

ANNUAL REPORT

2017/18



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Contents Page Photo: Student from Long Beach Unified School District

Page 4 Photo: Students from Portland Public Schools

Page 5 Photo: Students from Dallas Independent School District

Page 7 Photo: Students from Des Moines Public Schools

Page 10 Photo: Students from Des Moines Public Schools

Page 11 Photo: Students from Dallas Independent School District

ANNUAL REPORT 2017/18

CONTENTS

Message from the Chair	4
Message from the Director	5
About the Council	7
Vision	9
Organizational Structure	11
Characteristics and Conferences	13
Annual Fall Conference	14
Legislative/Policy Conference	15
Highlights of Council Activities	17
Award Programs	21
Financial Report	23
Sponsors	24
Publications	25
Council Staff	26



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR



June 30, 2018

It is with pride and gratitude that I join our executive director in sharing my reflections on my year as chair of the Council of the Great City Schools. In this annual report, you will find highlights showcasing the fantastic work of our school districts, task forces, and Council staff. I encourage you to take a moment and reflect on this school year and how we pulled together to help each other through the multiple catastrophes that this year handed us. Our truest test as leaders is our ability and courage to navigate the challenging waters we swim in, for if we do not have the fortitude to speak out against injustice then few others will.

Thankfully we are not in this fight alone. We are fortunate to belong to a mission-driven organization like the Council that keeps children at the center, with a rich history of advocacy and a legacy of bipartisan influence. The Council understands that our schools are the cornerstones of our communities and the organization values what we all hold dear: diversity, equity, security, respect, excellence, knowledge, passion for learning, and hope. These beliefs are evidenced everyday by the Council staff, our task forces, and the work of member superintendents and board members. I'm particularly proud that we launched a task force on Black and Latino Male Achievement this year and continue to support safe-haven policies that protect our immigrant and refugee students.

The work of the Council matters more than ever. We've been shaken to our core as another school shooting hit home in Florida's Broward County, but the Council responded with a national action plan to curtail gun violence, improve mental health supports, strengthen security, and initiate research. And we supported the voices of our young people that rose up in outrage at the lack of national resolve. We also acted together in the shocking aftermath of Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria, providing aid to Houston and Puerto Rico--no questions asked. It was our finest hour.

The Council represents family, fellowship, and relentless fervor for better education for our urban youth. Much of this is a direct reflection of the exemplary leadership that our Executive Director Michael Casserly has provided for the past 25 years. His over 40 years of tireless efforts on behalf of our students and personal sacrifice are unmatched. Congratulations Mike and thank you for your guidance, inspiration, and partnership in pursuit of educational justice for our nation's most vulnerable children and families. You are the quintessential dream-keeper and working alongside you has been an incredible experience.

All of us must remain steadfast, exhibiting the resilience and zeal necessary for our young people to thrive. I encourage everyone to stay focused, on-mission, and most importantly together. For it will take the collective voices and actions of the Council and the communities we serve to keep our schools safe and our students and families whole. Do not be discouraged - trust the voices of our students and the wisdom of our communities. A time of change and unrest is upon us, but the choice to lead is ours.

On a final note, I bid all of you farewell as I transition to the United Way for Southeastern Michigan. I will miss the Council, the staff, and the executive committee. Serving as your chair has been an honor and privilege. Our time together was always informative, expeditious, and rewarding. Thank you for the incredible opportunity to lead, to serve alongside each of you, and to advocate for our nation's children. Until we meet again, take care, and Godspeed.

Darienne Driver
Chair of the Board, 2017-18

“We have heard the cries of our students for tougher gun legislation and their pleas for stronger mental health. Today, we honor those voices and respond to their call for action.”

”

—Darienne Driver

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR



June 30, 2018

I am pleased and proud to present this annual report to the membership on the work of the Council of the Great City Schools during the 2017-18 program year.

Once again, the Council had an extraordinary year. Singular among the organization's accomplishments this year was the work we all did together to help our brothers and sisters in Houston and Puerto Rico in the aftermath of the devastating hurricanes last fall. The generosity and camaraderie of the membership was simply breathtaking. This year was also singular because of the tragic shooting in Florida's Broward County and the emergence of student leaders who rightly questioned the inaction by too many of our political leaders. The Council's board of directors, however, stood tall in supporting our extraordinary Broward County leaders and in proposing comprehensive legislation to address the underlying issues that such incidents raise.

Finally, this year was like none other in the number of statements we felt compelled to make in the face of the Charlottesville demonstrations, the evisceration of DACA, the hostility towards immigrants and their families, and the 'active shooter' video game. I suspect that these are not the last times we will need to speak up.

We were also proud this year to have won the Education Law Association's "Best Brief Award" for the amicus we filed with the U.S. Supreme Court in the case of *Endrew F. v. Douglas County School District* case. And we could not have been more pleased with how well the Annual Fall Conference in Cleveland was received by the membership.

If that were not enough, the Council released several new reports this year. This included the ground-breaking Academic Key Performance Indicators Pilot Report. Reports on internal auditing and cybersecurity were also produced. Moreover, the Council continued its work to support districts in the implementation of high academic standards, releasing a curriculum framework that received enthusiastic responses: *Supporting Excellence: A Framework for Developing, Implementing, and Sustaining a High Quality District Curriculum*. And the Council released the results of its most recent summit on males of color, *Excellence for All: Creating Environments for Success for Males of Color*.

The group also moved toward the finish line in assembling its ELL materials purchasing consortia and to launching a new video

platform to provide professional development on teaching struggling readers. And once again the Council published its annual *Managing for Results in the Great City Schools* report, which presented comparative trend lines on a wide array of operational and financial indicators across member districts. We stepped up our presence on social media this year and widened circulation of our award-winning newsletter, the *Urban Educator*.

The Council also continued to deploy its highly-regarded Strategic Support Teams to member districts in the areas of instruction, organizational structure, special education, transportation, facilities, school security, and many more. The group broadened its work this year to providing more technical assistance and professional development to school boards. The group continued to provide webinars for member district staff on the latest legal issues facing urban schools and served as an unflinching advocate on Capitol Hill.

I thank Darienne Driver, superintendent of the Milwaukee Public Schools, for her extraordinary leadership this year. And I thank the amazing Council staff for the dedication and expertise they put into their work on behalf of urban schools and their children every day. Thank you.

Michael Casserly
Executive Director

“For urban public schools, whose classrooms are filled with students from all over the world, our mission is not to reflect or perpetuate the walls that others would build. Our job is to tear them down, to educate future generations of informed, engaged citizens.”

—Michael Casserly



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.





Van Jones, left, moderates the Council's Town Hall Meeting on equity at the 61st Annual Fall Conference featuring panelists, left to right, Cleveland Schools CEO Eric Gordon, Milwaukee Schools Superintendent Darienne Driver, Denver school board member Allegra Haynes, Dallas Schools Superintendent Michael Hinojosa, Cleveland parent Jessica Nelson, Cleveland high school senior Shauntia Adams and Cleveland 10th grader Jonathan Chikuru.

Philanthropist Bill Gates discusses the education priorities of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation at the Annual Fall Conference in Cleveland.



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 school children



Top: Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Superintendent Shawn Joseph, Pittsburgh Schools Superintendent Anthony Hamlet and Kansas City Schools Superintendent Mark Bedell participate in a session on leading urban school districts as new superintendents at the Annual Fall Conference.



Top: Los Angeles school board member Kelly Gonez poses a question to congressional staffers at the Legislative/Policy Conference.



Left: Seattle school board member Jill Geary and Seattle Schools Superintendent Larry Nyland participate in a session at the Annual Fall Conference.

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 a School Finance Task Force to explore ways to challenge urban school funding inequities around the nation and an English Language Learners and Bilingual Education Task Force to focus on issues around the education of English language learners.

A Task Force on Achievement and Professional Development was established to eliminate gaps in the academic achievement of students by race. A Task Force on Leadership and Governance addresses the increasing concern about issues surrounding urban school leadership and

management, and a Task Force on Males of Color works to implement the pledge the membership took to improve conditions and outcomes for these students.

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.

**BOOKS
NOT
BULLETS**



CHARACTERISTICS AND CONFERENCES

Characteristics of the Great City Schools

Total Student Enrollment	7.8 million
Hispanic	44%
African American	27%
White	18%
Asian/Pacific Islander	8%
Alaskan/Native American/Other	2%
Free/Reduced Price Lunch Eligibility	71%
English Language Learners	15%
Students With Individualized Education Plan (IEP's)	15%
Total Number of Teachers	470,756
Student-Teacher Ratio	17:1
Number of Schools	13,772



Conferences

- Public Relations Executives Meeting
July 7-9, 2017
San Antonio, TX
- Annual Academic, Information
Technology & Research Conference
July 11-14, 2017
Pittsburgh, PA
- Annual Fall Conference
October 18-22, 2017
Cleveland, OH
- Chief Financial Officers Conference
November 14-17, 2017
Miami, FL
- HRD/Personnel Directors & Chief
Information Officers Meeting
February 6-9, 2018
Fort Lauderdale, FL
- Legislative/Policy Conference
March 17-20, 2018
Washington, DC
- Chief Operating Officers Conference
April 17-20, 2018
New Orleans, LA
- Bilingual, Immigrant & Refugee
Education Directors Meeting
May 15-19, 2018
Fort Worth, TX
- Curriculum & Research Directors
Meeting
June 25-28, 2018
Minneapolis, MN

ANNUAL FALL CONFERENCE

Under the banner “Advancing the State of Urban Education,” the Council of the Great City Schools held its 61st Annual Fall Conference, October 18-22, in Cleveland.

Hosted by the Cleveland Metropolitan School District, the five-day conference gave big-city school superintendents, board members, senior administrators and college deans of education a forum to discuss issues and share information and best practices to improve teaching and learning.

Philanthropist Bill Gates, who is the co-chair of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, unveiled what the priorities of the foundation would be for the next five years in the area of education.

They included funding a network of public schools across the nation, developing great curricula and professional development aligned to state standards and implementing innovative research involving technology and digital learning.

According to Gates, the foundation plans to spend \$1.7 billion on its K-12 education initiatives.

Also addressing the conference was actress and voting rights advocate Rosario Dawson, who told conferees that she understands how neglected so many urban communities are.

Dawson was the daughter of a 16-year-old teenage mother who had to drop out of school. But her mother didn't let poverty deter her from raising Dawson to believe she could do anything she wanted to do.

Dawson praised educators for not just helping students get good grades and a strong future, but helping them emotionally.

Conferees also heard from CNN



political commentator and bestselling author Van Jones. The son of two teachers, Jones said he learned from his parents the importance of educators.

Jones calls himself a progressive, yet believes the best educators must be both liberal and conservative. According to Jones, liberal educators will fight for the resources, policies and support that schools need to be great, while conservatives will make sure students take personal responsibility for their own growth.

Jones also did double-duty at the conference, serving as moderator of the town hall meeting, which focused on the issue of equity in education.

He noted that the panelists, comprised of four big-city school leaders, a parent and two students, had only 90 minutes to tackle the toughest issue in the country, if not the world.



“A future that can be great or terrible is sometimes based on a single word from a teacher. There’s no more noble work than your work.”

—Van Jones

LEGISLATIVE/POLICY CONFERENCE

Urban educators assembled in the nation's capital to discuss 2018 education priorities for the Trump Administration at the Council of the Great City Schools' Annual Legislative/Policy Conference, March 17-20, in Washington.

The conference also featured discussions that focused on federal education funding and the status of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program.

Political columnist and commentator Mark Shields addressed the conference. He told conferees that what Democrats and most Republicans failed to grasp during the last presidential election is that between 1998 and 2016, the gross domestic product of the country doubled while median household income went down.

According to Shields, Donald Trump spoke to Americans who had been ignored and forgotten, and while one can say he didn't have an answer to their problems, he paid attention to them.

Conferees also heard from Rep. Earl Blumenauer (D-Oregon), who has served in Congress since 1996. He lauded the students from Florida's Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School, who, since a deadly mass shooting occurred at their school, have advocated for gun control. He said that the nation needs to prevent mass shootings but noted that "every day in this country we have the equivalent of several of those mass shootings."

The congressman also believes that a conversation on guns safety can be built by empowering young people to create coalitions to take advantage of an unprecedented wave of civic activism.

Also addressing the need to prevent gun violence was Rep. Frederica Wilson, (D-Fla.), who strongly believes that as-



Mark Shields



Earl Blumenauer



Frederica Wilson

sault weapons should be banned for use by ordinary citizens because they are weapons of mass destruction.

The congresswoman is celebrating the 25th anniversary of the 5000 Role Models of Excellence Project mentoring program she created to empower minority males by pairing them with school-based and community mentors.

The program has been implemented in 102 schools in Miami-Dade County Public Schools and currently serves 6,000 students. The mentoring initiative has been so successful that it has expanded to schools in Florida's Duval County Public Schools, Pinellas County Schools, Broward County Public Schools and six schools in Detroit.



Philanthropist Bill Gates, third from left, poses with the Council leadership, left to right, Secretary-Treasurer Eric Gordon, Past Chair Felton Williams, Chair Darianne Driver, Chair-elect Lawrence Feldman and Executive Director Michael Casserly.



Council Chair Darianne Driver gives U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos the Council's resolution urging federal action against school shootings during a meeting between DeVos and Council school leaders.

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 2017-18 the Council—

- Participated in the release of the 2017 Trial Urban District Assessment (TUDA) results in reading and mathematics.
- Provided public-relations support to Broward County Public Schools in the aftermath of the Parkland school shootings.
- Hosted an Education Week listening tour featuring the newspaper's new editor-in-chief and urban-education leaders at the Council's Legislative/Policy Conference.
- Coordinated extensive press coverage of philanthropist Bill Gates' address at the Council's Annual Fall Conference in Cleveland.
- Coordinated a national town hall meeting on "Equity in Education," moderated by CNN contributor Van Jones.
- Issued more than a dozen press releases on activities and developments, including statements on the Broward County shooting, the DACA rollback, the active shooter video game, the Charlottesville violence and the Administration's family separation policy.
- Fielded scores of inquiries from national and regional media outlets, such as the New York Times, Washington Post, National Public Radio and the Associated Press.
- Published eight issues of the Urban Educator, the Council's award-winning newsletter.
- Received the National School Public Relations Association (NSPRA) Award of Merit for a story on "Supporting Male Students of Color Through Mentoring" in the Urban Educator.
- Published the organization's Annual Report.
- Hosted the 17th Annual Public Relations Executives Meeting in San Antonio.
- Participated in the National Association of Black Journalists Conference and the Education Writers Association Conference.
- Managed the organization's Blue Ribbon Corporate Advisory Group.

LEGISLATION

In voicing its proposals and ideas to Congress and other federal policymakers, the Council helps shape legislation to strengthen the quality of schooling for the nation's urban children. In 2017-18, the Council—

- Helped defeat proposed health care changes that would have resulted in massive cuts to school-based Medicaid reimbursements for Great City School districts.
- Helped secure additional federal funding for urban schools in the FY 2018 omnibus appropriations bill, including additional funding for Title I, IDEA, and the Title IV-A targeted formula grant, and successfully advocated against cuts in federal funding for teachers, professional development, and afterschool programs.
- Submitted recommendations to Congress on the reauthorization of the Perkins Career and Technical Education Act, highlighting the need for simplification and flexibility.
- Presented the Council Board of Directors' Resolution on School Shootings to the Federal Commission on School Safety, and submitted a school safety legislative proposal to Congress on behalf of urban schools.
- Submitted comments to the U.S. Department of Education on regulations for the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), on accountability, assessments, English language learners, and students with disabilities, and on initial guidance on the Endrew F. decision of the Supreme Court.
- Submitted comments to the U.S. Department of Education on the overidentification of students for special education services and disciplinary action.
- Submitted comments to the U.S. Department of Agriculture on flexibility in school meal regulations.
- Participated in meetings with U.S. Department of Education officials to discuss priorities and operational flexibility in the implementation of ESSA.
- Offered multiple recommendations to the Administration on the implementation of ESSA, including fiscal provisions affecting Title I, streamlining data collection and reporting, and identifying evidence-based strategies for turning around low-performing schools.
- Provided ongoing guidance to member districts on Title I funding, specifically on state set-asides affecting school district allocations.
- Acted as a resource for the membership on immigration actions taken by the new Administration, providing summaries of new federal executive orders and memoranda, sharing information on local district responses, and continually updating urban

HIGHLIGHTS OF COUNCIL ACTIVITIES

- schools on the status of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program.
- Summarized the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in the *Endrew F. v. Douglas County School District* case, which closely tracked recommendations in the Council's amicus brief and was recognized by the Education Law Association with its 2017 Best Education Brief Award.
- Hosted a series of webinars on legal issues facing urban school districts with Husch Blackwell, covering topics such as the Supreme Court, the federal Office for Civil Rights and Title IX, student privacy and social media, and issues of local control vs. state authority.
- Hosted monthly conference calls with member districts and the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) to resolve problems with the E-Rate application portal.
- Convened the Annual Legislative/Policy Conference, which featured four days of briefings on ESSA, DACA and immigration, school safety, and federal funding.
- Hosted a two-day meeting for Special Education Directors and Legal Counsels to discuss challenges and share best practices in delivering services for students with disabilities.
- Responded to scores of questions on federal legislation and served as an intermediary for the membership in resolving problems with the U.S. Department of Education.
- Fielded multiple information requests from Congress, the White House, the U.S. Department of Education, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Federal Communications Commission, and other federal agencies.
- Provided support to member districts participating in the Wallace Foundation project on turnaround schools.
- Conducted research on urban school progress on the Trail Urban District Assessment of NAEP.
- Provided technical support to districts on the 2017 NAEP results during the TUDA Pre-Release Workshop.
- Represented urban school district interests at meetings of the: National Assessment Governing Board, American Educational Research Association, Partnership for Readiness for College and Careers, Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium, National Center for Education Statistics, National Association for the Education of Young Children, National Network of Education Research – Practice Partnerships, Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents, National Association of Assessment Directors, Directors of Research and Evaluation, Council of Chief State School Officers, Council of Large Public Housing Authorities, and the Educational Testing Service.
- Responded to numerous member requests for statistical information and research assistance.
- Managed the data collection, analysis, and reporting of the Council's operational Key Performance Indicators.
- Provided technical assistance to member districts on setting up or enhancing programs for their males of color.
- Released a report summarizing current research-based approaches to improving the outcomes of males of color. The report was based on the Council's Males of Color Policy Conference hosted in the Spring of 2017.
- Provided assistance to numerous strategic support teams to help address issues in several school districts related to curriculum, research, English language learner instruction, supports for young men of color, and student achievement overall.
- Launched the Trail Urban District Assessment (TUDA) Advisory Group with the National Assessment Governing Board, the National Center for Education Statistics and 10 representatives from Council member districts providing recommendations and feedback on the development and operation of the TUDA program.
- Relaunched edwires.org, a site for member districts to collaborate, communicate, and share information.

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 2017-18, the Council—

- Launched the data collection, analysis, and reporting of the Council's Academic Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) on student achievement levels, attendance, suspensions, course participation, AP attainment, graduation rates, and special education trends.
- Conducted research to support the work of the Council overall and the Council's reviews of district academics and operations.
- Convened the annual meeting of research directors in Pittsburgh.

ACHIEVEMENT AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Improving the performance of all students and closing achievement gaps is one of the Council's most important priorities. In 2017-18, the Council—

- Collaborated with Student Achievement Partners, the Schusterman Foundation, and the Metropolitan Nashville Public

HIGHLIGHTS OF COUNCIL ACTIVITIES

- Schools to implement an augmented balanced literacy pilot project to improve early reading skills.
- Collaborated with the Council's bilingual team to develop a rubric indicating what high-quality mathematics resources should look like to meet the needs of English Language Learners.
- Convened a conference for the Council's Southern Cities to help them improve student outcomes.
- Began researching and conducting site visits to districts that have evidenced greater gains on NAEP than other districts.
- Convened the Achievement and Professional Development Task Forces at the Annual Fall Conference and March Legislative Conference.
- Partnered with the University of Chicago's Center for Elementary Mathematics and Science Education to facilitate a series of webinars on implementing computer science programs in three member districts.
- Convened the annual meeting of chief academic officers and information technology directors in Pittsburgh.
- Made numerous presentations to other organizations in support of college- and career-readiness standards.
- Updated www.commoncoreworks.org to enable greater access to Council materials.
- Collaborated with other strategic partners in supporting urban districts with standards implementation and school turnaround initiatives.
- Provided strategic support teams to member districts in the areas of instruction and special education.
- Provided requesting districts with both on-site and virtual support on their curriculum initiatives using the Council's Supporting Excellence: A Framework for Developing, Implementing, and Sustaining a High-Quality District Curriculum.
- Connected districts with their peers to answer requests for information on a host of academic issues.
- teams to assess damage and train department personnel on facilities management.
- Developed and implemented a groundbreaking new model for providing professional development to school boards to help them improve governance.
- Conducted 18 strategic support team reviews to member districts on organizational structure, staffing levels, human resources, facilities, budget and finance, transportation, and technology operations.
- Convened meetings of member district Chief Financial Officers, Human Resources Directors, Chief Operating Officers, Chief Information Officers, Chiefs of Safety & Security, Facilities Directors, Transportation Directors, Food Service Directors, Internal Auditors, Risk Managers, and Procurement Directors.
- Convened two meetings of the Leadership, Governance, and Management Task Force and the Finance Task Force.
- Published the twelfth edition of *Managing for Results in America's Great City Schools, 2016* with an expanded set of operational key performance indicators.
- Provided assistance to member districts in conducting superintendent searches and vetting potential candidates.
- Managed the Council's Urban School Executive Program (C'USE) for aspiring Chief Financial Officers.
- Processed the application for and presented the Council's Award for Excellence in Financial Management to the Fresno Unified School District.
- Published a booklet on Internal Auditing in the Great City Schools and on Cyber-Security in Today's K12-Environment.
- Fielded numerous member requests for management and operational information and services.
- Posted dozens of district job announcements on the Council's job board.

LEADERSHIP, GOVERNANCE, AND MANAGEMENT AND SCHOOL FINANCE

The Task Forces on Leadership, Governance, and Management, and School Finance address the quality and tenure of leadership and management in and funding of urban schools. In 2017-18, the Council—

- Marshalled the Council's membership to support its school districts damaged in the wake of Hurricanes Harvey, Irma and Maria.
- Provided the secretary of education in Puerto Rico two facilities

BILINGUAL, IMMIGRANT AND REFUGEE EDUCATION

America's urban schools serve more than 26 percent of the nation's English language learners. In 2017-18, the Council—

- Finalized the Council's inaugural Professional Learning Platform with 11 courses and more than 400 videos to help members work with struggling students. Hosted two facilitator training sessions for the ELA courses and one training session for the math courses. More than 20 districts participated in these sessions.

HIGHLIGHTS OF COUNCIL ACTIVITIES

- Coordinated a major two-year project to harness member purchasing power in coordination with the Los Angeles Unified School District to improve the quality of commercial ELL math materials.
- Conducted a survey of the impact of new English proficiency cut scores on WIDA's ACCESS instrument and conveyed concerns to the U.S. Department of Education and Congressional Staff in addition to the WIDA Consortium.
- Provided strategic technical assistance for improving ELL programming in member districts and responding to specific developments, including lawsuits and DOJ reviews.
- Conducted member queries on a number of issues and policies related to serving ELLs and immigrant children and youth in Council member districts.
- Launched survey and ELL data collection efforts to update the 2013 "ELLs in America's Great Cities" report. Presented preliminary results at the 2018 BIRE meeting.
- Continued to collect and share statements, policies and guidance from member school districts on current immigration law enforcement activities.
- Shared pertinent information with membership on immigration law developments.
- Convened the annual meeting of the Bilingual, Immigrant, and Refugee Education Directors in Ft. Worth, Texas.
- Convened two meetings of the Task Force on Bilingual, Refugee and Immigrant Education.
- Assisted in securing panelist for a SxSW session on Dual Language Programs.
- Assisted in securing presentations on ELL issues for the Annual Fall Conference.
- Worked with the Office of English Language Acquisition of the Department of Education to convene the National EL Roundtable, hosting one meeting at the offices of the Great City Schools.

ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION

The Council works to manage its resources and ensure the integrity of its programs. In 2017-18, the Council—

- Conducted a strategic planning process with the executive committee and staff.
- Conducted an external audit of the organization's 2016-17 spending and received unqualified audit results for FY2016-17.
- Coordinated travel and managed financials for 18 Strategic Support Team trips, 12 School Board Retreats, 14 Conferences and Meetings, 10 grant projects and 10 programs.
- Hosted the Annual Fall Conference in Cleveland, OH as well as multiple meetings and forums throughout the year.
- Maintained the online conference registration and hotel reservation system for all meetings.
- Conducted site visits for the 2020 and 2021 Annual Fall Conferences in Dallas and Philadelphia, respectively.
- Negotiated hotel contracts for eight peer-to-peer meetings.
- Managed the Dr. Shirley Schwartz Urban Impact Scholarship Program, and the ExxonMobil Bernard Harris Math and Science Scholarships.
- Continued cleanup of the organization's database system. Cleaned out old files and converted to e-files.
- Upgraded accounting software to SL Dynamics 2018.
- Upgraded all office computers and converted operating systems to Windows 10.
- Updated the Personnel Policy Handbook and the Accounting Policies and Procedures Manual.
- Crafted a new social responsibility policy for investing member dues in Council accounts.

AWARD PROGRAMS

GREEN-GARNER AWARD

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

The award, sponsored by ARAMARK K-12 Education and Scholastic, Inc., includes a \$10,000 college scholarship to be presented to a senior in the winner's school system or system from which the winner graduated.

Felton Williams, a school board member with California's Long Beach Unified School District, was presented with the award at the 2017 Fall Conference in Cleveland.

Williams has served on the Long Beach school board for 13 years and served several terms as president and vice president. He is widely acknowledged for his efforts to improve student achievement, including a program to boost the number of students of color pursuing enrollment in Advanced Placement courses and exams. In addition, he has planned and implemented the Long Beach school system's Academic and Career Success Initiative.

In 2016-2017, he served as the chair of the Council of the Great City Schools' Board of Directors.



Top: Felton Williams holds his Green-Garner Award and is congratulated by, left to right, Yvette Turner of Aramark K-12 Education, Tai Chapman of Scholastic, Inc., and Larry Feldman, chair-elect of the Council of the Great City Schools.

Right: Demetrius Jackson, a 2018 graduate of Cabrillo High School in Long Beach, Calif., was honored at a school board meeting for winning the 2018 Green-Garner \$10,000 college scholarship. Jackson will attend Northern Arizona University and plans to major in business.



“
...This award also is a reflection of the high quality of our school system in Long Beach and all the hard work of our talented team of educators and support staff, fellow school board members and superintendent, devoted parents, amazing students and exemplary community partners.
”

—Felton Williams

GREEN-GARNER AWARD WINNERS

1990 James Griffin, Retired Member Timothy Dyer, Former Superintendent	St. Paul School Board
1991 Paul Houston, Former Superintendent	Phoenix Union High School District Tucson Public Schools
1992 Richard Wallace Jr., Superintendent Emeritus	Pittsburgh Public Schools
1993 Constance Clayton, Superintendent	School District of Philadelphia
1994 Holmes Braddock, Board Member	Miami-Dade County Public Schools
1995 Curman Gaines, Superintendent	St. Paul Public Schools
1996 James Williams, Superintendent	Dayton Public Schools
1997 Maxine Smith, Retired Board Member	Memphis City School Board
1998 Gerry House, Superintendent	Memphis City Public Schools
1999 Rod Paige, Superintendent Judy Farmer, Board Member	Houston Independent School District Minneapolis Public Schools
2000 Eric Smith, Superintendent	Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools
2001 Barbara Byrd-Bennett, Superintendent	Cleveland Municipal School District
2002 John Simpson, Superintendent	Norfolk Public Schools
2003 Arthur Griffin, Board Member Franklin Till, Superintendent	Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools Broward County Public Schools
2004 Tom Payzant, Superintendent	Boston Public Schools
2005 Anna Dodson, Board Member	Norfolk Public Schools
2006 Beverly Hall, Superintendent	Atlanta Public Schools
2007 Elizabeth Reilinger, Board Member	Boston Public Schools
2008 Pascal Forgione, Superintendent	Austin Independent School District
2009 Emmett Johnson, Board Member	Atlanta Public Schools
2010 Arlene Ackerman, Superintendent	The School District of Philadelphia
2011 Candy Olson, Board Member	Hillsborough County Public Schools
2012 Carol Johnson, Superintendent	Boston Public Schools
2013 Denise Link, Board Member	Cleveland Metropolitan School District
2014 Terry Grier, Superintendent	Houston Independent School District
2015 Bill Isler, Board Member	Pittsburgh Public Schools
2016 Eric Gordon, Chief Executive Officer	Cleveland Metropolitan School District
2017 Felton Williams, Board Member	Long Beach Unified School District

Queen Smith Award For Commitment to Urban Education

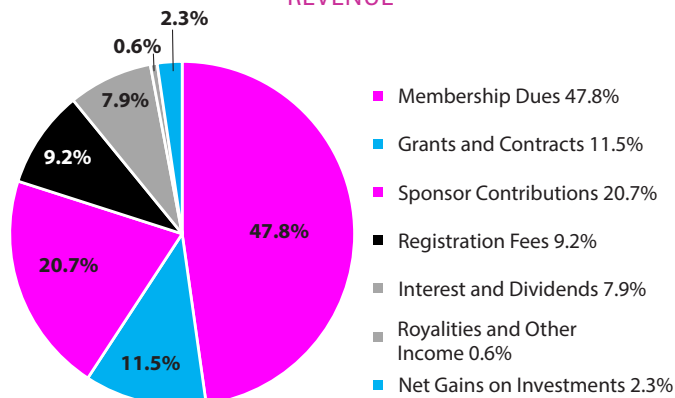
Alicia Isaac, a teacher for 11 years at Boca Ciega High School in Florida's Pinellas County Schools, was the recipient of the 2017 Queen Smith Award for Commitment to Urban Education. Sponsored by the Macmillan/McGraw-Hill Publishing Co., the award is named in honor of the company's late vice president of urban programs.

Shirley S. Schwartz Urban Education Impact Award

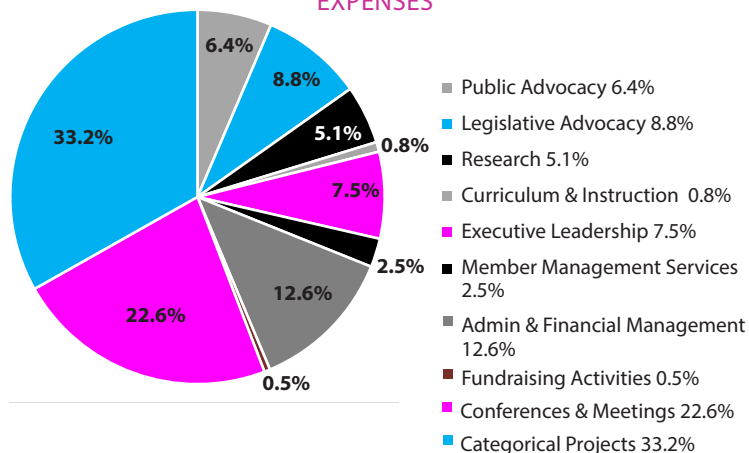
The Council of the Great City Colleges of Education, an affiliate group of deans working with big-city school leaders, presented the Dr. Shirley S. Schwartz Urban Education Impact Award to Florida's Broward County Public Schools, the School District of Palm Beach County and Florida Atlantic University for the Establishing Excellence in Elementary School Preparation Program. The award honors an outstanding partnership between a university and urban school system and is named in honor of the Council's director of special projects who died in March 2009.

FINANCIAL REPORT

REVENUE



EXPENSES



AUDITED REPORT

FY 16-17

ESTIMATE

FY 17-18

REVENUE

Membership Dues	\$2,756,018	\$2,839,510
Grants & Contracts	2,228,376	681,112
Sponsor Contributions	1,284,175	1,231,550
Registration Fees	478,248	545,028
Interest and Dividends	258,082	471,045
Royalties and Other Income	60,084	38,258
Net Gain on Investments	574,645	138,133
Total Revenue	\$7,639,627	\$5,944,635

EXPENSES

Public Advocacy	\$423,109	\$489,764
Legislative Advocacy	585,339	668,106
Research	233,026	385,476
Curriculum & Instruction	54,712	64,289
Executive Leadership	525,433	569,631
Member Management Services	177,230	189,072
Admin & Financial Management	796,883	958,830
Fundraising Activities	25,332	38,390
Conferences & Meetings	1,690,525	1,724,278
Categorical Projects	2,779,902	2,526,078
Total Expenses	\$7,291,491	\$7,613,912
Change in Net Assets	\$348,136	\$1,669,277
Net Assets, Beginning	\$9,997,892	\$10,346,028
Net Assets, Ending	\$10,346,028	\$8,676,750

SPONSORS

The Council thanks the following contributors for their support in 2017-2018

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Houghton Mifflin Harcourt
K12 Insight
LEGO Education
Lexia Learning
McGraw Hill Education
PCG Education
Pearson
Scholastic, Inc.
Texas Instruments
Waterford Institute
Wilson Language Training

2017 Annual Academic, Information Technology and Research Conference

BrightBytes
Catchon
Classlink
Clever
Continuity Focus
Curriculum Associates
Dell
Discovery Education
Dreambox
Education Networks of America
Follett
Gaggle
Hoonuit
Houghton Mifflin Harcourt
Infosys
Innive
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JAMF Software
Kajeet
Lightspeed
McGraw Hill Education
Panaroma
Pearson
Performance Matters
Public Consulting Group

Safe Schools
SchoolCity
Schoolology
Sunesys
Texas Instruments
Worldgate

2017 Public Relations Executives Meeting

Blackboard
Education Post
K12 Insight
Peachjar
West Corporation
(SchoolMessenger)

2017-2018 Executive Committee Meeting

Curriculum Associates
Houghton Mifflin Harcourt
Lexia Learning
McGraw Hill Education

2018 Annual Fall Conference

American Reading Company
ARAMARK K-12 Education
AXA
Benchmark Education
Blackboard
BrightBytes
Catapult Learning
Code to the Future
Curriculum Associates
Discovery Education
Dreambox
Flocabulary
Frontline
GCA Services Group
Goalbook
Houghton Mifflin Harcourt
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Lexia
McGraw Hill Education
Measured Progress
Naviance
Odysseyware
Panorama
Pearson
Performance Matters
Reading Plus
Renaissance

Scholastic, Inc.
SchoolCity
SchoolCnxt
Schoolology
Teacher Created Materials
Texas Instruments
Think Cerca
Vantage Learning
Vocabulary.com
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2017 Chief Financial Officers Meeting

BIAS
Catchon
Cornerstone OnDemand
Education Networks of America
ESS
Frontline
Gaggle
Gallagher Benefit Services
Hoonuit
Information Services Group
Infosys
Kelly Educational Staffing
LEGO Education
Lightspeed
Navigator Management Partners
PCG Education
Safari Montage
Talented

2017 HRD/Personnel Directors Meeting

Cornerstone OnDemand
Frontline
Kelly Educational Staffing
Public Consulting Group
Source4Teachers

2018 Legislative/Policy Conference

Cornerstone OnDemand
Curriculum Associates
Discovery Education
K12 Insight
LEGO Education
Lexia
McGraw Hill Education
Public Consulting Group
SchoolMint
Wilson Works

2018 Chief Operating Officers Conference

ABM
AECOM
ALC
American Traffic Solutions
ARAMARK K-12 Education
Audio Enhancement
BlueBird
Cooperative Strategies
CPI
CrisisGo
David M Shapiro Disaster Consultants
Gaggle
Hanover
Heery
Jacobs Engineering Group
K12 Insight
Public Consulting Group
Roush CleanTech
SchoolDude.com
Seon
Sodexo
transfinder
Zonar

2018 Bilingual, Immigrant & Refugee Education Directors Meeting

Avant
Benchmark Education
Curriculum Associates
Data Recognition Corporation
Ellevation
Imagine Learning
LEGO Education
Lexia
Mandarin Matrix
McGraw Hill Education
Pearson
Project Education
PCG Education
Public Consulting Group
Velaquez Press

Shirley Schwartz Urban Education Impact Award

Michael Green Jewish Community Foundation

PUBLICATIONS



- **Excellence for All: Creating Environments for Success for Males of Color in the Great City Schools** - October 2017
 This report seeks to contribute to the ongoing dialogue of raising our expectations for males of color and provide a resource for school districts seeking to build or recalibrate their initiatives to improve the academic outcomes of young men and boys of color. Throughout this report there are exemplars of current initiatives across the nation's big cities as well as promising practices in various areas.
- **Cyber-Security in Today's K12-Environment** - October 2017
 Technology has ushered in a new era for teaching and learning in classrooms from kindergarten through high school, with digital learning tools now an integral part of the K-12 environment. This white paper outlines key considerations for establishing secure environments, particularly for the large urban school districts that are part of the Council of the Great City Schools.
- **Internal Auditing in the Great City Schools** - October 2017
 The objective of this "white paper" is to describe best practices in internal auditing and demonstrate the value that an internal audit function brings to a school district.
- **Managing for Results in America's Great City Schools, 2017, Results from Fiscal Year 2015-2016** - October 2017
 The Council's annual report on more than 500 Key Performance Indicators of operational performance in the nation's urban schools.
- **Academic Key Performance Indicators Pilot Report** - October 2017
 The refined set of Academic Key Performance Indicators are designed to measure the progress among the Council's membership toward improving the academic outcomes for students in areas such as ninth grade algebra completion, number of high school students enrolled in advanced placement and four-year high school graduation rate.
- **Puerto Rico School Facilities Assessment** - November 2017
 Hurricane Maria, which hit Puerto Rico on September 20, 2017, resulted in schools suffering severe storm damage and flooding. The Council was asked to review and conduct a physical assessment of a subset of schools on the island to determine which, if any, could be reopened in relatively short order. The Council assembled a Strategic Support Team of senior facilities directors, business and school operations officers, and chief operating officers from its member districts.

COUNCIL STAFF



Council Executive Director Michael Casserly receives a congratulatory hug from Council Chair Darienne Driver for his 40 years of service at the Annual Fall Conference in Cleveland. Casserly, executive director of the Council since 1992, joined the organization in 1977, and served as the Council's director of legislation and research for 15 years.

“
A colleague who has devoted
40 years to one organization..and
poured nearly every day into im-
proving the lives and educational
outcomes of urban schoolchildren.
”

—Darienne Driver

ADMINISTRATION

Michael Casserly, Executive Director
Teri Trinidad, Director of Administration,
Finance & Conferences
Alisa Adams, Finance Manager
Terry Tabor, Conference Manager
Alexis Vann, Administrative & Conference
Specialist
Marilyn Banks, Administrative Assistant

COMMUNICATIONS

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

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

LEGISLATION AND POLICY

Jeff Simering, Director of Legislation
Manish Naik, Manager of Legislative Services
Gabriela Uro, Director of ELL Policy and Research
Julie Wright Halbert, Legislative Counsel
David Lai, Special Projects Manager

MANAGEMENT AND TECHNOLOGY

Robert Carlson, Director of Management Services

RESEARCH

Ray Hart, Director of Research
Moses Palacios, Legislative and Research Manager
Renata Uzzell, Research Manager
Ashley Ison, Research and ELL Policy Specialist
Eric Vignola, Programmer/Technology Specialist

SPECIAL PROJECTS

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

COUNCIL BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND MEMBER DISTRICTS 2017-2018 (AS OF MARCH 2017)

<u>School District</u>	<u>Superintendent</u>	<u>Board Member</u>
Albuquerque	Raquel Reedy	David Peercy
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Arlington	Marcelo Cavazos	Aaron Reich
Atlanta	Meria Carstarphen	Leslie Grant
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Clark County	Pat Skorkowsky	Linda Cavazos
Cleveland	Eric Gordon	Denise Link
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Dallas	Michael Hinojosa	N/A
Dayton	Elizabeth Lolli	William E. Harris, Jr.
Denver	Tom Boasberg	Allegra Haynes
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Omaha, Orange County, Palm Beach County, Philadelphia, Pinellas County, Pittsburgh,
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St. Paul, Toledo, Tulsa, Washington, D.C., Wichita



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