

Michael Casserly
Executive Director
Council of the Great City Schools

Michael Casserly has served as Executive Director of the Council of the Great City Schools since January 1992. Casserly also served as the organization's Director of Legislation and Research for 15 years before assuming his current position. As head of the urban school group, Casserly unified big city schools nationwide around a vision of reform and improvement; led the nation's largest urban school districts to volunteer for the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP); guided the organization to be the first national education-membership group to call for the Common Core State Standards; initiated an aggressive technical assistance program to improve urban education; directed the development of public education's first performance management system; and led the first national study of common practices among the nation's fastest improving urban school districts. He is currently spearheading efforts to boost academic performance in the nation's big city schools; strengthen management and operations; and improve the public's image of urban education. An article in USA Today some years ago called him a "Crusader for Urban Schools." He is a U.S. Army veteran, and holds a Ph.D. from the University of Maryland and B.A. from Villanova University.

Overview of the Council of the Great City Schools

The Council of the Great City Schools is the only national organization exclusively representing the needs of urban public schools. Composed of 67 large city school districts, its mission is to promote the cause of urban schools and to advocate for inner-city students through legislation, research and media relations. The organization also provides a network for school districts sharing common problems to exchange information, and to collectively address new challenges as they emerge in order to deliver the best possible education for urban youth.

The total enrollment of the Great City Schools is 7.1 million students.

Member districts: Albuquerque, Anchorage, Atlanta, Austin, Baltimore, Birmingham, Boston, Bridgeport, Broward County (Ft. Lauderdale), Buffalo, Charleston County, Charlotte-Mecklenburg, Chicago, Cincinnati, Clark County (Las Vegas), Cleveland, Columbus, Dallas, Dayton, Denver, Des Moines, Detroit, Duval County (Jacksonville), East Baton Rouge, El Paso, Fort Worth, Fresno, Guilford County (Greensboro, N.C.), Honolulu, Hillsborough County (Tampa), Houston, Indianapolis, Jackson, Jefferson County (Louisville), Kansas City, Long Beach, Los Angeles, Memphis, Miami-Dade County, Milwaukee, Minneapolis, Nashville, New Orleans, New York City, Newark, Norfolk, Oakland, Oklahoma City, Omaha, Orange County (Orlando), Palm Beach County, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Portland, Providence, Richmond, Rochester, Sacramento, San Diego, San Francisco, Santa Ana, Seattle, St. Louis, St. Paul, Toledo, Washington, D.C., and Wichita.

School districts eligible for membership must be located in cities with populations over 250,000 and student enrollment over 35,000. School districts located in the largest city of any state are also eligible for membership, based on urban characteristics. If the Board of Education has jurisdiction over areas outside the central city, then the enrollment of those areas may also be included for purposes of eligibility, but the population outside the central city shall not.

For more information on the Council of the Great City Schools, visit www.cgcs.org