

BOSTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

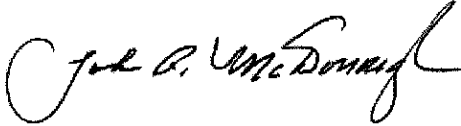


BSC 05JUN'15 AM 9:37

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

MEMORANDUM

TO: Chairperson and Members
Boston School Committee

FROM: John P. McDonough 
Interim Superintendent

DATE: June 5, 2015

SUBJECT: Council of the Great City Schools Membership Dues 2015-2016

This memorandum is to recommend payment of the 2015-2016 membership dues of the Boston Public Schools in the Council of the Great City Schools (CGCS). Attached please find a copy of the invoice and request for payment. I request that the School Committee approve these dues at the June 10, 2015 meeting.

The CGCS is a non-profit educational organization whose purpose is to promote the improvement of education in the Great City Schools through research, advocacy, and other appropriate activities. The Council is made up of approximately 65 of the nation's largest urban school systems, and is the only national education group whose sole purpose and mission is advocacy for urban public education.

The membership of the Council consists of communities with populations of 250,000 or more, or an enrollment in public schools of 35,000 or more. The membership dues are based on school system enrollment. The Board of Directors is composed of Superintendents and School Board representatives, generally the Chairperson, and of Council membership. The attached correspondence lists the member cities.

I recommend that the School Committee maintain membership in the Council for the 2015-2016 school year. Thank you for your consideration.

Attachment

cc: Erika Giampietro

Council of the Great City Schools

1301 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W. ♦ Suite 702 ♦ Washington, D.C. ♦ 20004
(202) 393-2427 ♦ (202) 393-2400 (fax)

May 12, 2015

<http://www.cgcs.org>

Mr. John McDonough
Interim Superintendent
Boston Public Schools
26 Court Street,
Boston, MA 02108

BSC 20MAY'15 PM 4:09

Dear John:

You will find an invoice for the 2015-16 dues to the Council of the Great City Schools enclosed with this letter. We encourage your prompt payment in order to keep your national organization in good financial standing.

Later this summer, you will receive reports on the Council's activities during the 2014-15 school year and the services it provided to your district specifically and to the membership generally. These reports are designed to answer the question, "What did we get for our dues?"

The Council has been incredibly productive this year. It remains the most effective and aggressive advocate for urban public schools in the nation. A good example of that effectiveness has been the Council's continuing ability to fight off amendments to the Title I formula in Congress that would strip member districts of hundreds of millions in federal aid. These are amendments that the organization has had to ward off without much help from other education organizations.

The Council's legislative prowess has been critical in flagging the issue, analyzing the effects of various amendments, marshalling key Congressional allies, and organizing the field in a way that blunted these very damaging attempts to rob urban schools of the resources we need. As Congressional debate on the ESEA reauthorization continues, the Council needs to remain strong on this and other critical issues. The Council was also instrumental in killing off Title I proposals like "portability" in the Senate and other efforts that would have undercut the fiscal architecture of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act. The Council produced the first and most detailed analyses of what portability would do to major city school systems—something that members of the Senate and the Administration looked to in deciding their own positions.

But the Council is not just about federal advocacy—as effective as it is in this arena. It is also about our ability to speak with a single voice about the successes, challenges, and needs of urban schools and the children we serve.

The Council took the lead with President Obama's My Brother's Keeper initiative and asked its members to pledge a series of actions to improve the academic outcomes for our males of color. The President personally announced our pledge last summer, and met with members of the organization's Executive Committee in March to support our efforts.

The group has also made major contributions to the implementation of the new common core standards in reading and math—even for districts in states that have not adopted the standards. The Council convened numerous meetings, workshops, and forums to help members with implementation and to assist with the selection and development of standards-aligned materials. Our detailed rubrics for selecting materials by grade level are getting rave reviews, as are our guidelines for selecting high quality commercial materials that meet the needs of English language learners.

In addition, the Council launched a new 30-second public service announcement that is now running in English and Spanish on television and radio stations nationwide. It has been seen or heard some 50 million times just in the first three months of 2015, according to Nielsen ratings.

Council of the Great City Schools™

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Clark County
Cleveland
Columbus
Dallas
Dayton
Denver
Des Moines
Detroit
Duval County
East Baton Rouge
El Paso
Fort Worth
Fresno
Guilford County
Hillsborough County
Honolulu
Houston
Indianapolis
Jackson
Jefferson County
Kansas City
Long Beach
Los Angeles
Miami-Dade County
Milwaukee
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Omaha
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Sacramento
San Diego
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San Jose
Seattle
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Tulsa
Wash. DC
Wichita

Our brand new three-minute video explaining why the new Common Core standards are critical to our children's future is also being circulated extensively across the country and has been viewed untold millions of times. In the process, the Council won three Telly Awards for the work.

In addition, the Council published a guide last fall to help you implement the new PARCC, SBAC, and other college and career-ready assessments this spring. And our Parent Roadmaps to the Common Core continue to be used by many of you to help your parent communities understand what their children will be learning at each grade level. Moreover, the Council published new tools for communicating the Common Core internally and externally, and for determining what questions districts need to be asking themselves over the course of the school year to ensure effective implementation of the new standards.

Moreover, the Council has now developed and is pilot-testing a new set of academic key performance indicators to accompany the nearly 500 operational KPIs that the Council and its membership developed and have used to improve efficiency and track progress. It is a major breakthrough.

The Council also published new research on urban school district turnaround efforts with federal School Improvement Grant funds, and has conducted the nation's most extensive inventory of assessment practices. And the Council continued to strengthen the capacity of its member districts with new Strategic Support Teams, which provided on-site technical assistance in areas ranging from instruction to staffing, special education to bilingual instruction, and food services to transportation. The teams are a perfect example of how urban school districts under the Council's umbrella are pulling together to help each other meet our toughest challenges.

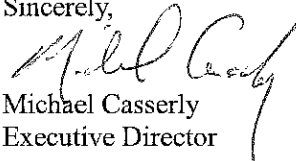
Finally, the organization continues to convene the highest quality forums and conferences to allow you to share your successes and learn from each other. Our annual conference in Milwaukee was hailed as our best ever, and our job-alike forums throughout the year allowed district staff members to exchange best practices and build networks of peer-based support.

To be sure, some of our positions are controversial, but no organization fights more aggressively or successfully for the nation's urban schools and urban schoolchildren than the Council of the Great City Schools. The Council remains the only independent education coalition located in Washington whose sole mission and purpose is the same as yours: the improvement of public education in our Great City Schools.

The Council is a group "fully committed to its constituents" and is listed along with only the NEA, AFT, and the CCSSO, by the *Washington Almanac*, as one of the most effective education groups in Washington. In fact, the Council is considered one of the most powerful organizations on Capitol Hill in any field. *Lessons from the Hill* calls the Council "relentless" and critical to Washington's understanding of urban school needs. *USA Today* calls the Council "a crusader for urban education," the *New York Times* describes the group as "influential," and *Education Week* refers to us as "stalwart."

In short, the Council is an organization that belongs solely to urban educators for urban education and urban kids—all the time. That commitment is needed now more than ever as we work to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, implement the Common Core State Standards, and navigate the fracturing debate about public education's future. The many challenges we face will require urban schools to be more vocal, united, and forceful than ever. Our success can be traced directly to you, and to the strength of our alliance. Thank you for your commitment to the Council and our urban schoolchildren.

Sincerely,



Michael Casserly
Executive Director

Cc: Michael O'Neill, Board Chair/CGCS Rep., Boston Public Schools

Invoice No. 10-4007-15

BSC 20MAY'15 PM 4:09



Council of the Great City Schools
1301 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Suite 702
Washington, D.C. 20004
(202) 393-2427
E.I.N. 36-2481232

Bill To: John McDonough
Interim Superintendent
Boston Public Schools
26 Court Street, 7th Floor
Boston, MA 02108-2505

**** INVOICE ****

Date	Description	Amount Due
5/12/2015	FY 2015-2016 Membership Dues Due on or before July 1, 2015	\$42,345.00
TOTAL:		\$42,345.00

Please remit check to the address above