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FOR RELEASE

October 26, 2023

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The Michael Casserly Urban Executive Leadership Institute

Graduates First Cohort of Superintendents

Second Cohort Announced

SAN DIEGO, Oct. 26 – The Council of the Great City Schools today announced the successful completion of the first cohort of the Michael Casserly Urban Executive Leadership Institute for Superintendents, named after the Council's longtime former executive director. A commencement ceremony was held in San Diego during the Council's 67th Fall Conference.

While in the eight-month program, the 10 participants gained new skills as they attended sessions on effective leadership, school board relations, academics, media relations, operations, finances, and labor relations. Other facets of the program included individual coaching and mentoring as well as hearing from current and past Council member superintendents, including Deputy Secretary of Education Cindy Marten.

Cohort members were provided with the opportunity to shadow successful urban school superintendents who provided them with advice, guidance, and feedback. Current superintendents also took time out to present to participants during sessions each month.

"By the end of this program, we wanted to provide these education administrators with a fundamental understanding of and passion for the work it takes to successfully lead a large urban school district," said Michael Hinojosa, the Council's Superintendent-in-Residence, who oversees the program. "Due to the intensive training they received, as well as the work of their mentors, for whom we are all grateful, these graduates are well-prepared to join the ranks of urban school superintendents and create a successful educational environment for the students they will serve."

"The purpose of this program is twofold," said Council Executive Director Ray Hart. "We want to help current senior-level education administrators hone their knowledge and leadership skills, and develop and train the next generation of urban school superintendents. I believe the program has accomplished both of these goals, and I look forward to its continued success."

Second Cohort Named

Ten education leaders from urban school districts have been chosen for the second cohort of the Council's program to train current and aspiring superintendents. The announcement was made at the Council's 67th Annual Fall Conference in San Diego.

This year's cohort is rich in diversity, with five men and four women, and six educators of color.

Participants were nominated by a current or past superintendent and then had to undergo a rigorous selection process.

"Being a part of this cohort pushes individuals out of their comfort zone and gives them opportunities to grow both professionally and personally," said Hinojosa. "We're already hearing of the great progress from the first cohort, so I can't wait to see how this program will propel each one of these exceptional individuals to new heights as they receive the mentorship, tools, and guidance they need to improve the nation's urban school systems."

The second cohort of the Institute begins their leadership journey in February and will participate in monthly sessions through October 2024.

The members of the cohort are:

- Rochelle Cox, Interim Superintendent, Minneapolis Public Schools
- Drew Echelson, Chief of Schools and Accountability, Boston Public Schools
- Karla Estrada, Deputy Superintendent, Los Angeles Unified School District
- Fateama Fulmore, Deputy Superintendent, NOLA Public Schools
- Jose Martinez, Chief of High Schools, Orange County Public Schools (FL)
- Dexter Moore, Jr., Chief of Staff, Oakland Unified School District
- Eric Rosser, Superintendent, Poughkeepsie City School District
- Andrew Strope, Deputy Superintendent, Indianapolis Public Schools
- Shannon Trejo, Deputy Commissioner of School Programs, Texas Education Agency
- Angela Whitelaw, Deputy Superintendent, Memphis-Shelby County Schools

To access bios and photos of the 2024 cohort of the Michael Casserly Urban Executive Leadership Institute, **click here.**