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Council of the Great City Schools



Urban School Superintendents: Characteristics, Tenure and Salary



Third Biennial Survey



Introduction & Survey Methodology

The Council of the Great City Schools surveyed its member cities in the summer of 2001 to determine the characteristics of superintendents in America's urban schools. This, the Council's third biennial report on urban superintendents, contains the results of that survey. Results from the 1997 and 1999 surveys are also provided as comparisons.

Survey forms were mailed and faxed to the board of education secretary and the communications/public relations manager in each of the member districts in July and again in August of 2001 to insure the highest response rate possible. Respondents were asked to provide

information on the gender, race/ethnicity, salary, benefits, and bonuses for their superintendent as of July 1, 2001. Surveys were received from 44 of the 56 member districts, for a response rate of 79 percent.

Council staff determined the race/ethnicity and gender of superintendents in the non responding districts and estimated salaries on the basis of previous information. These estimates are included in this report. All data presented in this publication are reported in summary form. Salaries for 1997 and 1999 have been adjusted for inflation and are presented in constant 2001 dollars.

Highlights

Demographics

(As of July 1, 2001)

- ◆ Some 48.2 percent of Great City School (GCS) superintendents were White, 37.5 were African American/Black and 14.3 percent were Hispanic/Latino in 2001. By contrast 42.1 percent of GCS superintendents were White, 42.1 percent were African American/Black and 14.0 percent were Hispanic/Latino in 1999.
- ◆ About 69.6 percent of GCS superintendents were men in 2001. Some 41.1 percent of all superintendents were White males; 19.6 percent were African American/Black males, and 8.9 percent were Hispanic/Latino males.
- ◆ Approximately 30.4 percent of GCS superintendents were women in 2001. This is nearly a 10 percentage point increase from 1999. Some 17.7 percent of all superintendents were African American/Black females, 7.1 percent were White, and 5.4 percent were Hispanic/Latina females.

Tenure

- ◆ The average tenure of a Great City Schools (GCS) superintendent increased from 2 1/3 years in 1999 to 2 1/2 years in 2001.*
- ◆ The majority (63.6%) of GCS superintendents have been in office between one and five years. This is unchanged from 1997 or 1999.

*Tenure was defined as the length of time current superintendents had been in office as of the survey date. Interim superintendents are included in calculations.



- ◆ The average tenure for a GCS male superintendent was just over 2 3/4 years in 2001; for females it was 2 1/12 years.
- ◆ Just over 14 percent of GCS superintendents had 5 or more years in their current positions in 2001. This is an increase from 9 percent in 1999

Salaries

- ◆ The average salary for GCS superintendents increased from \$165,144 (in constant 2001 dollars) in 1999 to \$177,011 in 2001, a real increase of 7.2 percent.
- ◆ The salary range for GCS superintendents was between \$113,000 and \$298,000 in 2001. The salary range was \$106,00 to \$245,000 in 1999.
- ◆ The average salary for a GCS superintendent with 5 or more years experience was \$184,612 in 2001; the average salary for a GCS superintendent with between 1 and 5 years was \$173,267; and the average salary for a GCS superintendent with 1 year or less was \$184,725.
- ◆ The average salary for a GCS superintendent in a district with less than 50,000 students was \$153,221 in 2001; in a district with between 50,000 and 100,000 students was \$176,372; in a district with between 100,000 and 200,000 students was \$198,850; and in a district with more than 200,000 students was \$213,351.
- ◆ The average salary for superintendents of school districts with 25,000 or more students nationally is estimated at \$152,817, compared with an estimate of \$118,811 for districts of all sizes.*

Benefits & Bonuses

- ◆ The range of annual bonuses or pay-for-performance provisions was between \$3,835 and \$49,500.
- ◆ Superintendent pay-for-performance bonuses ranged from 3.5 to 30 percent of base salary.
- ◆ Some 67 percent of GCS superintendents had benefits that included car or mileage allowances; 46 percent had financial bonuses; 68 percent had such "other" benefits as travel allowances, membership dues, moving expenses, and communication allowances; and 2 percent had a house or apartment allowance.
- ◆ The average benefit package for GCS superintendents was \$44,954 in 2001.



*Source: Educational Research Service. Estimated salary averages are 1999-00 figures expressed in 2001 dollars.



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Figure 1

Number of CGCS Superintendents by Race/Ethnicity and Gender:
July 1997, July 1999, and July 2001

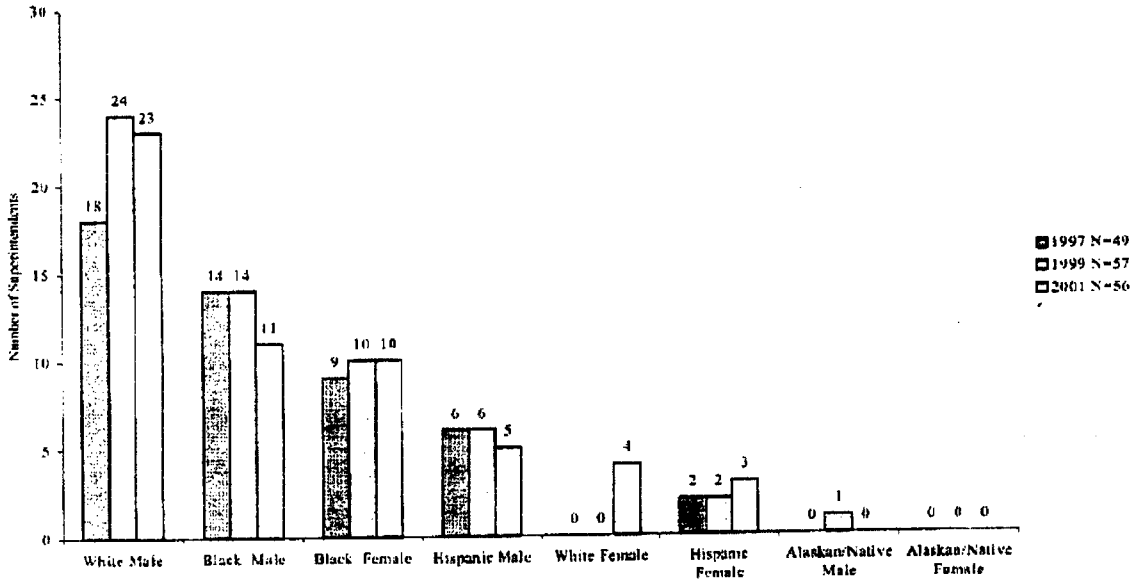


Figure 2

Percent of CGCS Superintendents by Race/Ethnicity and Gender:
July 1997, July 1999, and July 2001

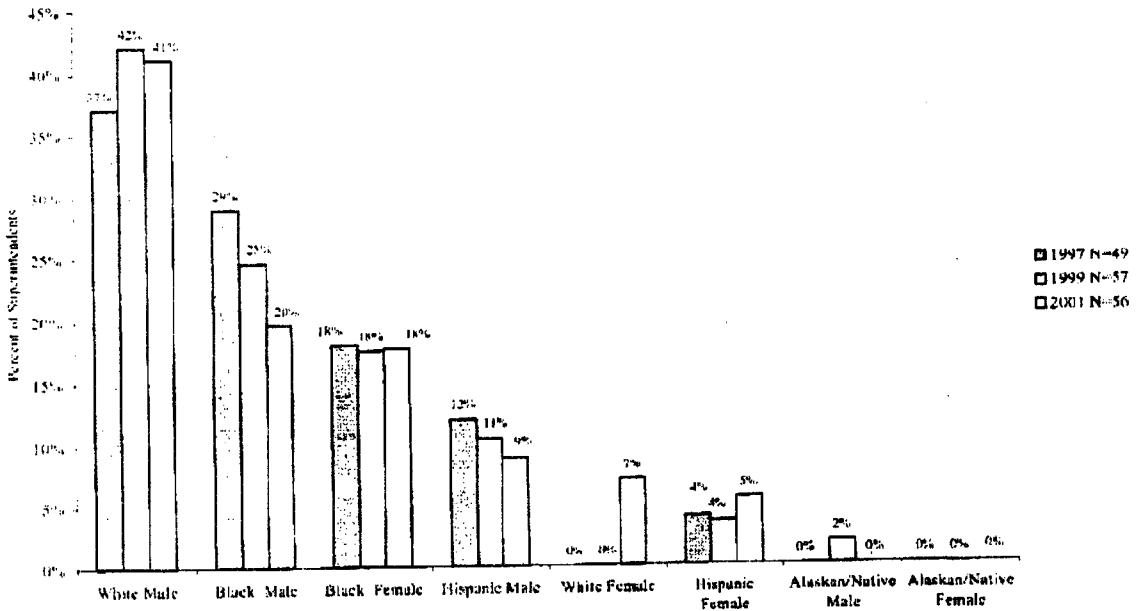




Figure 3

CGCS Superintendents by Tenure:
July 1997, July 1999, and July 2001

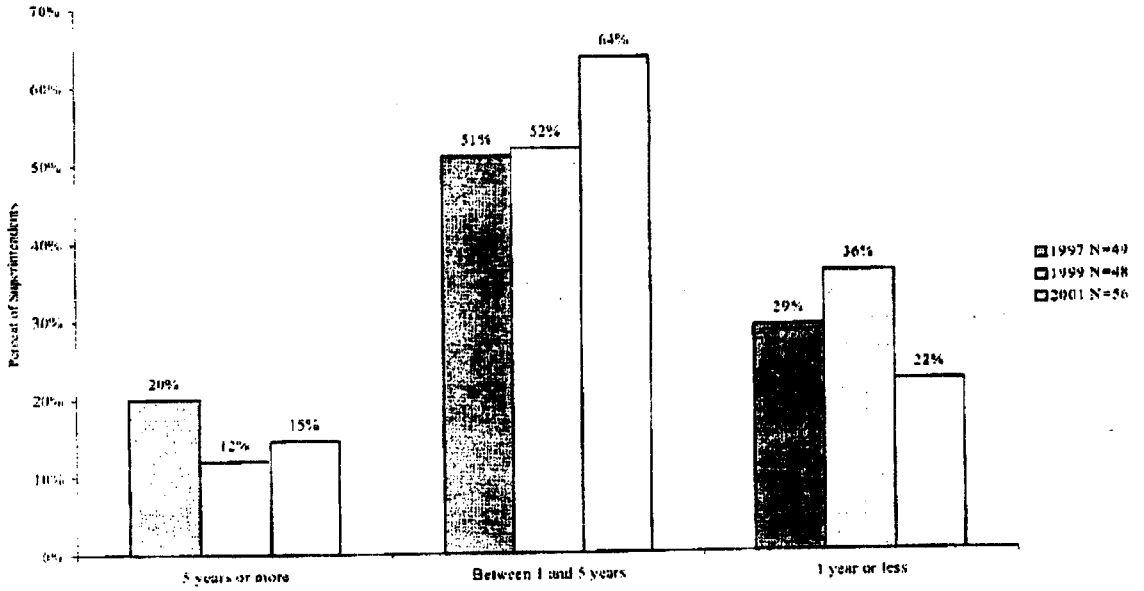


Figure 4

CGCS Superintendents Salaries by Tenure:
July 1997, July 1999, and July 2001

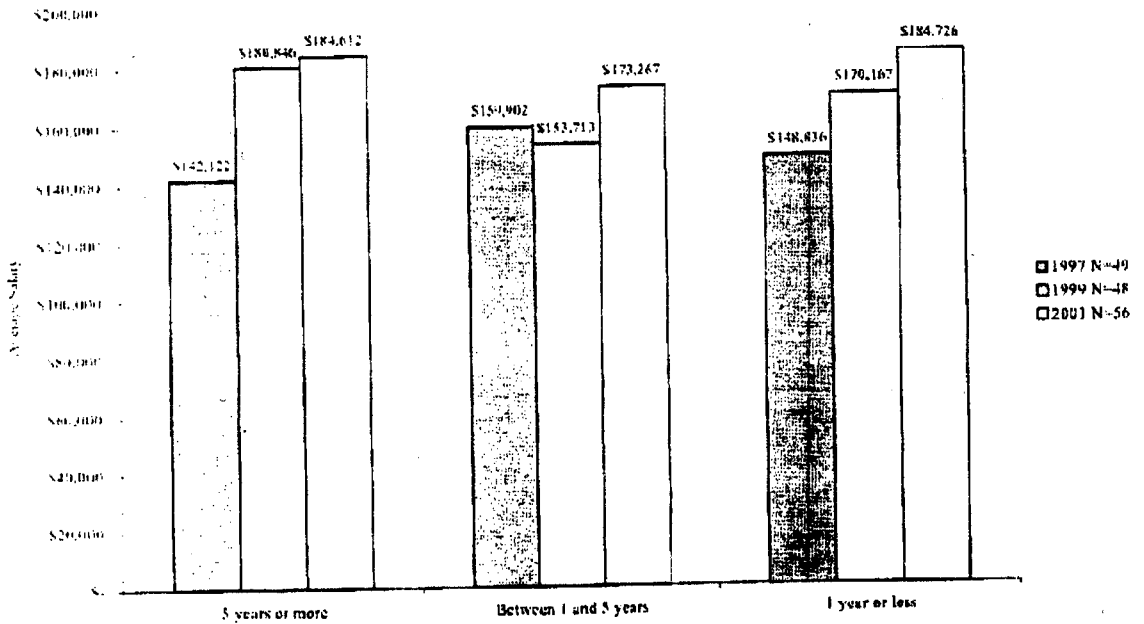




Figure 5

CGCS Superintendents Salaries by Enrollment:
July 1997, July 1999, and July 2001

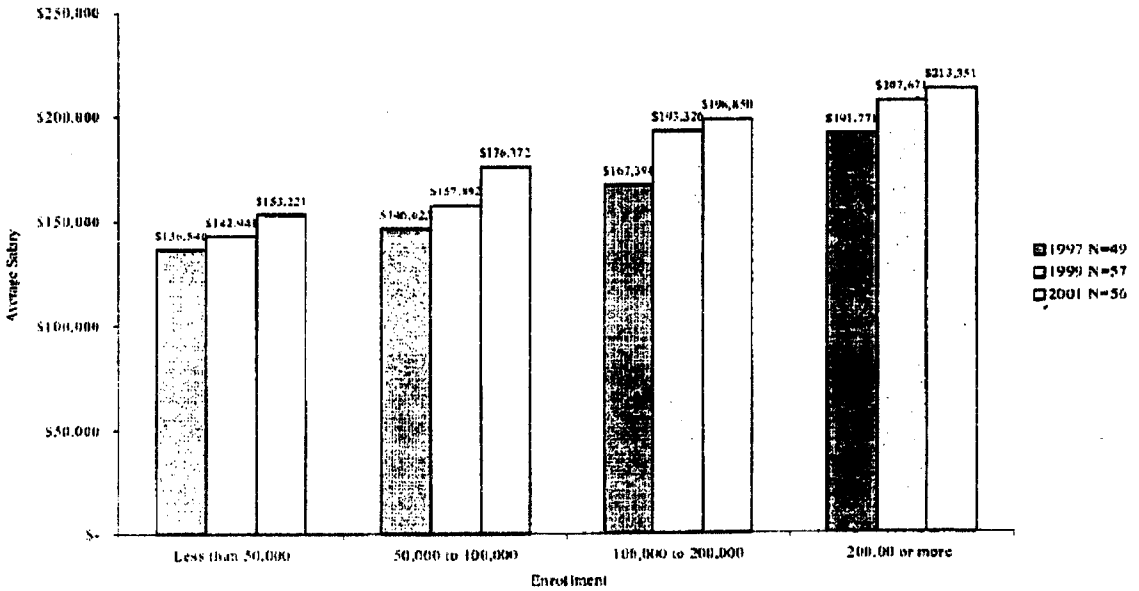


Figure 6

CGCS Superintendents by Salary Range:
July 1997, July 1999, and July 2001

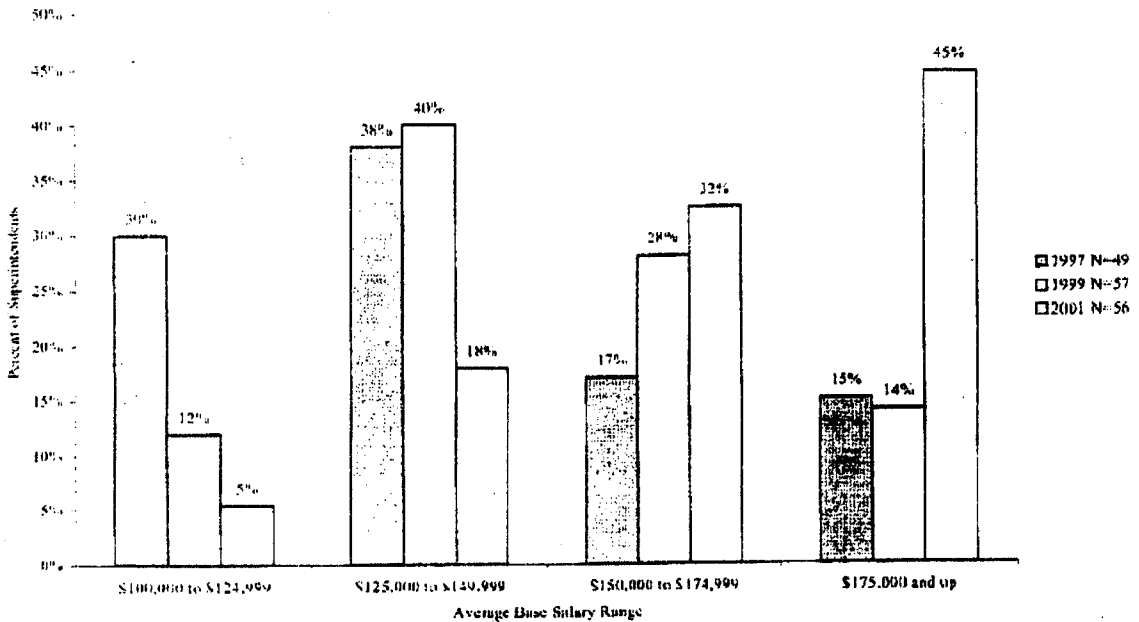




Figure 7

Ethnicity and Gender of CGCS Superintendents by Salary and Enrollment: July 2001

