STANDARDS & PROMISING PRACTICES FOR SCHOOLS EDUCATING BOYS OF COLOR
Coalition of Schools Educating Boys of Color is proud to present the latest version of the COSEBOC Standards. Through this version, COSEBOC continues its mission to provide innovative, research-based, real-world-tested tools and practices that enable boys and young men of color to prosper socially, emotionally, culturally, and academically. Founded in 2006, COSEBOC is well regarded for providing high quality professional services and programs.

In the era of high stakes testing and the Common Core, reaching expectations is important for all students. However for educators of boys and young men of color, COSEBOC believes that another set of Standards, the Uncommon Core, is also essential.

The COSEBOC Standards and Promising Practices for Schools Educating Boys of Color provides important exemplars and indicators for those invested in equity, as well as a culturally responsive complement to the Common Core State Standards. Armed with the Uncommon Core, you can attack the insidious impact of the Achievement and Opportunity Gaps that limit the potential of too many marginalized and vulnerable students. It will provide a
strong operational framework for the healthy transformation of classroom, school, and district environments necessary for successful learning outcomes, especially for boys and young men of color.

The framework for the original Standards was presented during our 2nd Annual Gathering of Leaders to 200 educators, community activists and policy makers. From their suggestions and constructive feedback, Dr. Edward Fergus and his team from the Metropolitan Center for Urban Education compiled and presented the COSEBOC Standards and Promising Practices.

In 2017, COSEBOC entered into partnership with William James College and representatives of their Graduate Psychology department. The fruit of this partnership is the new social and emotional thread that is woven through each of the seven core standards. We are extremely grateful to the faculty and students of William James College for their time, expertise and commitment to this work. Their ideas and recommendations illuminate the importance of social and emotional well-being to the affirmative development of boys and young men of color.

I also want to extend my thanks others in the COSEBOC network that contributed to bringing this 4th edition to fruition. We encourage you to use the Uncommon Core as a North Star to help your schools and districts to chart and navigate towards a destination of success.

Ron Walker
Executive Director
CORE AREA 1: SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

School leadership is the process of envisioning, developing and safeguarding the conditions necessary for ensuring that each and every student receives a high quality educational experience.

CATEGORIES:
1. Instructional Leadership
2. Regular Self-Assessment
3. Community Leadership
4. Visionary Leadership
5. School Leaders’ Self-Awareness
6. Leadership Qualifications

CORE AREA 2: PARENT/FAMILY/COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PARTNERSHIP

Parent/Family/Community Engagement Partnership is the external support system surrounding youth that operates to provide, protect, and nurture academic, social, emotional, moral, and physical development.

CATEGORIES:
1. Teacher-Family or School-Family Communication
2. Parent Involvement
3. Community Involvement
4. Parent Collaborations
5. Schools Provide Learning at Home
6. Schools Provide Decision-Making Opportunities

CORE AREA 3: SCHOOL ORGANIZATION

School Organization is the social and/or structural arrangement of an educational institution that includes (but may or may not be limited to) course schedule, leadership structure, staffing arrangements, etc.

CATEGORIES:
1. Governing Board
2. Core Mission/Vision Statements
3. Tracks that are not Academically Rigorous are Eliminated
4. High School Curricula Aligned with College Enrollment Requirements
5. Early Childhood Infrastructure
6. A Common Core Curriculum that Includes Requirements for Students to Complete Advanced Work in Mathematics, Science, and Literacy
7. Small Learning Communities (MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL ONLY)
CORE AREA 4: SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE

School Climate is the social atmosphere of a setting or learning environment in which students have different experiences, depending upon the protocols set up by the teachers and administrators.

CATEGORIES:
1. Physical Environment
2. Student Leadership & Voice
3. Inclusive Policies and Practices
4. School Culture Activities

CORE AREA 5: CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

Curriculum and Instruction is the academic content, scope and sequence, materials, and developmentally appropriate pedagogical strategies used by practitioners.

CATEGORIES:
1. Culturally Relevant Instruction
2. Multicultural Education
3. Gender Relevant Instruction
4. Student-Centered Instruction
5. Rigorous Curriculum and Instruction
6. Character Education

CORE AREA 6: ASSESSMENT

Assessment is the set of protocols used to ascertain the academic and behavioral level of youth.

CATEGORIES:
1. Standardized Assessment Preparation
2. Alternate or Authentic Assessment
3. Special Education Assessment and Process
4. Talented/Gifted, Honors/AP Program and Assessment (when applicable)

CORE AREA 7: SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL BEHAVIORAL SUPPORT

Social-Emotional Behavioral Support refers to the work of school counselors. A school counselor is an educator who works in elementary, middle, and high schools to provide academic, career, college readiness, and personal/social competencies to all students through advocacy, leadership, systemic change, and teaming and collaborating with other stakeholders as part of a comprehensive developmental school counseling program.

CATEGORIES:
1. Counseling Program
2. Social and Health Services in the Community
3. School Counselors’ Self-Awareness
## Core Area 1

School leadership is the process of envisioning, developing and safeguarding the conditions necessary for ensuring that each and every student receives a high quality, educational experience.

### School Leadership

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#### A Quality School and School Program Has:

1. **Instructional Leadership That Focuses On:**
   - Strengthening teaching and learning, and professional development
   - Aligning the approach to the developmental stage of the school
   - The four domains of teaching and learning: "Instruct, Inform, Intervene, Improve"
   - Placing educational concerns over management concerns
   - Placing an emphasis upon models of professional development that impact directly upon classroom practice (e.g., coaching models instead of one-shot professional development)
   - Progressive and restorative approaches to discipline and classroom management
   - Providing an instructional framework that facilitates effective and efficient instructional classroom practices
   - A systemic approach that addresses discipline and classroom management issues
   - Having the confidence and ability to deal with conflict effectively

2. **Regular Self-Assessment to Inform Systems Change Efforts:**
   - Engage in a systematic self-assessment of key areas and use data to develop a multi-year school-wide improvement plan in the following areas:
     - Social-emotional learning (self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making)
     - Multi-tiered systems of supports for academics and behavior
     - Building-based mental health providers (school psychologists, social workers)
     - Substance abuse/addiction prevention and intervention efforts (including internet addiction)
     - Trauma-sensitive classrooms
     - Culturally responsive classrooms
     - School connectedness
     - Family-school partnerships
     - Teaching and engaging in social justice efforts
     - Developing and/or fostering a safe and supportive school climate
     - Care for the whole child (full-service—if not in-house, then develop community partnerships with pediatricians, mental health providers, and pediatric dentists that accept state-mandated insurance)
   - Engage in advocacy efforts to implement policy on the above
   - School changes/intervention programs are more successful when maintained over an extended period of time; incorporate an interactive component, and utilize more than one strategy

Examples: leaders conduct quarterly discussions on shared vision and benchmarks of progress made.
### SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

#### SCHOOL QUALITY INDICATORS:

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#### 3. COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP MANIFESTED BY SCHOOL LEADERS:

- a. Signaling to others what is important and building confidence and capability in those they lead
- b. Having the confidence and ability to deal with conflict effectively, (Skill set)
- c. Establishing coherent communities within their schools as well as a sense of a responsible community beyond and around the school
- d. Recruiting and retaining a culturally diverse teaching staff; facilitating mentoring relationships for new teachers and staff

#### 4. VISIONARY LEADERSHIP DEMONSTRATED BY SCHOOL LEADERS:

- a. Taking a broad view of change (i.e. focusing on the big picture)
- b. Communicating a clear vision that includes, but is not limited to a broad view of change
- c. Placing emphasis upon forms of leadership that are people-oriented, transformational, and empowering
- d. Taking advantage of external opportunities to generate change and to encourage staff to innovate

#### 5. SCHOOL LEADERS’ SELF-AWARENESS THAT INCLUDES:

- a. Consciousness of their own cultural heritages and the ideals and values associated with those heritages
- b. Accepting and respecting cultural difference
- c. Culturally relevant practices
- d. Affirming the range of social and cultural identities faculty, staff, and students claim
- e. Awareness of potential biases toward other cultures
- f. Comfort with racial differences that may exist between them and others
- g. Understanding of institutional bias with respect to its treatment of women, people of color, immigrants and sexual minorities
- h. Specific knowledge about the student and community racial/ethnic and gender groups
- i. Development of self-care strategies for self and faculty

#### 6. LEADERSHIP QUALIFICATIONS BY SCHOOL LEADERS:

- a. For early childhood leaders—sufficient direct training, graduate work, and/or experience with early childhood education curriculum and implementation
- b. For elementary and middle school leaders—sufficient direct training, graduate work, and/or experience with elementary and middle school curriculum and implementation
- c. For high school leaders—sufficient direct training, graduate work, and/or experience with high school curriculum and implementation

#### 7. DATA-DRIVEN INSTRUCTIONAL MANAGEMENT:

- a. Conduct analysis of attendance, behavior, and achievement on a monthly basis with specific attention to disproportionate representation by groups (e.g., Free/Reduced Lunch status, English language learners, Special Education status, race/ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation)
- b. Conduct monthly data-driven meetings with leadership team to identify students likely to struggle
- c. For middle and high school leaders, conduct analysis of course failure and passing rates in 4–5 week intervals
- d. For early childhood and early elementary grades, conduct analysis of data specific to intervention services

Examples: publicly shared vision and goal statements; partnership statements between community organizations and school/district on shared initiatives
The original COSEBOC Standards document was produced by the generous support of the Open Society Foundations and the W.K.Kellogg Foundation.