



SCHOOL EFFICIENCY AND
QUALITY ADVISORY COUNCIL

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NEWS RELEASE
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School Advisory Council to Examine Financial Condition of County Districts, Use of Income Tax Funds

The School Efficiency and Quality Advisory Council, which was created to oversee the use of new voter-approved funding for Multnomah County public school districts, will meet on January 30 to review the financial condition of county school districts and begin hearing testimony from superintendents on how schools are using new resources from the temporary County income tax.

The meeting will take place on **Friday, January 30**, from **3-6 p.m.** in the **U.S. Bank Room of the Multnomah County Central Library**, which is located at **801 SW 10th** in downtown Portland. The meeting is open to the public and the media.

The 22-member council is charged with ensuring that revenues from the new, temporary Multnomah County income tax benefit students in the classroom and that the tax money is well spent. In addition, the council will monitor schools' progress in improving the educational performance of all students. The three-year County income tax and the advisory council were created by passage of Ballot Measure 26-48 last May.

At Friday's meeting, the Council will receive a briefing on the financial condition of county school districts by Multnomah County Auditor Suzanne Flynn and City of Portland Auditor Gary Blackmer. The Council also will begin hearing from school district representatives how schools are using resources from the voter-approved measure. Portland Public Schools Superintendent Jim Sherzinger and David Douglas School District Superintendent Barbara Rommel, are scheduled to brief the Council at Friday's meeting. Representatives from the County's other school districts will brief the Council in the coming weeks.

The council is co-chaired by Qwest Oregon President Judy Pepler, and Baruti Artharee, a regional director for Providence Health Systems and former chairman of the Urban League. Portland Mayor Vera Katz and Multnomah County Chair Diane Linn serve on the council. Other members include representatives of business, education, labor, school parents and taxpayers, as well as Multnomah County's different ethnic and geographical communities.

The school advisory council will review budgets and plans submitted by County school districts to improve academic success and operational efficiency. The council will review separate performance audits prepared by Multnomah County and City of Portland auditors and it will send a report of its own findings to every household in the County. In addition, the new advisory council will report its findings to the Portland City Council and the Board of County Commissioners.

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