



NEWS RELEASE
Nov. 12, 2003

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Members Announced for School Advisory Council to Oversee Use of County Tax Funds

Multnomah County Chair Diane Linn and Portland Mayor Vera Katz announced today the 23 members of the new School Efficiency and Quality Advisory Council, which was established by voter approval of Ballot Measure 26-48 last May to support Multnomah County public schools and services.

The Council is charged with ensuring that revenues from the new, temporary 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. Linn and Katz consider the committee to be a centerpiece of a promise to taxpayers that there will be accountability for this important investment in schools.

Qwest Oregon President Judy Peppler, and Baruti Artharee, a regional director for Providence Health Systems and former chairman of the Urban League, will serve as co-chairs of the new advisory council. The panel's other members represent business, education, labor, school parents and taxpayers, as well as Multnomah County's different ethnic and geographical communities. Linn and Katz also will serve on the Council.

"This Council is intended to provide credible outside verification that taxpayer money is being put to good use," Peppler said. "I look forward to working with this accomplished and representative group to ensure taxpayers' goals for the use of this money are met."

"I am looking forward to working with my colleagues on this panel and the County's school districts to help make sure we take advantage of this important investment our residents have made in our schools," said Artharee.

The local, three-year measure will generate an estimated \$89 million for public schools this year. School districts have agreed to use the funds to maintain or improve student-teacher ratios, maintain instructional days, and fund programs and services that prepare students for college and the workforce.

The school advisory council is planning to hold its first public meeting in December and will meet about four times a year. In addition to ensuring proper use of revenues from the local tax, 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.

(MORE)

School Efficiency and Quality Advisory Council

Co-Chairs

- **Baruti Artharee**, Regional Director/Diversity Initiatives, Providence Health Systems; former Chair, Urban League; African American Alliance
- **Judy Pepler**, President, Qwest Oregon; Chair Public Policy, Portland Business Alliance

Members

- **Richard Anderson**, CPA, Accounting and Tax, Center Oak Properties
- **Damian Barnett**, Native American Chamber of Commerce, Merchants Bank
- **Ed Bettencourt**, retired, former Portland Schools Director of Student Achievement, principal
- **Steven Cheung**, Marshall High School junior, Superintendent's Student Advisory Council
- **Dr. Phyllis Edmundsen**, Dean of Education, Portland State University
- **Bertha Ferran**, mortgage consultant, Hispanic Metro Chamber, United Way
- **Nancy Hamilton**, co-founder, Help Out Public Education (HOPE)
- **Vera Katz**, Mayor, City of Portland
- **David Knowles**, Project Manager, Shiels, Oblatz and Johnsen
- **Diane Linn**, Chair and Chief Executive Officer of Multnomah County
- **JS May**, President, Portland Schools Found, Metropolitan Group
- **Nathan Nguyen**, Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon
- **Luis Ornelas**, Portland Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, consultant, Engineering and Project Development
- **Dr. Lee Pelton**, President, Willamette University
- **Carol Samuels**, Tax Supervising & Conservation Commission, Seattle-Northwest Securities
- **Bill Scott**, Chair, Leaders Roundtable, General Manager, Flexcar Oregon
- **David Shields**, Gresham City Council, President, Gresham Chamber of Commerce
- **Ken Thrasher**, former president of Fred Meyer, Chair, Quality Education Commission (retired)
- **Courtney Vanderstek**, Director for Teaching and Learning, Oregon Education Association
- **Coni Westmoreland**, Multnomah Youth Commission, David Douglas High School junior
- **Duncan Wyse**, President, Oregon Business Council