

School Efficiency and Quality Advisory Council

December 8, 2003

School Efficiency and Quality Advisory Council: will ensure that the revenues provided by the Multnomah County Income Tax benefit students in the classroom and that the new local tax dollars are well spent.

The Council will include representatives of parents, educators, taxpayers, business leaders, union leaders, and governmental leaders, including the Mayor of Portland and the Multnomah County Chair. The Multnomah County Chair and Mayor of Portland will appoint it, in consultation with the City Council and Multnomah County Board of County Commissioners. The appointment process will be broadly circulated.

Role of the Council: The Advisory Council has dual roles, to ensure accountability for the use of revenues and to communicate their findings to taxpayers. Specifically, the Advisory Council will:

- Review plans and budgets for expenditures to ensure that they are consistent with the requirements of the Multnomah County Income Tax (see below).
- Review plans and results for improving academic success and operational efficiencies to ensure that the dollars are well spent.
- Work with City and County auditors to define the scope of specific performance audits and review the findings of those audits.
- Report at least annually to the City Council and County Commission and make recommendations about continued funding.
- Ensure that information about the use of the revenues is reported to every household in Multnomah County.

Uses of the Multnomah County Income Tax: As provided for in City and County Resolutions establishing the Council, revenues for Multnomah County schools generated from these tax adjustments will only be used as follows:

- To promote the current or improved student-teacher ratios.
- To promote a full school year.
- To fund programs designed to achieve improvements in academic success of all students.
- To fund key student support programs and services that provide a quality school experience and retain students in school.
- To fund performance audits.
- To communicate with all citizens regarding achievement and accountable use of these tax dollars

Council Reports: The Council will make recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners and the City Council each year about the allocation of resources, through joint briefings on at least an annual basis or more frequently as necessary. They will

advise the governing bodies about whether improvements in academic outcomes and operational efficiencies are being achieved. If expectations are not being met, the Board of County Commissioners and City Council can withhold allocations, alter allocations or develop specific conditions for districts to receive resources.

The Council will also develop informational materials about their findings and communicate these findings to each individual household in Multnomah County. They may also devise additional, cost-effective communication methods.

Performance Audits: The County will allocate proceeds of the income tax to fund performance audits of the school districts within the County to be conducted jointly by the City Auditor and the County Auditor in order to achieve cost-savings through more efficient use of resources, opportunities to improve school effectiveness, and capacity-building for increased accountability. The City and the County auditors will work with all the districts in the appropriate jurisdictions including the School Efficiency and Quality Advisory Council to identify possible performance audit areas.

In addition, the auditors will provide an opportunity for the district(s) management to respond to the audit report(s) and deliver the audits to the individual Boards of Educations, as well as the Advisory Council. The Advisory Council will also review District responses as they consider whether progress in operational efficiencies and performance is being achieved.

For more information contact Ed Sheets, consultant to the Council, at 503-222-1700.