



# News Release

From Seattle Public Schools

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## **Superintendent Names Members of Community Advisory Committee on Investing for Educational Excellence**

Superintendent Raj Manhas has appointed fourteen highly qualified and accomplished individuals to form the **Superintendent's Community Advisory Committee on Investing for Educational Excellence**. Collectively, committee members bring outstanding expertise in finance, budget management and leadership experience in large organizations; skill in marketing and communication; and experience in K-12 academic issues. All members have a keen interest in and commitment to the K-12 public education system and the students of Seattle. "I am confident that this group will develop practical recommendations that will help ensure we reach our goals, and that we align our resources with our academic agenda to create a sustainable system where every child will succeed," said Manhas.

Community response to the request for applications and nominations for the Superintendent's Advisory Committee was outstanding. Nearly 250 individuals applied or were nominated to serve. Among the applicants were current or former chief executive and chief financial officers; university professors; and parents who have provided leadership in PTSA's and on site councils. "I am extremely grateful for the outpouring of interest and desire to serve our students," said Manhas. "The large number of highly-qualified applicants made the selection processes a pleasure. At the same time, it was a challenge to choose from among the outstanding field of candidates. I hope that everyone who applied will consider working with us in other capacities, and I plan to find meaningful and effective ways to make that happen."

The overall charge of the committee is to provide recommendations on the development and implementation of a short and long-term financial plan/strategy to advance academic achievement and make every school a quality school. The Superintendent has asked the committee to assess the District's current and long-term fiscal condition; identify ways to realign the District's budget to better support the academic vision; identify options to achieve long-term fiscal stability, including structural changes as well as ways to increase revenue; and to recommend strategies for communicating to and receiving input from the public on these topics.

Funding to support the committee effort will come from donations. Bios of committee members are attached. Committee co-chairs will establish a schedule for meetings, all of which will be open to the public. The group is expected to provide a set of recommendations by December 15.

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**Seattle Public Schools**  
**Superintendent's Advisory Committee on Investing in Educational Excellence**

**CO-CHAIR Trish Millines Dziko**

**Trish Millines Dziko is Co-founder and Executive Director of Technology Access Foundation**, an organization that provides opportunities for students of color in grades K-12 to receive technology, math literacy, critical thinking, problem solving and information synthesis skills. Formerly Millines Dziko had a successful career in the technology industry, including senior management roles with Microsoft. She is a member of several boards of directors, including the YWCA and Washington Digital Learning Commons. Millines Dziko is the parent of four young children, three of whom will attend a Seattle elementary school this fall.

**CO-CHAIR John Warner**

**John Warner retired from The Boeing Company after 34 years in a variety of leadership roles, most recently as Senior Vice President and Chief Administrative Officer.** During his career Warner was responsible for multi-billion dollar budgets and thousands of employees. He has demonstrated outstanding commitment to public education over the past 15 years, leading Boeing's multiple projects to support schools; serving on the Alliance for Education board; and as Past President of Partnership for Learning. He is the chairman of the board of trustees of Western Washington University, a board member of Islandwood, and was the past chairman of the board of the Pacific Science Center. Warner is the parent of two Seattle Public Schools graduates and grandparent to five children, two of whom attend school in Seattle.

**Monte Bridges is Superintendent of the Puget Sound Educational Service District (PSESD).** He directs an array of services that touch 338,000 students across 35 school districts and 200 private schools. Formerly he served as Superintendent of Vashon Island School District and in a variety of capacities with Edmonds School District. Bridges is an adjunct faculty member at Seattle Pacific University and has been a clinical instructor in the Department of Speech and Hearing Sciences at the University of Washington for many years. He is past chair of the Washington State Dollars for Scholars Board, and is a member of the Washington State Arts Commission.

**Sherry Carr is a Business Leader on the 787 program at The Boeing Company.** Her experience includes 18 years in finance/cost management roles, and managing large budgets during times of economic downturn. Carr has been a Parent-Teacher-Student-Association (PTSA) leader for six years, and has been elected as Seattle Council PTSA President for 2005-2006. During two years at the Seattle Council level, Carr assisted several school PTSA's to resolve a variety of issues. She is the parent of two Seattle Public Schools students – one elementary age and one at middle school, both of whom volunteer along with her at The Special Olympics and Seattle Children's Theatre.

**Doreen Cato is Executive Director at First Place**, a nonprofit agency focused on assisting families in transition and providing education and social service programs for children in grades K-5. Formerly she has been a public school educator, director of development at United Way of King County, and an employee of Washington Mutual Bank. Cato has more than 25 years of extensive community volunteer experience focused on human services, homelessness, education, and social justice issues. Currently she is Chair of the Minority Executive Director's Coalition and Chair of King County Housing Authority Board of Commissioners. Cato has two children.

**Peter Davis is President and CEO of Gaco Western**, a \$25 million business that manufactures products for waterproofing and insulation. Davis has more than 10 years involvement as a parent leader in Seattle elementary and middle schools, chaired the district-level I-728 committee for four years, and served on the district's Budget Advisory Team. Davis is also President of the Seattle Theatre Group Board of Directors and Chair elect of the Group Health Foundation. He is the parent of two Seattle Public Schools students, one at middle school and one at high school.

**Frank Greer is Founder and President of GMMB**, a public affairs firm that is a national leader in communicating about pressing issues such as health care and health policy, safety, the environment, education, and many others. Greer has more than thirty years experience in communications and advertising, serving clients that include major foundations, public interest groups, labor organizations, corporations and successful candidates for Congress, Governor, Senate and the Presidency. Greer also has also been active in public school reform efforts for more than 20 years, and is a Seattle Public Schools parent.

**Frederick C. Kiga is Director, Corporate and Government Relations, Russell Investment Group**, a global leader in multi-investing that manages more than \$131 billion in assets and which advises clients on an additional \$2.3 trillion. While serving as Chief of Staff to former Governor Gary Locke, he implemented an innovative "Priorities of Government" budget process to address a \$2.5 billion deficit without a tax increase. He also served as Director of Revenue for the State of Washington, and has experience in banking and management consulting. Kiga is a Regent of the University of Washington and also serves on a number of advisory boards including Capitol Hill Housing Improvement Program and the Association of Washington Business. He is a parent and a graduate of Garfield High School.

**Joann Kink-Mertens** retired in 2004 from the Washington Education Association, where she held the role of Compensation/Finance Field Representative. She has devoted over twenty years to the areas of school finance, school district budget analysis and education employee compensation. Kink-Mertens was a member of Seattle Public Schools' Fiscal Integrity Committee, a group of citizen experts that was appointed by the School Board to help guide implementation of the independent Moss Adams Financial Operations and Information Systems Audit completed in April 2003. Kink-Mertens also served as board member and officer of the National State Education Research Staff Association.

**Doris Koo is Senior Vice President and Western Region Director of The Enterprise Foundation**, an organization that helps low income families with their struggle out of poverty by providing decent homes, access to steady employment, quality child care and safer streets. Formerly, she served as Executive Director of Asian Americans for Equality, based in New York; and also as Director of Development and Deputy Executive Director for the Seattle Housing Authority. Koo is experienced in public agency financing, budgeting, and working with diverse constituencies. Both of her children are graduates of Seattle Public Schools.

**Andrew Kwatinetz launched a career as a writer in 2004.** Previously, he spent 15 years as a senior level manager at Microsoft where he was a key leader in the development of Microsoft Office. Kwatinetz has extensive experience leading teams and managing large budgets. In April 2005 Kwatinetz co-founded "Communities for Public Education" (CPE). CPE's goal is to work with parents and communities throughout the city to make sure all schools effectively serve all children. Kwatinetz is the father of two Seattle Public Schools elementary students and has been actively involved in their school as a parent leader.

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**Marguerite Roza serves as a Research Assistant Professor at the Daniel J. Evans School of Public Affairs at the University of Washington.** Roza's research focus is on quantitative policy analysis, particularly in the area of education finance. Much of her research is focused on ways to ensure that data is used effectively to close the achievement gap, and that district spending is strategically targeted to support better and more equitable learning and teaching. Roza has also consulted on these topics to school districts and organizations across the nation.

**Mary Jean Ryan is Director of the Office of Policy & Management for the City of Seattle.** She leads many of the city's high-profile policy and project efforts such as Northgate redevelopment and the Mayor's Children and Youth Strategy, and played a key role in shaping the 2004 Families and Education Levy. Ryan created and directed the City's Economic Development Department during the Rice administration; served in Washington, D.C. in the Small Business Administration during the Clinton Administration; and previously directed the Evergreen Community Development Association. Ryan has a high-school age child who attends school in Seattle. She also coaches girls soccer and basketball.

**Venus Velázquez is a Public Affairs Consultant with almost 15 years of experience in strategic communications and community relations.** She specializes in building strategic alliances, community-based outreach campaigns and governmental relations. Her past and current clients include the Seattle Urban League, CASA Latina, The Nature Conservancy, The Audubon Society, Muckleshoot Indian Tribe and the United Indians of All Tribes Foundation. For almost five years, Velázquez worked for Pyramid Communications, a nationally recognized and award winning public affairs firm. Before joining Pyramid, she served as a project manager for the City of Seattle's Neighborhood Planning Office. Velázquez is a former member of the board of Casa Latina and former President of the Washington State Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. She is also the parent of two bilingual pre-school aged children.

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### **Staff Support**

It is recognized that a great deal of staff support will be needed to ensure that the committee has quick and easy access to the information and data needed to successfully complete its charge. To ensure this work is effectively coordinated, a **Staff Executive Director, Sara Morris**, has been appointed. This temporary role will be funded by donations. Morris is formerly of TechNet Northwest, where she launched, developed and managed all of TechNet's operations in Washington, Oregon and Idaho. TechNet represents numerous technology companies in the Pacific Northwest in policy and political matters at the federal level. Prior to joining TechNet, Morris was Group Marketing Manager at Amazon.com. She also served as a communications aide in the Clinton White House and directed consumer insight efforts and brand development strategies as a senior researcher and planner at Chicago-based advertising agency Euro RSCG Tatham.

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