

## **United Way Executive Director Doreen Cato Appointed to Charter School Commission**

### **Local News**

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OLYMPIA, Wash. - Governor Jay Inslee, Lieutenant Governor Brad Owen and House Speaker Frank Chopp announced their appointments today to the state's new Charter School Commission. Last November, voters approved [Initiative 1240](#) to establish charter schools in Washington state. The initiative also called for the creation of a new, nine-member commission to manage and oversee the charter school system. The offices of the Governor, Lieutenant Governor and House Speaker are designated as appointing authorities. Each worked to ensure that their selections reflect the political, geographic and socio-economic diversity of the State and have expertise and experience relevant to overseeing the charter school system. Inslee's appointments are Doreen Cato from Ocean Shores, Chris Martin from Spokane and Steve Sundquist from Seattle. "Creating a new system for charter schools is a heavy lift, and maintaining a high level of accountability and transparency is key," Inslee said. "These are people who understand what our students need to succeed, and how to manage people and resources to meet the needs of a diverse student population." Cato is the executive director and chief professional officer of the United Way of Grays Harbor and former executive director of First Place, a kindergarten through sixth grade nonprofit school for at-risk children and families.

Martin is the executive director of Prodigy Northwest, an organization that develops leadership and academic programs for gifted youth. Martin also serves on the Spokane School District's STEM Design and Leadership Team. Sundquist, a member of the Our Schools Coalition, served several years on the Seattle School Board. Owen's appointments are Kevin Jacka of Springdale, Cindi Williams of Bellevue and Larry Wright of Sammamish. Jacka has been the superintendent of the Mary Walker School District in northeast Washington since 2005. He led a 10-district consortium dedicated to educational reform and served as the lead superintendent of the Rural Alliance, an organization involving a host of education partners to promote college/career readiness and college transition. Williams has held a number of senior-level policy and communications positions in education including with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the U.S. Secretary of Education and the White House. Currently an executive with an education policy firm, Williams also serves on several nonprofit boards and is an advocate for children with special needs. Wright has an extensive background with youth-focused organizations at the state and national level. Currently managing director of the Bellevue Arts Museum, Wright previously led the National Mentoring Partnership in Washington, D.C., and was executive director of Washington State Mentors and marketing director of the College Success Foundation. He has served as an adjunct professor at Seattle University. "We are fortunate to have had an outstanding mix of applicants to serve as pioneer members," said Owen. "We are confident that the people we've selected have the background and expertise to make some of the tough decisions necessary to establish academic excellence in these new schools in the months and years ahead." Chopp's appointments are Trish Millines Dziko of Vashon, Dr. Margrit McGuire of Seattle and Dave Quall from Mount Vernon. Dziko is the founder and CEO of the Technology Access Foundation, a nonprofit organization that gets students of color engaged in science, technology, engineering, and

math by partnering with education, business and community leaders. She is the co-chair of the Committee for Excellence in the Seattle School District. McGuire is the director of teacher education at Seattle University and a specialist in curriculum development and social studies education. She authors an integrated social studies program, Storypath, for elementary and middle school grades and has introduced a new preschool program, Pre-K Storypath. Quall is a former Democratic state representative who served as chair of the House Education Committee for eight years. He was an educator in public schools for 38 years, and has a B.A. in education and an M.A. in education guidance/counseling from Seattle Pacific University. Quall is retired and lives in Mount Vernon.

“All three of our appointees have a strong history of supporting students and education in both the public and private sectors,” said Chopp. “They offer a depth of experience and diversity we need to make sure every child in the state gets the opportunity to succeed.” The appointments are effective today. The standard term on the commission will be four years, though the length of the initial appointments will be staggered with the longest lasting three years. No commission member may serve more than two consecutive terms.