



## **Diane M. Linn, Multnomah County Chair**

### **NEWS RELEASE**

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### **Chair Linn, Mayor Katz Brief County School Districts on New Funds, Oversight Panel**

Multnomah County Chair Diane Linn and Portland Mayor Vera Katz met this morning with representatives of all Multnomah County public school districts to brief them on developments surrounding the new County personal income tax to support schools and services.

“We are so glad that our community can begin the school year with the assurance of a full school year, reasonable class sizes and rigorous academic programming,” Chair Linn said during the meeting held at the Multnomah Educational Service District.

The County income tax was created when voters approved Ballot Measure 26-48 last May. The tax is expected to raise \$89 million for public schools this year. The money allowed County schools to avoid teacher layoffs, keep down class size and meet other classroom needs that would have been cut this year without the additional local support.

During the meeting, Chair Linn, Mayor Katz and school officials agreed on the importance of being accountable to the public for how money raised by the new tax is spent. The ballot measure mandates regular audits and creates a School Efficiency and Quality Advisory Council to monitor money going to the schools.

“Ultimately, this collaboration is about assuring our citizens that we are being good stewards of the gift they have given our children,” said Mayor Katz.

Linn reiterated the County’s plans to refund a portion of the local tax if the state revenue plan and income tax surcharge is enacted and provides more money for Multnomah County schools. The County estimates it could refund about 25 percent of the local tax if that occurs.

In addition, Linn and Multnomah County staff briefed school officials on implementation of the new tax and efforts to help the public prepare for the tax and encourage employers to offer payroll withholding. The County also updated school officials on efforts to assist students and their families who are most in need through the School-Age Policy Framework.

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