THE NEXT 20 YEARS:

FOSTERING EXCELLENCE IN OUR PUBLIC SCHOOLS

ALLIANCE for EDUCATION
As the daughter of public school teachers, a product of public school, and now a parent to three children in Seattle Public Schools, my belief in public education as the cornerstone of democracy is total. I am inspired by the thoughts and contributions on the pages that follow — and grateful to be part of a community so deeply committed to public education.

Two decades ago, Seattle’s civic leaders came together to found the Alliance for Education. Its mission: to promote excellence in our city’s public schools.

That flame remains more alive than ever today.

Back in 1995, civic leaders sought a means of better coordinating community support for school and district initiatives. Superintendent John Stanford sought the credibility of an independent charitable organization to bolster the district’s profile in the community.

Since that time, the Alliance has worked hand in hand with local businesses, foundations, individuals and the district, generating over $155 million to support student needs. This community’s generosity is staggering, and the Alliance has been proud to act as an independent guardian of these funds on behalf of student success.

From impactful literacy initiatives like “Every Child a Reader,” to the powerful collective advocacy of the Our Schools Coalition, to the nationally recognized Seattle Teacher Residency, the Alliance has focused on enhancing academic opportunities for all students, particularly our most economically disadvantaged.

The work of school improvement is constant. Today we ask you to join us as we look towards our “next twenty.” As a city, we are wrestling with big questions over how to manage our region’s explosive economic growth in a manner that benefits the many, not just the few. At the Alliance, we strongly believe the best antidote to economic disparity is a strong public education infrastructure. As we shape our civic future, we must ask ourselves: What role will our public school systems play? What do we expect from our schools? What do we expect from our school leaders? And what do we expect from ourselves?

These questions will guide us as we enter our next decade. Good answers will require two things — YOU (the participation of the whole community) and courage (a willingness to confront uncomfortable topics “without fear or favor.”) As a community invested in equality and opportunity for all, we should do no less.

Sara Morris
President & CEO
Alliance for Education
MEET OUR CONTRIBUTORS

ELIZABETH “BETSY” ARONS
Chief Executive Officer, Urban Schools Capital Academy

HOWARD BEHAR
Starbucks Coffee, President Starbucks International (Retired)

FRANK BLETHEN
Publisher and Chief Executive Officer, The Seattle Times

JON BRIDGE
Co-CEO, Ben Bridge Jeweler, Inc.

MARTHA CHOE
Civic Leader

LEE HARTWELL
Former President and Director, Fred Hutchison Cancer Research Center, Nobel Laureate

ANISSA LISTAK
Executive Director and Founder, National Center for Teacher Residencies

JIM MORRIS
Principal, J2 Ventures

SENATOR PATTY MURRAY
United States Senator, Washington

ERIN OKUNO
Executive Director, Southeast Seattle Education Coalition

ESTELA ORTEGA
Executive Director, El Centro de la Raza

NORMAN RICE
Seattle Mayor 1989-1997

EVELYNE ROZNER
Retired Consultant

JUDY RUNSTAD
Of Counsel, Foster Pepper PLLC

JON SCHOLES
President & CEO, Downtown Seattle Association

STEVE SUNDQUIST
Former Seattle School Board President

MICHAEL TAMAYO
4/5 Teacher, Leschi Elementary

ED TAYLOR
Dean and Vice Provost of Undergraduate Academic Affairs, University of Washington

LYON TERRY
National Board Certified Teacher, 2015 Washington State Teacher of the Year, 4th Grade Teacher, Lawton Elementary

LYNNE VARNER
Associate Vice President for Advancement Relations and Communications Strategies, Washington State University

JENNIFER VRANEK
Founding Partner, Education First

DR. JILL WAKEFIELD
Chancellor, Seattle Colleges

JOHN WARNER
Chief Administrative Officer, Boeing (Retired)

JEN WICKENS
Chief Regional Officer, Summit Public Schools
WHY IS PUBLIC EDUCATION IMPORTANT TO YOU?

LYNNE VARNER
Growing up, education was my way out of no way. It was the route I took across racial and socio-economic barriers that could have consigned me to a life of crippling limitations. I am a first-generation college graduate whose upward trajectory began in the classroom.

JENNIFER VRANEK
Public education lifted my family out of poverty – and it’s what will lift the next generation of Americans to the middle class. Nothing in our society is more important than giving each and every child an outstanding pK-12 education and the option to go to and succeed in college.

HOWARD BEHAR
I am a product of public education, from grade school through college. Public education is the primary access point most of us have had to create our lives. The success or failure of our institutions of public education will determine how our community and our country fare.

ESTELA ORTEGA
Public education is a right rather than a privilege for all people in our society. Through public education, we actualize democracy.

LYON TERRY
Public education is the great American equalizer that allows everyone a foot in the door of prosperity. Public education has the power to change society for better.

ERIN OKUNO
Public education has the ability to change lives. It roots our community in what is mutually good and important.

ED TAYLOR
Public education holds the promise that one’s birthright will not predetermine their fate in our world. Put succinctly by Dr. Martin Luther King: “The arc of the moral universe is long but it bends toward justice.” The act of bending the arc is the work of public education.

JON BRIDGE
The unique nature of education for all in our country has the potential to prepare our children for success on an equal playing field. That is the hope for universal public education which all can (and should) participate in.

JOHN WARNER
Public education is the root of success, or failure, of a society. Our citizens who get an excellent education prosper and enhance life for all. Those who do not become a burden to themselves and the community, by and large. I like what John Adams said in 1786: “A memorable change must be made in the system of education and knowledge must become so general as to raise the lower ranks of society nearer to the higher.”
PATTY MURRAY
The idea of a strong public education is an essential part of the fabric of our nation. When all students have the chance to learn, we strengthen our future workforce, our country grows stronger, and we empower the next generation of Americans to lead the world. Public education can also be a ticket to the middle class, and improving it is an important part of what it means to grow our economy from the middle out, not the top down.

FRANK BLETHEN
Quality, accessible, egalitarian public education is the very foundation of a sustainable democracy and informed self-government. The magic of American democracy is that our “elite” founders recognized there must be broad based citizen participation if a new form of inclusive democracy were to survive. No governing system will survive without inclusion, opportunity and hope, which can only come through a public education system.

JUDY RUNSTAD
Public education should be our number one priority. It has been the foundation of this country’s success, and unless we focus on the current challenges to our public education system, we will not be competitive in today’s world.
WHAT’S THE GREATEST SUCCESS
SEATTLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS HAS
ACHIEVED OVER THE LAST 20 YEARS?

BETSY ARONS
SPS has taken its achievement work very seriously with the Data Scorecard to measure multiple objectives. The most courageous work a district can do is to face student achievement reality and to focus the entire district on the gaps in learning. I would not call it a “success” yet, but measuring every aspect of student learning is the key to improvement, as what gets measured gets done.

JON SCHOLES
Moving to a neighborhood attendance area model has had a positive impact on our community, as has the district’s support of option schools, strong AP programs, and K-8 STEM schools.

STEVE SUNDQUIST
I believe there are two noteworthy successes in the past twenty years. First, the district’s new student assignment plan, largely returning to neighborhood schools supported by regional specialty services. This model creates easier opportunities for families and neighborhoods to engage with and support their schools. Second, a comprehensive annual measurement system has been implemented to track the progress in outcomes on key measures for each of our schools and for the system as a whole. Thoughtful outcome measurement is critical to future progress.

LYON TERRY
Seattle is doing an excellent job of harnessing the power of teacher leadership through programs like the Seattle Teacher Residency, The Career Ladder Program and professional development provided by teachers for teachers in places like science and literacy. Teachers are making the difference and will always continue to do so.

MARTHA CHOE
We’ve seen courageous, innovative leaders from the school district and Seattle Education Association collaborate to create a common vision and roadmap - that alignment made real progress happen. Parents, teachers, administrators, policy makers and the community all have valuable perspectives that must be respected and considered, but at the end of the day, our kids need to be at the center of all the talk and action.

ANISSA LISTAK
The Seattle Teacher Residency (STR) is one of the Seattle Public Schools’ greatest successes. When a school district commits to growing teachers in direct response to the needs of its students, it has reached an elevated and sophisticated position in the U.S. education and teacher preparation reform community. Consistently in urban districts, children lack access to teachers who understand their needs and how to accelerate their learning and development. The STR – under the Alliance for Education’s remarkable leadership and guidance – solves for this challenge by developing cutting edge, day-one ready teachers to meet the needs of SPS.
WHAT NEEDS TO HAPPEN FOR SEATTLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS TO BECOME A MODEL URBAN SCHOOL SYSTEM OVER THE NEXT 20 YEARS?

JON SCHOLES
SPS will need to align capacity planning with the city’s growth and comprehensive plan goals. Seattle’s explosive growth and economic vibrancy is a good problem to have, and can be managed well by multiple civic entities coming together and creating more value for the community.

MICHAEL TAMAYO
Closing the academic achievement gap is paramount for any large urban school district to be successful. To do that, SPS must continue to recruit and retain top tier teachers to the district. The Seattle Teacher Residency is a great start to cultivate these types of teachers, but as long as other districts’ compensation packages are better than SPS, it will be difficult. Another area for SPS to become a model district is implementing a quality district-wide K-12 computer science curriculum. Many schools have individual teachers who are taking on this challenge; SPS needs to make this a required curriculum from elementary all that way to high school levels.

BETSY ARONS
SPS will need to make some difficult decisions around focusing all their efforts towards student outcomes. Currently, as is the case in many school districts, decisions are made that benefit the adults in the system but are not necessarily the right actions that benefit students. It will take bravery on the part of leaders to ensure that each child has an effective adult in every position in the school system, especially in each classroom. A rigorous curriculum with high standards for every child will also be needed to ensure students are college and career-ready upon graduation. And all of these goals need to be continually measured and publicly addressed so that parents and community members continue to support the right work.

EVELYNE ROZNER
SPS needs to be willing to partner constructively with community resources to ensure all kids 1) are ready to learn, 2) achieve academically, 3) and are prepared for a productive future. The optimist in me says “opportunity knocks”. Answering will require the district to alter ways of thinking, of discipline, of student engagement, and of hiring, supporting and mentoring teaching and leadership talent. Only then can current random successes be institutionalized and the promise of social mobility kept.
JENNIFER VRANEK
Perhaps more than any other urban school system in America, Seattle has the opportunity to be the best urban system of schools in America. We can only accomplish this goal if we make sure every school offers an excellent education – whether it’s a neighborhood school, an alternative school, a charter school or a contract school. What matters more than school type is whether every student has an excellent teacher, year after year, and whether each student is challenged and supported to reach her full potential.

JIM MORRIS
Improving public education is a never-ending task – we need to be focused on helping our teacher corps to be better every day, providing our principals the resources and training to be fabulous leaders and providing a district infrastructure which is dedicated to enabling our students, teachers and principals to achieve.

NORM RICE
Some issues are the same and stay the same. It is about quality education, recognizing there are differences, and that we need to direct resources to solve and bridge the differences. This is not about just passing a levy but really having direction and effort in rallying and educating the community about education.

LEE HARTWELL
Schools need to adopt a different model on education. Rather than accumulating information, students need to develop skills that will make them effective, independent lifelong learners and problem solvers.
HOW SHOULD WE, AS A CITY, MEASURE SUCCESS IN SEATTLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS?

JEN WICKENS
Instead of looking solely at test scores to measure success in schools, we need to look at college entrance and retention. We need to raise the bar from high school completion to completion in a four-year college. Our students will rise to the expectations we set for them. Our 21st century world now requires a four year degree, so our K-12 system must evolve and prepare ALL students to succeed in colleges/universities and beyond.

JIM MORRIS
Increased SPS enrollment indicating increased confidence in our schools. Increased high school graduation rates indicating improved performance by all of our students. Decreased city unemployment and poverty rates indicating that we are preparing our students for life.

LYON TERRY
We must develop broader measures of success than we currently have. Are we building growth mindset in students? Are we creating safe atmospheres for students to take risks in? Are we growing students to persevere through difficulty and failure? How can we measure character and strength of personality? Character, safety and climate measures must be used along with academic measures to assess success. Society demands that we do much more than teach content; we must teach and measure character.

JENNIFER VRANEK
I’d love to stop arguing over the inconsequential day-to-day fights about the high school diploma, or the elementary math curriculum – and instead focus on measuring our progress in: getting more children ready for kindergarten, reading at 3rd grade, graduating from high school ready for postsecondary education and enrolling and succeeding in postsecondary education. We have a long way to go in each of these measures – but we can get there.
WHAT ONE OPPORTUNITY MUST SPS SEIZE? WHAT ONE MISTAKE MUST IT AVOID? WHAT ONE CHALLENGE MUST IT SOLVE?

BETSY ARONS
There’s no one fix or single opportunity, but the quality of the workforce has to be addressed to ensure that every student has an effective teacher, and every teacher has an effective principal to lead them. And that effectiveness has to be judged, in part, by the outcomes of students – how well are they learning? Principals need to be given the autonomy and support they need to meet the needs of their students. Right now, the district has been somewhat risk-averse, but empowering their principals and teachers to meet student needs is an important step to take. And SPS has to avoid the political pitfall - that adults often want what’s best for them and will resist the focus on student outcomes. If SPS can overcome that challenge – avoiding hard decisions that impact adults but are best for students – they will become the outstanding school district they have the potential to be.

JENNIFER VRANEK
We don’t need a great system of schools – we need great schools for every kid that together form a system. The biggest opportunity we must seize is to raise our expectations for every student. Let’s turn every elementary and middle school into a center of discovery and innovation; we all know that young children already dream big and love learning – so let’s challenge and engage these big brains with fun, project-centered learning. Let’s make our secondary schools rigorous and supportive centers of learning: If Tacoma can place every qualified student in AP or IB classes as the default enrollment, why can’t we?

ESTELA ORTEGA
SPS has the opportunity to truly, adequately educate a diverse population. To do that, students need to genuinely feel welcomed by the system.

JEN WICKENS
We must be open to innovation – to new ways of thinking. Every other industry – outside of education – is innovative in the Puget Sound Region but we have failed to evolve as an education sector. Our schools still look exactly like they did one hundred years ago but our world has dramatically changed. Our city is full of incredible resources – utilizing them to raise our children will require us to break out of our traditional ways of thinking about education.

MICHAEL TAMAYO
There has been inconsistent leadership at the superintendent level for many years in SPS. Past School Boards and the Superintendents have not had collaborative relationships and there hasn’t been a strong commitment from leadership to plot a course of action, and more importantly, stick with it. SPS must seize the attention that public education has been receiving and be bold in instituting broad reforms in conjunction with the Seattle Education Association to address closing the achievement gap and disproportionate discipline.
**NORM RICE**
Broadly speaking, we are not improving the system, we are only defining the problem. We are getting people aroused on an issue but not the outcome. The overall quality of education for the child is often the last thing on the list. This has to be the first thing.

**JILL WAKEFIELD**
The first mistake we have to avoid: having the attitude that it has to be done alone. We have to re-engage so many people in the community who really want the system to be successful, and find ways to re-engage them in a meaningful way.

**LEE HARTWELL**
There is no magic solution to creating an effective school system. It is a process. What is needed is a new vision of the end goal, appropriate metrics for success, and iterative experimentation to continuously improve.
MANY THANKS

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Bradley Hoff, Foster Pepper PLLC, Board Chair
Jonathan J. Bridge, Co-CEO, General Counsel, Ben Bridge Jeweler, Inc.
Pamela Banks, President & CEO, Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle
Jane Broom, Director of Washington State Community Affairs, Microsoft Corporation
Sherry Carr, Board of Directors President, Seattle Public Schools*
Fay Chapman, Community Volunteer
Lisa Chick, Vice President and Senior Regional Director, City Year, Inc.
Erle Cohen, Executive Director, Seed IP Law Group
Mathew Dailey, LPL
Maud Daudon, President & CEO, Seattle Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce*
Dan Dixon, Vice President, External Affairs, Swedish Medical Center
Roger Erskine, Executive Director (Retired), Seattle Education Association
Lynnette Frank, Community Volunteer
Brett Gerry, Vice President & Assistant General Counsel, The Boeing Co.
Steven Gottlieb, Principal, Gottlieb Group Communications
Ken Hamm, President & CEO, First Choice Health
Sheila Edwards Lange, Interim President, Seattle Central College
Bruce Leader, Strategic Relations Group, Microsoft Corporation
Nathaniel “Nate” Miles, Vice President, Strategic Initiatives, State Government Affairs,
Eli Lilly and Company
Chase Morgan, Partner, Bridge Partners LLC
Sara Morris, President & CEO, Alliance for Education*
Dr. Larry Nyland, Superintendent, Seattle Public Schools*
Estela Ortega, Executive Director, El Centro de la Raza
Matthew Paddock, Managing Director, Metzler North America
Jena Thornton, Magnetic ERV
Sally Yates, General Counsel, Corporate Services, Group Health Cooperative
David Zapolsky, General Counsel, Amazon
* Denotes Ex-Officio

STAFF
Maggie Allen, Field Director, STR
Marisa Bier, PhD, Program Director, STR
Sara Circelli, Program Coordinator
Cathey Fraser, Annual Fund and Database Manager
Christy Giles, Recruiter, STR
Gina La Porta Roller, Curriculum Coordinator, STR
Cynthia McKinney, Finance Assistant
Jim Molloy, Accountant and Fiscal Services Coordinator
Sara Morris, President & CEO
Michael Nguyen, Recruitment & Retention Coordinator, STR
Alma Romero, Office Manager
Alicia Sands, Development Coordinator
Jami Sheets, Communications Specialist
Mark Taylor, Director of Grants Management
Amy Ward, Chief Finance Officer
Mike Woodman, Development Director

EMERITUS BOARD
Arthur W. Buerk, Emeritus Chair
Kenneth Alhadeff
Patricia Bedient
Herbert M. Bridge
Phyllis J. Campbell
Donald J. Covey
Kirby L. Cramer, Sr.
Anne Farrell
Victor Fung
Josef E. Gray
Robert L. Gerth
Nicolas Hanauer
Pam MacEwan
John D. Mangels
Tomio Moriguchi
Jim Morris
Shan Mullin
Donald P. Nielsen
Donovan Olson
Patrick F. Patrick
Roger D. Percy
Peggy V. Phillips
Shane Philpot
William J. Rex
Judith M. Runstad
Gary R. Severson
Cheryl M. Scott
Pete Shimer
John D. Warner
Robert A. Watt
R.Y. Woodhouse, Ph. D.
Today's staff and board stand on the shoulders of those who built the Alliance with passion and dedication for the cause of high quality public education across Seattle. We offer our sincere thanks to the people who built this organization over the past 20 years.

**BOARD ALUMNI**

J.D. Alexander
Robert C. Alexander
Bruce Allenbaugh
Elizabeth G. Armintrout
Jose Banda
Michael A. Barrett
Mary E. Bass
Debbie Bevier
John T. Blake
John F. Bliss
Jane I. Blodgett
Charles Blumenfeld
Lisa C. Bond
Carey Brennan
Kenneth Bunting
Philip K. Bussey
Roger W. Chaffin
Sally B. Chong
Cheryl M. Chow
Theodore J. Collins
Cleo C. Corcoran
Russell W. Crawford
Carol Crothers
Joanna Cullen
Steve Davis
Michael L. DeBell
David Della
Bob A. Dickey
Michael J. Dubes
Dan Edelman
Bill Ehrlich
Ron Elgin
Susan Enfeld
David Fagerlie
Jack H. Faris
Jon Fine
John R. Fitzgerald
Robert D. Frazier
José Gaitán
Doug Gann
Gary Gannaway
William H. Gates
Peter D. Glidden
George Griffin
Marie Gunn
M. Nina Hanselmann
Joanne Harrell
James R. Harvey
Betty Hoagland
Timothy J. Hogan
Sally Jewell
Bruce D. Johnson
Douglas N. Johnson
Charles A. Kane
James Kelly
Ali Khatibi
Frederick C. Kiga
Kerry K. Killinger
Donald B. Kraft
William W. Krippaehne
Peter C. Ku
Quentin W. Kuhrau
Steve E. Leahy
Robert D. Lipman
Eric P. Liu
Brent Lower
Lisa D. MacFarlane
Peter L. Maier
Rajinder S. Manhas
Donald Manning
George W. Martin
Ruth Massinga
Scott McClellan
Richard L. McCormick
Mike McGavick
Craig McKibben
Zoe Melendez
Charles H. Mitchell
John A. Moga
Stephen F. Mullin
Toni Murdock
Nancy L. Murphy
Ken B. Myer
Kirk Nelson
William H. Neukom
Greg Nickels
Phil Nudelman
Joseph Olchefske
James R. Peoples
Louis H. Pepper
Bob D. Peters
Steve Pulkkinen
Robert A. Ratliffe
Scott B. Redman
Norman B. Rice
Roger A. Rieger
Sharon Rodgers
Paul E. Schell
Ron Sims
Orin Smith
Kay Smith Blum
Tom Stritikus
Dan Sudit
Stephen J. Sundquist
David K. Y. Tang
Liz Vivian
Nancy Waldman
Bruce W. Williams
David C. Williams
Kathryn A. Williams
Craig Wrench
Charles E. Wright
Patrick Yalung
Cree Zischke

**STAFF ALUMNI**

Marleen Arenivar
Constance Awenasa
Jack Bernard
Stephan Blanford
Kevin Boyce
Nancy Buchanan
Emily Carlson
Kerry Clayman
Jacque Coe
Matthew Couch
Patrick D’Amelio
Edgar Gonzalez
Joel W. Groen
Matt Hayes
Rachel Hug
Laura Jacumin
Tara James
Patricia M. Kile
Laura Kohn
Susan I. Lockyer
Karen Manuel
Julie McCleery
Solynn McCurdy
Kyle Miller
Carol Naubert
Erin Okuno
Robin K. Pasquarella
Julie Pearson
Jennifer Petersen
Rick G. Reichert
Nancy Roberts-Brown
David R. Rood
Nicholas Russ
Karen M. Santangelo
Chuck Schafer
Patrick Sexton
Todd Snider
Pascal Storck
Karen Tollenaar Demorest
Julie K. Tomita
Collin R. Tong
Maura E. Whalen
Rodney C. Wheeler
Tracy Woodman
Kathleen Wright
“Only the educated are free.” EPICTETUS