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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 10, 2009

**Foundations Back Seattle Public Schools'
Excellence for All Strategic Plan**

\$9 million to help boost academic achievement and support teachers

SEATTLE—Seattle Public Schools today announced \$9 million in grants from local and national foundations to support implementation of the district's five-year strategic plan. The plan, *Excellence for All*, is designed to raise achievement of all students by providing students and teachers with the resources they need to succeed: expanded college-ready coursework for students; real-time student data to drive decision-making; and stronger professional development opportunities for teachers, school leaders, and district officials.

Developed with community input and approved by the Seattle School Board in 2008, [*Excellence for All*](#) sets measurable targets for improving academic performance and closing the education gap, including increasing the college-ready graduation rate. Today, fewer than one in five graduates of Seattle Public Schools meet the requirements to enroll in a four-year college.

"Seattle Public Schools is committed to providing a high-quality education for every student," said Superintendent Maria L. Goodloe-Johnson, Ph.D. "*Excellence for All* is our roadmap for success, and today, we're taking a big step forward. Working together—and with the support of our partners—we can deliver on the promise of an education that prepares every student to graduate from Seattle Public Schools ready for college, career, and life."

The grants announced today come from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (\$7.2 million, www.gatesfoundation.org), The Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation (\$1.2 million, www.broadfoundation.org), The Boeing Company (\$308,000, www.boeing.com) and The Stuart Foundation (\$254,000, www.stuartfoundation.org), and will support:

- **College Readiness**

A high school diploma must prepare students for college, career, and life. Seattle Public Schools will expand Advanced Placement opportunities and other college-level courses for high school students, and teachers and counselors will receive additional training and support.

- **Data, Assessment, and Performance Management**

Up-to-date information on student progress can empower teachers, administrators, and district leaders to base decisions at every level on what students need to know, and how to get there. Under a new “performance management” system, Seattle staff will be able to use real-time student data to ensure they are making progress toward academic goals, best meeting students’ individual needs, and providing appropriate support as soon as students and schools fall behind.

One of the grant-funded projects will support the implementation of a district-wide assessment system. The district is currently piloting one option, Measures of Academic Progress (MAP). MAP provides teachers and administrators with real-time information about student growth and academic performance, giving teachers and principals additional opportunities to provide students with immediate support when they need it.

- **Staff Development**

Teachers are the most important school-based factor in student achievement. Seattle Public Schools will strengthen its ability to retain and attract quality teachers and improve training to develop the next generation of district and school leaders.

“These grants represent a vote of confidence in the leadership and strategic direction of Seattle Public Schools,” said George Griffin, chair of the Alliance and CEO of G3 & Associates. “The Alliance for Education is proud to be a community partner with Seattle Public Schools to help all children fulfill their potential.”

The Alliance, an independent nonprofit organization that builds community support for Seattle Public Schools, worked in close partnership with the school district to secure the grant funding. The Alliance will play a lead role in managing the funding, tracking, evaluating and communicating results, and engaging the community. Accountability—to students, to families and to the community—is a cornerstone of *Excellence for All*. Seattle Public Schools and the Alliance for Education are putting in place specific accountability measures to ensure that funding is directed as specified in grants.

“Successful school districts are those where teachers, parents, and the community are united behind a single goal: preparing students to enter and succeed in college—and beyond,” said Vicki Phillips, director of education at the Gates Foundation. “We have confidence in *Excellence for All*, and the commitment of Seattle Public Schools to support the work that teachers and students do together in the classroom to ensure that all of our young people graduate from high school ready for college.”

Seattle Public Schools’ *Excellence for All* plan also outlines the district’s commitment to strengthen the math and science curriculum to make sure students learn essential skills; establish clear goals and commit every level of the district to real accountability; and update critical business and information systems.

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Seattle Public Schools

Seattle Public Schools is the largest K-12 school system in Washington state, serving more than 45,000 students in 93 schools with a dynamic, standards-based learning community. We are committed to ensuring a high-quality education for every student by offering a broad range of programs and learning opportunities enhanced by strong support from parents, volunteers, and community members. Learn more at www.seattleschools.org.

Alliance for Education

The Alliance for Education is an independent, non-profit organization that brings together members of the community who are dedicated to supporting effective academic programs for children in Seattle Public Schools. Visit us online at www.alliance4ed.org.