



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 6, 2010

CONTACT
Molly O'Connor, Thrive by Five Washington
206-621-5562; molly@thrivebyfivewa.org

THRIVE BY FIVE WASHINGTON BOARD OF DIRECTORS ELECTS NEW MEMBERS

Whitworth University president among four to join state's public-private partnership for early learning

SEATTLE – At its quarterly meeting today, the Thrive by Five Washington Board of Directors elected four new members. Thrive by Five Washington is the state's non-profit public-private partnership for early learning.

Elected to the Thrive board were **Beck Taylor**, president of Whitworth University in Spokane; **Sen. Steve Litzow** (R-Mercer Island), ranking minority member of the Early Learning, K-12 & Higher Education Committee; **Janet Levinger**, community volunteer and advocate for children; and **Lynn Kessler**, former member of the Washington State House of Representatives from Hoquiam.

Key work for Thrive by Five Washington includes working closely with the state Department of Early Learning and Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction to lead the creation of a statewide early learning system that supports children from birth to third grade; overseeing the state's new Home Visiting Account, which was created by the state Legislature in 2010 to match public and private dollars and fund proven and promising home visiting programs throughout the state; and leading the new statewide "Love. Talk. Play." campaign to help parents better understand why the first years of life are important and how they can best support their children.

The Thrive by Five Washington Board of Directors currently has 25 members, including four legislators that represent both parties and the House and Senate, and three ex-officio members: the governor, state superintendent of public instruction and director of the state Department of Early Learning. Members serve three-year terms.

Taylor, Litzow, Levinger and Kessler join an active and committed board of state, community, business and philanthropic leaders, many of whom helped create Thrive almost five years ago. The board is currently co-chaired by Gov. Christine Gregoire and Jackie Bezos of the Bezos Family Foundation. Nina Auerbach is president & CEO of Thrive by Five Washington.

For a full board list: <http://www.thrivebyfivewa.org/boardofdirectors.html>

About Thrive by Five Washington

Started in 2006 by Washington state businesses and foundations, Thrive by Five Washington is the state's nonprofit public-private partnership in early learning. Thrive mobilizes the statewide commitment to early learning by raising public awareness about the importance of early learning for all children birth to age 5; identifying and driving proven programs, best practices and promising models across the state; and collaborating with early learning and K-12 partners to build an early learning system that helps families and caregivers give their children the best start in school and life possible. For more information about Thrive by Five Washington: www.thrivebyfivewa.org

###