



For Immediate Release

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FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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**Grand Opening Celebration for the Educare Early Learning Center in
White Center**

WHAT: Educare Early Learning Center Grand Opening Celebration

WHO: The entire White Center community and supporters of the Educare Center,
including children and families, caregivers, funders, partners, educators, builders
and national, state and local leaders

WHEN: Saturday, March 27, 2010
1:00-4:00 p.m.

Ceremony:

1:00 –1:45 p.m. Opening Remarks and Recognitions

Open House

2:00– 4:00 pm. Tours and Activities for Children and Families

WHERE: Educare Early Learning Center
625 SW 100th St, Seattle, WA 98146
(Adjacent to White Center Heights Elementary School)

On Saturday, March 27th the Educare Early Learning Center of Seattle will hold its grand opening. Educare is one of the most respected models of early learning and care in the country. This is the tenth Educare center in the country and, as part of a national early learning network, the first Educare in Washington state. The center serves 134 infants, toddlers and preschoolers in full-day, full-year programs that encompass high quality child development, health, and family

support. It also serves as the hub for the larger White Center Early Learning Initiative, which is one of two Thrive By Five Washington demonstration sites in the state modeling best practices that can be replicated in communities statewide.

The 44,000 square foot building was designed by Miller Hayashi Architects. A number of environmentally sustainable characteristics have been incorporated, ranging from the choice of building materials to its integration within the infrastructure of the neighborhood, and the project is expected to achieve LEED Gold Certification. In addition to ten classrooms, the Center includes community gathering spaces, a parent resource library, and training rooms for providing workshops to preschool and child care providers and parents. The transparency of public spaces reinforces the Center's ties to the community and supports the ability to foster outreach to families in White Center as well as region-wide professional development for early learning and family support providers.

The project received capital funds from federal and state governments, private foundations and individual donors. Washington State contributed \$3.4 million; almost \$2 million came from federal funding sources, and private foundations contributed more than \$9 million to the capital campaign. The National Development Council facilitated construction financing by providing expertise in the federal New Markets Tax Credit program. Access to \$4.7 million in funds was provided through tax credits available via King County Housing Authority. "The New Market Tax Credits program has been incredibly successful at stimulating private investment and economic growth in low-income urban neighborhoods and attracting critical resources to help innovative and important projects, like the Educare Center, open their doors," said Chuck Depew, regional director for the National Development Council. Shorebank Enterprise Cascadia and US Bank also provided expertise and resources.

The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation provided the major lead gift and other local foundations supporting the center include Thrive By Five Washington, The Norcliffe Foundation, The Paul G. Allen Family Foundation, The Seattle Foundation and the Norman Archibald Charitable Foundation. Funding also came from The Kresge Foundation, Buffett Early Childhood Fund, George Kaiser Family Foundation, and the Bounce Network.

OAC Services, Inc. provided construction advisory services to the project's major funder. The project was constructed by Kassel Construction with project management provided by BroadView Associates.

About the Educare Early Learning Center Programs

Operated by Puget Sound Educational Service District, the Educare Early Learning Center offers full-day, year-round infant/toddler/preschool programs for children from income eligible families and for children with disabilities. The Center also offers caregiver and educator resources and professional development programs to enhance the quality of early learning and care in all settings to prepare ALL children in the community to be successful in school and life.

All young children in the White Center community—from newborns to children five years old—can benefit from the Center's services. As part of WCELI, a Thrive by Five Washington demonstration community, the Center will potentially impact early learning in the state and nation.

For More Information

To learn more about the Educare Early Learning Center, the White Center Early Learning Initiative, or Puget Sound Educational Service District, visit www.wceli.org and www.psesd.org, or call 425-917-7605. To arrange for visits and interviews, please contact Joan Tritchler, 425-917-7605; jtritchler@psed.org.