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## **New Washington organization created to support high-quality public charter schools**

*The Washington State Charter Schools Association is a new statewide nonprofit that will support the start-up of high-quality public charter schools in Washington.*

Seattle -- The League of Education Voters announces the creation of the Washington State Charter Schools Association. The Association is a new statewide nonprofit that will support the start-up of high-quality public charter schools in Washington, with a focus on serving at-risk populations and students who do not currently have access to high-performing schools.

Last November, voters approved the creation of up to 40 public charter schools over the next five years, making Washington the 42nd state to offer charters as another public school option for students. These public charter schools will be open to all students and won't charge tuition.

To ensure new charter schools opening in Washington are successful, the Association will focus on three key areas of support: providing information about charter schools; supporting leaders who want to grow high-performing public charter schools; and providing general support and services to help charter schools operate.

"Charter schools offer flexibility to try new and innovative ways to help more students succeed. We look forward to working with parents, school leaders, and communities to provide new choices to help every child graduate from high school prepared for college and careers," said Chris Korsmo, CEO of the League of Education Voters.

This summer, the Association will launch the Washington State Charter School Leadership Cohort to support education leaders who plan to open the first public charter schools in Washington. Cohort members will receive coaching on writing a charter school application and board member recruitment, and a planning stipend. They will participate in trips to observe high performing charter schools that have made a real difference in students' lives.

The Association is led by a diverse board of directors with education, nonprofit, community, and business experience. The board is responsible for governance and fiduciary oversight and will hire an executive director. The League of Education Voters is helping to launch the Association, secure funding, and serve as the fiscal agent until the organization's 501c3 status is secured.

The Association received \$800,000 in start-up funding from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

More information about the Association can be found at <http://www.wacharters.org>.

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*The League of Education Voters (LEV) is a non-partisan, nonprofit organization made up of parents, students, and leaders who believe in a quality public education from cradle to career. LEV is the only Washington-based organization working to improve public education from early learning through higher education. We shape the debate, build powerful coalitions and grow the grassroots to achieve meaningful reform and ample, equitable, stable resources for education. [www.educationvoters.org](http://www.educationvoters.org)*