The Illinois State Charter School Commission is delighted to announce that Dr. Karen Elise Washington has accepted the position of Deputy Director of the Commission, effective July 16, 2013.

Dr. Washington began her career as a business and computer teacher in Catholic schools, was first a principal in Country Club Hills School District 160, and later served as both an elementary and a high school principal for charter and contract schools in high-poverty Chicago neighborhoods for the American Quality Schools network, eventually being promoted to Regional Manager at AQS, supervising and ensuring academic success for charter schools both in Illinois and Indiana. Dr. Washington left AQS in 2010. She completed her doctorate in Curriculum and Instruction from Loyola University, Chicago, after having earned a Masters in Teaching and Learning from DePaul, and a BA in Business Administration from the Illinois Institute of Technology. She presently evaluates Performance Assessments for California Teachers for the University of Southern California, where she previously served as an Adjunct Professor.

Dr. Washington is a wife and mother of two; a resident of Homewood, Illinois; President of the Knollwood Homeowners Association; and was appointed, then elected Village Clerk of Homewood in 2012 and 2013.

In her capacity as Deputy, Dr. Washington will lead the renewal activities for the Commission’s two existing schools, Prairie Crossing and Southland; monitor and assist in providing quality openings for the Commission’s two newest schools: Concept Horizon Math and Science Academies in McKinley Park and North Austin; participate in the Commission’s appeals, and work to promote best practices in charter authorizing throughout Illinois.

July 10, 2013