

## **A Resolution in Support of Universal Access to High Quality Preschool for All 3 and 4 - Year-Old Children in Durham County**

WHEREAS, The County, City and School System leaders believe in the power of high quality preschool to support the goals of the County's *My Brother's Keeper*, the Mayor's *Poverty Reduction Initiative*, and Durham Public School's *Graduate Durham*; and

WHEREAS, scientific studies show that high quality preschool benefits all groups of children and brings extraordinary benefits to groups that could otherwise not afford it; and

WHEREAS, strong research evidence suggests that universal access to high quality preschool in Durham will help increase the academic attainment of young men of color, decrease generational poverty, and increase graduation rates of students in Durham Public Schools; and

WHEREAS, rigorous studies show that high quality preschool programs improve children's cognitive and social skills, preparing them to succeed as they enter elementary schools; and

WHEREAS, universal preschool is a proven, nonpartisan policy and North Carolina should join states like Oklahoma, Georgia and Florida who fund statewide universal pre-K programs; and

WHEREAS, ensuring access to quality preschool for 3 and 4-year-olds whose parents choose to send them has proven to be one of the soundest educational investments the public can make, providing demonstrated, significant, long-term savings on the costs of special education, grade retention, welfare and crime; and

WHEREAS, during their K–12 years and beyond, children who attend quality preschool perform better on standardized achievement tests in reading and math; exhibit more positive behaviors in the classroom; are more likely to graduate from high school, continue their education and be more prosperous as adults; and

WHEREAS, a recent study\* found that children who have been born in a county where and when the preschool program was generously funded demonstrated better academic outcomes; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT Resolved that the Durham Board of County Commissioners, the Durham City Council, and the Durham Public Schools Board of Education do hereby commission a Community Preschool Task Force; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the three elected bodies charge the Community Preschool Task Force to lead our community in crafting a plan for ensuring that all of Durham's low-income children have access to high quality preschools; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Task Force plan will include:

- a) *Durham's current capacity for providing high quality preschool (identifying what we have and what we need)*
- b) *Methods other communities have used to create broader preschool participation*
- c) *Financial models for supporting universal preschool*
- d) *Ways of cooperating with private or community-based providers of high quality preschools*
- e) *Evidence-based practices of high quality preschool*
- f) *Capacity for increasing professional development opportunities for preschool teachers*
- g) *Recommendations for universal preschool in Durham informed by research*
- h) *Timeline for implementation*

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that approximately twelve Task Force members will be identified by the Executive Director of Durham’s Partnership for Children and the Senior Vice-President of the Triangle Area Child Care Resources and Referral Services by December 1, 2015. Membership on the Task Force will represent all important stakeholder groups and will reflect the demographic makeup of our community.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the Task Force will report on its progress to the elected bodies quarterly and deliver a plan for providing universal preschool by June 1, 2016.

This the 24<sup>th</sup> day of September, 2015

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Heidi Carter, Chair

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Mike Lee, Vice Chair

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Natalie Beyer

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Leigh Bordley

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Sendolo Diaminah

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Minnie Forte-Brown

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Matt Sears

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Dr. Bert L’Homme, Superintendent

<http://www.centerforpubliceducation.org/Main-Menu/Pre-kindergarten/Pre-Kindergarten/Pre-kindergarten-What-the-research-shows.html>

<http://www2.ed.gov/documents/early-learning/matter-equity-preschool-america.pdf>

*\*“Impact of North Carolina’s Early Childhood Initiatives on Special Education Placements in Third Grade,” Clara G Muschkin, Helen F. Ladd and Kenneth A. Dodge, Education Evaluation and Policy Analysis, February 2015. DOI: 10.3102/0162373714559096*