

DURHAM BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

*Resolution*

**THE NATIONAL COLLABORATIVE FOR INFANTS AND TODDLERS RESOLUTION TO PROMOTE INVESTMENTS IN YOUNG CHILDREN AND FAMILIES FROM PRENATAL TO THREE**

- WHEREAS,** counties routinely provide an array programs and services to an estimated 16 million children ages birth to three in the United States; and in 2017 about 29 percent of counties had more than a quarter of all children living in poverty; and
- WHEREAS,** the most rapid period of brain development occurs within the first years of life with the brain developing faster from birth to age three than at any later period in life, building the foundation for all future learning, behavior and health; and when toddlers receive what their growing brains need, they become healthy children who are confident, empathetic and ready for school and life; and programs and policies that support healthy development from birth to age three result in better social, economic and health outcomes and build a more productive workforce that strengthens our economy now and in the future; and
- WHEREAS,** parents are a child’s most important caregivers and play the lead role in their child’s healthy development; at the same time, communities and governments can effectively provide families with an array of comprehensive support at an especially critical time; and
- WHEREAS,** programs and policies should start early to ensure healthy beginnings at birth, support families with infants and toddlers and make high-quality child care and learning environments more accessible and affordable to all; and
- WHEREAS,** high-quality child care is often unavailable or unaffordable for parents who need it, and many families are not connected to networks or early childhood support that can offer guidance and confidence to navigate the earliest months and years of their children’s lives; and
- WHEREAS,** Durham County and all counties take pride in our responsibility to protect and enhance the health, welfare and safety of residents in cost-effective ways—especially for the children under the age of three in our area; and
- WHEREAS,** research shows that when we invest in the first three years of a child’s life the returns for the community are the highest, and we can reduce the need for more expensive interventions later; and
- WHEREAS,** research also shows that high-quality early childhood development programs can deliver an annual return of up to 13 percent per child on upfront costs through better outcomes in education, health, employment and social behavior in the decades that follow; and economists attribute local economic growth and prosperity to high-quality early child care programs; and
- WHEREAS,** the National Association of Counties (NACo) and other national organizations joined the National Collaborative for Infants and Toddlers (NCIT), a project of the Pritzker Children’s Initiative (PCI), in a groundbreaking partnership to work with communities and states across the country to focus on early childhood development for young children from birth to three.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED,** we the members of the Durham County Board of Commissioners do hereby sign on to the Call to Action to prioritize and invest in prenatal-to-three efforts that promote a healthy start at birth, support for families with infants and toddlers and high-quality care and learning environments and utilize the resources available through NACo and the NCIT to:

- Be a champion for change by prioritizing and investing in high-quality infant-toddler programs so children, families and communities can thrive;
- Designate an early childhood leader with authority to coordinate and maximize county services to optimize child and family outcomes and leverage additional resources;
- Convene or draw on a diverse team of leaders, decision-makers and community stakeholders committed to early childhood investments;
- Take an inventory of local programs and services for children and families;
- Create a plan with measurable outcomes to implement, shift and enhance evidence-based approaches that promote a comprehensive and equitable continuum of care that begins before birth and spans into adulthood, with specific recommendations for children under three and their families;
- Leverage local, state and federal investments and explore innovative funding strategies and revenue streams to support early childhood programming; and
- Promote prenatal-to-three policies, best practices and cross coordination to improve child and family outcomes as well as service delivery and efficacy in government through streamlined processes.

This 8<sup>th</sup> day of April 2019.

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Wendy Jacobs, Chair

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James Hill, Jr., Vice-Chair

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Heidi Carter

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Brenda A. Howerton

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Ellen Reckhow

