

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

This Memorandum of Understanding is made and entered this ___ day of _____ by and between the DURHAM COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS and the DURHAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS BOARD OF EDUCATION.

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners and the Board of Education mutually desire to improve the lives and educational achievements of Durham school children;

WHEREAS, members of the Board of County Commissioners and the Board of Education understand the importance of regular communication throughout the year and during the budget process;

WHEREAS, Durham is a caring and innovative community that seeks to collaborate to support social justice and equity for all, and

WHEREAS, as two of Durham County's largest employers, Durham Public Schools and Durham County Government share a commitment to policies that support employees and families such as living wages, opportunities for growth in compensation, training and skills, and family friendly benefits;

WHEREAS, the Board of Education and Board of County Commissioners will work with their state and national professional organizations and legislative delegations to seek adequate state and federal funding to ensure successful educational opportunities and wholistic supports for children and families;

WHEREAS, the Board of County Commissioners, the Board of Education, and staff leadership of Durham County and Durham Public Schools commit to focus together on evidence-based practices that support children and families;

IT IS NOW THEREFORE AGREED THAT:

1. The Durham County Board of County Commissioners and the Board of Education will meet quarterly to work towards a shared vision for our Durham community that is equitable and just for all. Agendas will include equal time for shared updates and discussion on county and education issues.
2. As two of Durham's largest employers, Durham Public Schools and Durham County share a commitment to policies that support employees and families such as living wages, strong benefits and parental leave. We all agree that local funding may be needed to ensure equity for school employees, and

3. Durham Public Schools' budget development process should be informed by its strategic planning process for achieving improved student outcomes and closing the opportunity gap, to include third-grade literacy, eighth-grade preparation for high school, increased graduation rates, decreased out of school suspension rates, increased access to advanced academics, AP (advanced placement), IB and honors courses and other relevant metrics. The strategic planning process shall be formally integrated into budgets for Durham County and Durham Public Schools.
4. Durham Public Schools and the Board of County Commissioners shall provide one another appropriate information regarding school funding as such information is released to the public.
5. In an effort to align with the county's budget development cycle, Durham Public Schools intends to submit its draft budget request before April 1st for the upcoming budget year.
6. The Board of Education, with input from a broad and diverse cross-section of the Durham County community, will set and regularly report on a broad range of measurable goals and outcomes for students and families. Data will be disaggregated where possible by subgroups of students according to state and federal accountability models, which include race, students with disabilities, English language learners, academically / intellectually gifted, and economically disadvantaged students. Reportable data may include measures such as EOG/EOC scores, growth measures, ACT/SAT scores, graduation rates, suspension rates, teacher retention, attendance, college and career readiness as well as post-secondary information from the National Clearing House, and perhaps others. Qualitative measures, including feedback from parent, student, and/or educator surveys, might also be used. Durham Public Schools shall provide the Board of County Commissioners with annualized reports on the above data and outcomes (i.e. as new data becomes available) at the same time this data is released to the media.
7. The County will share with the Board of Education regular reports related to the well-being of children and families. Reportable data, shared annually, may include measures that are associated with academic and social success in school, such as teen pregnancy rates, unemployment rates, number of 4 year olds in high quality preschool, the community input and need for early child care and education (Durham Early Childhood Action Plan), and number of youth engaged in after-school and summer activities, as well as updates on County programs and services that impact children and youth.
8. The Board of County Commissioners shall provide equal consideration to budget and programmatic proposals generated by Durham Public Schools as to those proposals generated by County staff. Expansion funding requests from both bodies will include detailed data supporting the request, expected outcomes and benchmarks. The Board of County Commissioners shall strive to maintain per-pupil funding to continue to be a state leader in educational funding.

9. The Board of County Commissioners and the Board of Education recognize the low level of state funding for teacher compensation and other school system employee salaries compared to the rest of the nation and shall work together to support competitive pay scales for certified and classified personnel to ensure the recruitment and retention of highly qualified and effective teachers and staff.
10. Durham Public Schools is supported by state, federal and local funding sources. In a political climate where state and federal funding sources are at-risk, Durham County will work to support Durham children through consistent and adequate local funding. The Board of Commissioners aspires to continue to be a state leader in strong support for public school students. If county revenue increases, the Board of Commissioners shall increase per pupil funding proportionally.
11. The Board of Education will maintain an undesignated fund balance for Durham Public Schools at a level sufficient to always protect the schools' operational / cash flow integrity.
12. The Superintendent of Durham Public Schools and the County Manager, will direct appropriate staff to work together to develop future school site plans (including potential co-locations), capital financing models, and plans for repurposing sites no longer slated for their original purpose. One value of this work should be to ensure maximum use by and value to the public.
13. The Board of County Commissioners and Board of Education recognize the strong commitment by the County and its citizens to high-quality educational facilities. To that end, Durham Public Schools and the County will both support the ongoing upkeep, operation and repair of new and existing facilities by funding infrastructure adequately within the annual budget cycle. The County will sponsor bond referenda on a regular basis in consultation with Durham Public Schools and City and County Planning staff to address facility needs.
14. Durham Public Schools will consult with the Board of County Commissioners on school construction and renovation and develop energy-efficient and cost-effective plans and specifications.
15. The Board of County Commissioners and Board of Education shall jointly meet in the last quarter of each calendar year to review compliance with this Memorandum of Understanding prior to the commencement of the following year's budget discussions.
16. The Board of County Commissioners and Board of Education shall review this Memorandum of Understanding every two years to discuss how well we are meeting these mutually agreed upon goals and any revisions needed.

COUNTY OF DURHAM

DURHAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION

Mike Lee, Chair
Durham County Board of Commissioners

Bettina Umstead, Chair
Durham Public Schools Board of Education

Attest: _____
Monica W. Wallace, Clerk

Attest: _____
Nicole Smith, Board Liaison