

Key Thoughts on Moving Forward Expeditiously with Pre-K Expansion
(through a contract w. CCSA and DPfC, which can be negotiated to better address the concerns about pre-K expansion which Commissioners have noted)

1. There are many moving parts to this work and some Commissioners have strong feelings about what should come first. Staff believe that our expert partners (CCSA and DPfC) will be best able to determine the appropriate order of operations and will be key to helping our community take the required actions to successfully expand high-quality pre-K.
2. Staff (and the proposers) believe we know enough about supply and demand (and system needs) to ramp up our work and move towards additional, high-quality classrooms in the fall of 2018. We do not recommend waiting for the supply and demand study to be fully completed to start ramping up related work covered in the proposed contract. Staff believe that what remains to be learned and done will be learned and done more quickly and effectively by CCSA/DPfC staff with skills appropriate to the prioritized tasks at hand.
3. The proposers agree that one of the very first orders of work is to establish quality standards and figure out the appropriate requirements in different parts of our system as well as what will be required to grow and meet those enhanced standards.
4. The ability of the County and these two organizations to work towards these broad goals w. current staff is at its limit. Without more capacity we are unlikely to move forward.
5. Almost all current NCPK seats in Durham have multiple funding streams. We expect this will be true of future seats as well. There are many up-sides to forging ahead in our efforts to facilitate and organize the creation of new, high-quality classrooms, to expand the teacher pipeline, and to build up parental demand (i.e. waitlist) *at the same time we are seeking additional state funding*. Accessing additional state funding does not require a waitlist of unserved children.
6. A large waitlist that we don't have the capacity to serve yet may be good for the County in a strict financial sense. It doesn't help parents of 4 year olds who needs subsidized pre-K in a few months, however. It also doesn't help our system, which needs time and additional, focused efforts to develop provider and teacher capacity. That capacity will not develop further in a vacuum.
7. In the long-run we absolutely intend to set ourselves up to thoughtfully create as many local seats as there is demand for and to match as many of those seats as possible with state funding.