

DURHAM BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Resolution

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF A DURHAM WORK-BASED LEARNING COLLABORATIVE
COMMUNITY AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

- WHEREAS,** Durham enjoys a thriving economy and a 2018 mean family income of \$102,861, and yet one in five Durham families with children who still live in poverty; and
- WHEREAS,** in 2018, Durham saw 5.4 percent wage growth and the highest weekly wages paid in the state of North Carolina, but the percentage of jobs held by Durham residents decreased; and
- WHEREAS,** children in the lowest income quintile have a 39 percent chance of staying there as adults and without both high-demand skills and education and access to good jobs in the local economy, their odds are unlikely to improve; and
- WHEREAS,** since Durham is part of a regional economy with full employment levels, the youth talent pipeline is critical to Durham’s future growth; and
- WHEREAS,** with North Carolina projected to add more than 550,000 jobs by 2024 and Durham experiencing twice the rate of job growth of the United States last year, identifying sources of future talent is critical to continued economic development; and
- WHEREAS,** improving outcomes for Durham youth will depend upon our ability to both prepare and connect Durham’s young adults as future employers in the local economy, also ensuring Durham’s continued competitive advantage in attracting and retaining high-growth industries; and
- WHEREAS,** understanding this challenge, key partners in the public, private and philanthropic communities in Durham have been working on a strategy aimed at increasing educational and career readiness for all Durham youth age 14-24; and
- WHEREAS,** this strategy calls for a community-wide effort to build a high-quality work-based learning (WBL) system that focuses on career, adds relevance to school and begins to address inequalities in Durham’s labor market; and
- WHEREAS,** work-based learning is a proven strategy benefitting both employers and youth by preparing young adults for work through career awareness, exposure and experiences; and
- WHEREAS,** work-based learning programs have shown participating minority students enrolling in college at twice the rate of non-participating minority students; and
- WHEREAS,** students who participate in work-based learning receive higher postsecondary GPAs and are more likely to be employed after graduation; and
- WHEREAS,** employers who participate in work-based learning programs can generate their own highly skilled workers internally, developing a more reliable local talent pipeline for their business while also increasing their brand awareness among youth and the larger community; and
- WHEREAS,** though many agencies, schools and non-profits in Durham have been independently using work-based learning as a tool to promote college and career readiness, much room remains for improved collaboration; and
- WHEREAS,** building on the existing YouthWork program funded by the City, Durham County and Durham Public Schools, and the new DPS 3-2-1 program, a new collaborative was formed, the Durham Work-Based Learning (WBL) Collaborative; and
- WHEREAS,** Made in Durham convened the Collaborative that now has 17 organizations in Durham working together to meet the needs of Durham’s youth and employers with a unified set of goals and outcomes; and
- WHEREAS,** the Durham Work-based Learning (WBL) Collaborative is conducting a 6-month public awareness campaign around the benefits and opportunities that the programs in the Durham Work-based Learning (WBL) Collaborative can provide to both Durham youth and employers; and
- WHEREAS,** this campaign is designed to inform youth, parents, and employers about work-based learning and encourage everyone to participate.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Durham County Board of County Commissioners that

- the Durham Work-based Learning Collaborative is an important initiative for Durham’s successful economic development success, and that
- the Board of Commissioners DO HEREBY strongly support the campaign to educate and encourage students, parents and employers to actively participate in the opportunities to learn about the benefits and programs offering work-based learning in Durham as a critical component to our vision of a shared prosperity for all of Durham’s residents.

This 28th day of October 2019

Wendy Jacobs, Chair

James Hill, Jr., Vice-Chair

Heidi Carter

Brenda A. Howerton

Ellen Reckhow

