



## Legislation Text

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File #: 21-0002, Version: 1

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**Item:**

**Further Discussion of Hope (Remote) Learning Centers (30min)**

**Date of BOCC Meeting: January 4, 2021**

**Request for Board Action:**

The Board is requested to receive further information from the leadership of the Hope Learning Centers and that they ask any questions they wish.

On August 24<sup>th</sup>, Durham County approved \$405,000 in support for the Hope Learning Centers, a remote learning option for Durham students (contract attached). County funding was primarily to support no-cost placements of students experiencing houselessness, who qualify for free or reduced lunch, have parents in essential jobs, have parents unemployed because of COVID, and/or who are part of the foster care system or live in public housing. County funding was initially only supposed to support these centers for part of the first semester, but due to slower initial enrollment and outside fundraising, the initial County funding sufficed for all of the first semester, which runs through January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

The Hope Learning Centers are all operating at capacity at this point, as are the remaining three DPS remote learning centers. Though a small number of staff and students associated with the centers have contracted COVID since the centers opened, there is no evidence that any spread occurred *at* the centers.

At their December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2020 meeting, the County Commissioners approved \$124,000 in additional funding to provide funding for the first two weeks of second semester, which will carry the Hope Learning Centers through the end of January.

It seems fairly clear that all of the alternatives being considered by Durham Public Schools for second semester will not result in a reduced need for remote learning slots. It could be that the availability of transportation through DPS may effectively *increase* the demand for slots. Based on the overall 2<sup>nd</sup> semester request presented on Dec. 14<sup>th</sup>, 2020, the remaining funding gap for the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter is \$491,000 and for all of 2<sup>nd</sup> semester it is \$1,019,800. More information regarding known or potential additional funding sources may be available in January.

**Alignment with Strategic Plan:** Safe remote learning centers for Durham students aligns with Goals 1 - 3 of the Durham County Strategic Plan.

**Resource Persons:** Magan Gonzales-Smith, Executive Director (Durham Public Schools Foundation); Alexandra Zagbayou, Executive Director (Student U); Kate Goodwin, Director (Kate's Korner); Forrest Perry, Regional Vice President (YMCA of the Triangle); Drew Cummings, Chief of Staff

**County Manager's Recommendation:** The County Manager recommends that the Board receive further information from the leadership of the Hope Learning Centers and that they ask any questions they wish.

County Manager: \_\_\_\_\_