

Durham PreK Governance Committee Meeting NOTES

Jim and Carolyn Hunt Early Childhood Resource Center

Held In person and Virtually on November 16th, 2023 (9:30am-11:30am)

In Attendance, listed in random order:

Voting Members: Cathy Collie-Robinson, Dr. Wykeshia Glass, Dr. Iheoma Iruka, Dr. Aleksandra Holod, Dr. Kimberly Sowell, Deric Boston, Michelle Lyn, Xavier Cason, June Shillito, Darnella Warthen, Dr. Deborah Pitman, Brittany Gregory, Tabitha Blackwell, Jason Rutherford, Reverend Michael Page

Non-voting Members: Dr. Kristi Snuggs, Dr. Linda Chappel, Donna Rewalt, Tammorah Mathis, Monnie Griggs, Jena Fuchs, Joy Turner, Sara Glenn; **Guests:** Karen Thompson, Adrienne Stephens, Maggie West, Brianna Head

WHAT	NOTES
<p>Welcome and Introductions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome and Introductions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A recording of the meeting can be found on our DPK YouTube channel ○ Dr. Iheoma Iruka and Dr. Linda Chappel welcomed newly appointed Governance Members- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dr. Aleksandra Holod, Senior Education Researcher American Institutes for Research, Chair, CCSA Board of Directors ▪ Jason Rutherford, President of the Durham Alumni Chapter of Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc. ▪ Tabitha Blackwell, Executive Director, Book Harvest ▪ Charleita Richardson, Chief Executive Director, Durham’s Children’s Initiative ▪ Brittany Gregory, Parent Representative and Early Education Professional ○ All members then took turns introducing themselves ○ Thank you to members transitioning off the Committee. We appreciate your service. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sharon Hirsch ▪ Leigh Bordley ▪ Michael Page ○ Vote on Governance Chair and Vice-Chair; Dr. Iheoma Iruka is transitioning from the Committee Chair position and has agreed to continue as a member. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Chair nominee: Dr. Cathy Collie-Robinson ▪ Vice-Chair nominee: Dr. Wykeshia Glass
<p>Action Item</p>	<p>Approval of nominees for Governance Chair and Vice-Chair effective December 1st, 2023</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motion by Xavier Cason, second by Darnella Warthen

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All in favor
Meeting Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve Meeting Notes • Provide an Overview of DPK • Analyze Teacher Salary Support Payments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Consider changes recommended by staff • Study DPS Waiver Request <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Consider options • Review Recommendation for Non-NC PreK Classroom Bonus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Consider options • Review Current Enrollment and Budget • Share Program Updates
*Action Item	<p>Approve Governance Committee notes from May 2023</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motion by Cathy Collie-Robinson, second by Wykeshia Glass • All in favor
*Action Item	<p>Approve Governance Committee notes from September 2023</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motion by Brittany Gregory, second by Dr. Kimberly Sowell • All in favor
Overview of Durham PreK	<p>Dr. Linda Chappel provided members with an overview of Durham PreK.</p> <p>What is Durham Prek? Durham County is committed to expanding access to high-quality, publicly supported preschool</p> <p>Main Program Goals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve Classroom Instruction • Support Family Engagement • Build Capacity for High Quality care <p>Durham PreK addresses equity by expanding access and improving quality.</p> <p>Durham County has committed to expanding access to high quality, publicly supported preschool in big ways. Durham PreK is a unique program because it is a collaborative across public programs in Durham. Our goal is to enhance and expand access to public preschool. We found there was a large difference between our 4 year old census and the availability of public seats. Instead of creating parallel programs that don't intersect in Durham, we decided to enrich and enhance our existing</p>

	<p>programs, while at the same time creating additional new seats. Funded seats are braided and blended with existing seats, and then there are seats that are just locally funded. In order to expand access we use the local dollars to remove restrictions that come from other programs. Our goal is always to serve as many children as possible. For this school year there are 653 seats that are being touched by the local dollars. Some of these seats are 100% funded locally while others are braided and blended.</p> <p>Breakdown of Durham PreK seats locally funded</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ DPK Only: 271 Seats ○ DPK/NCPK: 277 Seats ○ DPK/NCPK/Title 1: 28 Seats ○ DPK/NCPK/HS: 61 Seats ○ DPK/HS: 1 Seat ○ DPK/Title 1: 15 Seats <p>Durham County's investment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Expands access for four-year-old children ● Increases the number of publicly funded seats ● Broadens eligibility guidelines ● Funds technical assistance to local child care centers to build capacity for meeting higher standards ● Funds higher wages for teachers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Establishes standard compensation scale for all DPK teachers ○ Increases reimbursement rates to fund increased pay
<p>*Review Teacher Salary Support Payments</p>	<p>Joy Turner, Director of Data and Provider Services, reviewed the Teacher Support Payment information</p> <p>SY23-24 Lead Teacher Credentials</p> <p>Number of Lead Teachers by License Type:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Initial: 3 ○ Continuing: 13 ○ Residency: 3 ○ Provisional: 1 ○ Emergency: 0 ○ No License: 10 <p>Number of Lead Teachers by Years of Experience:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 0-5 years: 8 ○ 6-10 years: 5

- 11-15 years: 4
- 16-20: 3
- 21+ years: 0
- Average years: 7.9

The information above is based on teacher data as of 11/8/23 and excludes Durham Public Schools teachers since those contracts are not final.

DPK Teacher Salary Policy

- Lead teachers with a BK license must be compensated according to Durham Public Schools’ (DPS) certified teacher salary schedule.
- Lead teachers working toward a BK license or holding an Emergency BK License or a Temporary Permit must be compensated at 0 years of experience according to NC Department of Public Instruction’s salary schedule.

Teacher Compensation Support Payment Policy

- Paid monthly to help offset the cost of teachers’ salaries for those compensated on the DPS salary schedule
- Based on a graduated scale which takes into account the monthly salary and teachers’ years of experience

Current Support Payment Scale

- Starts at 5% of total salary at 0 years of experience
 - 1% increase every year beginning at 1 year of experience
 - 1.5% increase every year beginning at 3 years of experience
 - 0.3% increase every year beginning at 15 years of experience
- **This model has been used since our first full year of Durham PreK (SY 2019-2020) and needs to be reevaluated in light of how teacher raises have been implemented at the state and county level over time.**

Lead teachers that have a BK license must be compensated according to the Durham public schools certified teacher salary schedule based on the number of years of experience on their license. If a lead teacher is working towards a BK license, but does not yet have it, they must be compensated at 0 years of experience on the Department of Public Instructional salary schedule. If a teacher is required to be paid on the Durham Public school scale, the providers receive a monthly support payment to help offset the cost. Currently, the payment is based on a graduated scale which takes the teacher’s monthly salary and years of experience into account. The scale starts out as 5% of the teacher’s total salary. If the teacher has 0 years of experience, that's what the provider receives. There's a 1% increase every year, beginning at one year of experience, a 1.5% percent increase, beginning at 3 years, and then 0.3% increase every year, beginning at 15 years.

Ex. If a teacher has 0 years of experience, the provider will get 5% of their monthly salary through the support payment. If the teacher had 8 years, they would get 16%. And if they had 24 years, they'd get 28%. The percentage that we pay grows because the salary grows over time.

Impact of Teacher Raises on Providers

- Reviewed a graph that reflects the impact of raises on providers over time under the current model. Providers have been responsible for most of the teacher raises that have happened in the past 4 years.
- The current model creates some sharp increases at 15 and 25 years of experience, which could discourage providers from hiring teachers with higher levels of experience.

- **Proposed Support Payment Scale**

- Start at 10% of total salary at 0 years of experience
- 1% increase at 1 year of experience
- 1.5% increase beginning at 2 years of experience
- 1.3% increase beginning at 9 years of experience
- 0.3% increase beginning at 16 years of experience
- 2% increase at 25 years of experience
- 0.3% increase beginning at 26 years of experience

Impact of Proposed Support Payment Scale

- Reviewed a graph that reflects the impact of the proposed support payment scale over time that showed a reduction of providers' out of pocket cost regardless of teacher experience level.
- The new model provides better incentivizes for hiring the most experienced teacher available.
- If approved, the new support payment scale would be retroactive to the beginning of the school year. Providers could receive their increased payments as early as December.

Discussion:

- Darnella Warthen shared that she has been a provider in Durham for many years and intentionally has chosen not to be a provider for Durham PreK, in part so that her involvement on the Governance Committee would be highly valued and credible since she would not have a personal gain. She said that as a provider and business owner, this supplement is very important to private providers who cannot compete with Durham Public Schools and it will help them recruit and retain good talent for their programs. Since they are serving some of the most vulnerable children and families, she thinks this proposal is critical to supporting programs in their efforts to hire highly qualified staff. She urged members to consider passing the proposed scale.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brittany Gregory echoed her support. • Dr. Iruka mentioned that there are currently zero teachers listed at 21+ years of experience for the current school year and wondered what we have seen in years past. Dr. Chappel highlighted that since we are not yet under contract with Durham Public Schools, the numbers presented here do not include teachers from DPS. Historically, teachers with the most years of experience are employed by DPS. Joy Turner looked up information from last year and was able to report that last school year, we had two teachers with 21+ years of experience. Dr. Iruka noted that it's interesting to see the community-based programs separated out. • June Shillito also echoed her support for the new model and mentioned that especially with the stabilization grants coming to an end, this will be important to support Durham PreK teachers and providers. June is a Durham PreK provider and will recuse herself from the vote. • Cathy Collie-Robinson stated that for sustainability, the proposal is a drop in the bucket for what needs to happen. We need to continue looking at compensation, particularly benefits. • Dr. Chappel reminded members that this proposal is what we can afford within the current budget. If they want the scale higher, their vote would be a recommendation to Durham County as the primary funder.
Action Item	<p>Governance unanimously approved the proposed teacher support payment scale starting at 10% of total salary at 0 years of experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motion by Darnella Warthen, second by Jason Rutherford • All in favor <p>All conflicted members present for the vote, Deric Boston, Dr. Deborah Pitman, and June Shillito, abstained.</p>
*DPS Waiver Request	<p>Durham Public Schools has Requested a Waiver of the DPK Wage Minimum for Instructional Assistants</p> <p>Dr. Chappel provided context for members and reminded them that last Spring, Governance approved a minimum wage of \$17.60 per hour for instructional assistants, which would take effect for the current school year. We believed we would be in good shape for this year since most of our sites were already paying at or above that rate. Dr. Chappel also reminded members that the issue of compensation is important to us and that we monitor and require proof of pay to support sites in ensuring teaching staff are compensated appropriately based on our salary requirements. We are currently not under contract with Durham Public Schools though they are providing public preschool services, because they are slightly below the minimum requirement for instructional assistants.</p> <p>Dr. Pitman submitted a memo to Governance members regarding this matter. She explained that Durham Public Schools operates on a state and local salary scale. The Board of Education votes and adopts the scale. Over the last several months, DPS has finished completing a one year salary study of classified employees which includes instructional assistants. As a result of that</p>

study, the salary scale adjusted quite significantly. As we look at the employees in Durham PreK classrooms, for the most part all of them will be in great shape and well above the minimum. However, two employees were identified at \$0.04 below the requirement. Dr. Pitman assured members that the district is highly committed to ensuring their employees are appropriately compensated and that they support the decision of the living wage in Durham. She said when they looked at the increase in salaries as a result of the classified salary schedule and the benefits package offered to employees that is estimated to be around a \$47,000 value, DPS is over the current minimum requirement set forth by Durham PreK. She went on to explain that if they had employees at \$17.30, their lowest starting salary point, they would be \$516.00 below the current DPK minimum, but that is without factoring in their benefit package.

Members discussed whether to accept the district's request for a waiver regarding the instructional assistant salary minimum.

Discussion:

- Darnella Warthen said since Durham Public Schools is the standard, she is afraid if we waive this requirement for them, it would set the wrong precedence. Since the resources are there, she believes they should meet the requirements.
- Dr. Sowell said she agrees with Ms. Warthen. Opposed to agreeing to the waiver, she would be in favor of seeking additional funds to cover the difference for the two employees in question and asked what that exact amount would be.
- Dr. Iruka asked if we can request a waiver from the Board of Education.
- Dr. Pitman explained that this is a bigger issue since Durham Public Schools is connected to the state salary scale and the Board of Education vote. To rectify this issue, they would need to realign the entire salary scale as they cannot simply grant an exception for two employees. She again lifted up their benefits package as putting them well above the minimum. They are compensating staff at about \$18,000 above the minimum when you factor in benefits.
- Dr. Iruka said based on her calculations of the \$0.04 difference works out to be an \$83.00 difference for the year per staff member.
- Dr. Sowell said she understands it is a larger issue than simply a matter of funding.
- Cathy Collie-Robinson and Dr. Kristi Snuggs mentioned the desire for further conversations to be had with the school board so that if the waiver is granted, it is not permanent.
- Brittany Gregory asked about the local portion of the salary scale and how that impacts instructional assistants. Dr. Pitman said that once the salary scale is adopted, local supplements are used to implement the scale. Since this has already been done, she emphasized that the current scale does not exactly align with the Durham PreK minimum requirement.
- Ms. Warthen stated that instructional assistants, within their current classification and likely with their current qualifications, are dedicated to the work but not able to be a lead teacher and she thinks it would speak volumes if Durham Public Schools showed their commitment to adopting our required minimum.

- Dr. Iruka lifted up the value of the benefits and reminded members that the benefits package is a main reason why early childhood educators transition to the public schools.
- Dr. Chappel clarified that we cannot contract with any entity that does not meet our requirements without permission from Governance, which is why we needed to bring this matter to their attention for a vote. She believes our Governance Committee can be a strong catalyst for change and noted that the committee has already influenced the workforce by building capacity. She agreed that the current benefits package offered by Durham Public Schools is more comprehensive than what private sites can offer but also stated that it is disappointing the minimum salary cannot be met. We were hopeful that when they were studying the classified rates and when the state passed the new budget that they would be over the minimum. She acknowledged we may need more time to work through the bureaucracy. We believe we can continue to advocate and make changes to impact our community, but we need more time.
- Dr. Pitman said that although we cannot make a true side-by-side comparison of the value of benefits since benefits packages vary; when factoring in the value of the benefits package, it brings the hourly value to about \$27-28.
- Ms. Warthen mentioned that for folks working at that level, the money they bring home in their paychecks may be more valuable to them than their benefits package. She also acknowledged the importance of having Durham Public Schools at the table, especially so children with high needs have the option of attending public school sites that are better positioned to give them the support and resources they need.
- Ms. Gregory asked if they could consider approving the waiver with the caveat of the conversation continuing with Durham County and the Board of Education.
- Xavier Cason brought up that the Board of Education in North Carolina cannot levy their own taxes and are completely dependent upon the county, so if there is a budget discussion, the Board of Education would be required to ask the county. He asked for clarity on who would bring this discussion forward.
- Dr. Chappel said we at CCSA would push this matter forward to the county as the principal funder and we would work with Dr. Sowell. We already report to County Commissioners and the Board of Education regularly and can work to get this issue in front of them. What is challenging is that there are many instructional assistants in the district. She is realistic that this is likely a multi-year issue and does not want to misrepresent the timeline to the group.
- Mr. Cason said he would support the waiver for one year and has confidence in the county's support.
- Dr. Sowell mentioned that the county partially funded the salary study Dr. Pitman mentioned earlier and decided to fund a salary supplement for classified employees, which had not been done before. She said there is a very strong commitment from the county to support livable wages for our educators and Durham residents. She then mentioned the joint meeting with the county and school board this Friday and suggested we lift up this matter as something for both boards to take a look at so we can resolve this issue.

<p>Action Item</p>	<p>Governance unanimously approved Durham Public Schools’ Request for Wage Waiver for the 2023-2024 school year with the requirement of reported feedback on progress towards resolving this matter.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motion by Cathy Collie-Robinson, second by Xavier Cason • All in favor <p>Dr. Pitman abstained from this vote due to conflict of interest.</p>
<p>Non-NC PreK Classroom Bonus</p>	<p>Dr. Chappel introduced the final voting matter to Governance members. Governor Cooper funded a classroom bonus in the amount of \$3,860 for NC Pre-K classrooms due to inflation and negative impacts of the economy. With our braided model, we try to assure that resources are available across the board for all of our classrooms. Currently, we have two classrooms within the Durham PreK ecosystem that do not currently have any NC Pre-K seats and are therefore not eligible for the bonus that our other classrooms will be receiving. We have money in the budget available to allocate to classroom bonuses for the same amount for the two non-NC Pre-K classrooms. Governance approved classroom bonuses at the end of last school year, however, that was a separate bonus.</p> <p>Discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several clarifying questions were asked. Dr. Chappel clarified that this would be issued directly to the providers in the two non-NC Pre-K classrooms and it is affordable within the current budget. The funds would be unrestricted but for use to benefit the classroom. One classroom is at First Presbyterian and one is at Lyons Farm.
<p>Action Item</p>	<p>Vote on a Bonus for Non-NC PreK Classrooms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motion by Brittany Gregory, second by Dr. Aleksandra Holod. • All in favor <p>All conflicted members present for the vote, Dr. Deborah Pitman and June Shillito, abstained.</p>
<p>Current Enrollment and Budget</p>	<p>Dr. Chappel provided a quick enrollment summary with the remaining few minutes of the meeting.</p> <p>Breakdown provided for SY 2024 seats based on source of funding.</p> <p>DPK Enhanced - NC Pre-K</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 277 seats • 16 sites <p>DPK Enhanced - NC Pre-K Head Start</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 61 seats • 3 sites <p>DPK Enhanced - NC Pre-K Title I</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 28 seats • 4 sites <p>DPK Enhanced - Head Start</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 seat • 1 site <p>DPK Enhanced – Title I</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15 seats • 1 site <p>DPK Only</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 271 seats • 22 sites <p>Durham PreK has a total of 653 seats dispersed between 25 sites. First Presbyterian was added for the current school year as a new locally funded site.</p> <p>Current Enrollment of Locally Funded Durham PreK Seats</p> <p>Durham PreK Only</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 271 Allocated seats • 241 students enrolled • 89% enrollment percentage <p>Durham PreK Enhanced</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 382 Allocated seats • 350 students enrolled • 92% enrollment percentage <p>There are a total of 591 students enrolled under local funds totaling to 91% enrollment rate.</p> <p>Dr. Chappel clarified that these numbers only include Durham PreK funded seats. By our next meeting in January, we will be able to report on the full number of children benefiting from public preschool. We will go more in depth about our funding and seat capacity at our next meeting.</p>
<p>Apprenticeship Signing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members were reminded that our Apprenticeship Signing Event is being held this evening at Durham Tech. We are the largest registered apprenticeship program in the state of North Carolina. Dr. Chappel reminded members that the program was originally seeded through a private donation to CCSA which aligns with our goal to bring in other resources. Though Durham PreK is the priority, the apprenticeship program is open to early childhood educators outside of Durham PreK as well with the goal being to build capacity.

<p>*DPK Updates</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1,717 applications have been received and 985 families have accepted their placement offers • Durham PreK enrollment in locally funded seats is approximately 92% • Outreach continues and planning for next school year is underway • Be sure to check out our October Newsletters featuring interviews with Darnella Warthen and Natalie Beyer! • A team from CCSA, Durham Tech, and El Centro Hispano will visit Charlotte Bilingual Preschool to learn more about workforce and apprenticeship strategies specifically geared towards bilingual early childhood educators. • The 2024-2026 RFA is now open. This is a joint application between NC Pre-K and DPK.
<p>Summary and Adjournments</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The meeting was adjourned at 11:32am. <p>Future Meeting Dates- 9:30 – 11:30 am</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • January 18, 2024- Virtual • March 21, 2024 – Virtual • May 16, 2024 – In person meeting with lunch provided after the meeting; virtual participation also available. To be held at the Jim and Carolyn Hunt Early Childhood Resource Center, located at 1201 South Briggs Avenue in Durham.

*** Agenda items with handouts**