

Mecklenburg County Expands Access to Pre-K Education

Washington, D.C. July 2, 2018 – The Committee for Economic Development (CED) is pleased to share the news that the Mecklenburg County Board of Commissioners approved a new fiscal year budget, 6-3, which includes funding for 33 new pre-k classrooms as the first installment to implement voluntary, universal pre-K for all 4 year-old children in the County. To pay for the public pre-k expansion, Commissioners adopted an increase of 3/4s of a penny in the property tax, which will enable about 800 additional children to have access to high-quality early learning starting this fall.

Working together in close partnership, CED and the Early Learning Policy Group completed a feasibility study to expand access to early childhood education for children (0-5) in Mecklenburg County, North Carolina. The resulting report was released last September (Phase I)—see [full report](#), [Executive Summary](#), [infographic](#), and other background materials on the County web site—and contains financial recommendations as part of a 5-point Action Plan to support both high-quality child care and voluntary, universal public pre-K. CED began Phase II, an implementation plan, last December that involves raising public visibility and awareness of the County initiative as well as design and phase-in components for the six-year plan.

The initiative could not have succeeded without participation from the Charlotte Executive Leadership Council—a group of 25 top executives—which includes CED Trustee, Tom Nelson, Chairman, President and CEO of National Gypsum. The company also has representation on the Mecklenburg County Executive Committee overseeing development and implementation of the initiative.

“National Gypsum is a proud partner of CED, and we are excited to see what the future holds for access to early education, not only in Mecklenburg, but in the rest of the country as well,” said Nelson.

This is a terrific example of committed engagement from the business community to lead transformative change with both short and long-term impacts for children throughout the County. CED will continue to support the Executive Committee through November. If you have any questions, please contact Cindy Cisneros, Vice President of Education Programs at CED, at Ccisneros@ced.org.

ABOUT THE COMMITTEE FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

Founded in 1942, the Committee for Economic Development of The Conference Board (CED) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, business-led public policy organization that delivers well-researched analysis and reasoned solutions to our nation’s most critical issues. CED’s work is grounded on seven core principles: sustainable capitalism, long-term economic growth, efficient fiscal and regulatory policy, competitive and open markets, a globally competitive workforce, equal economic opportunity, and nonpartisanship in the nation’s interest. Learn more at www.ced.org.

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