



NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release April 18, 2011

Lieutenant Governor Dalton Supports Smart Start Funding

Durham's Partnership for Children to host Smart Start-supported program tour on Wednesday

Durham, NC – Lieutenant Governor Walter Dalton is speaking out in support of Smart Start and will tour White Rock Baptist Child Development Center in Durham on Wednesday, April 20th. Dalton will meet with local parents, child care providers, representatives of local family support programs, and business leaders to hear how Smart Start is positively impacting the Durham community.

Smart Start is a public/private partnership developed in 1993 to address the problem that too many North Carolina children were arriving at kindergarten not prepared to learn. The initiative serves families of all income levels with children birth through five through parent education programs, health services, and programs that improve the quality of child care. Since Smart Start's inception, nearly twice as many children are enrolled in high-quality child care. In addition, a Duke University study found that third-graders have higher standardized reading and math scores and lower special education placement rates in counties that received relatively more funding for Smart Start and More at Four when these children were younger.

Last week the House Health and Human Services Appropriations Subcommittee released a proposed budget that would cut Smart Start funding by 20 percent and included provisions that would dismantle North Carolina's early childhood system.

"Severely cutting our state's high-quality, award-winning childcare program jeopardizes North Carolina's continued success in economic development and job recruitment and hurts our children's future. If Smart Start is cut, teachers and small businesses would be hurt—the early learning industry, comprised mostly of small businesses, sustains tens of thousands of jobs," said Lt. Governor Dalton. "It would be very short-sighted for North Carolina to threaten our future economic success and each child's personal success by inordinate cuts to such a successful and productive program. I encourage each member of the General Assembly to protect Smart Start from these massive cuts."

WHAT: Visit from Lieutenant Governor Walter Dalton

**WHEN: Wednesday, April 20, 2011
9:30 am to 10:30 am**

**WHERE: White Rock Baptist Child Development Center
3400 Fayetteville Street
Durham, NC 27707**

About Durham's Partnership for Children - Making young children a priority.

Founded in 1994 and first funded in 1995 to administer the Smart Start grant in Durham County, the Partnership works as an independent, local nonprofit that serves young children birth to age 5 and their families under North Carolina's nationally recognized initiative to ensure all children enter school healthy and ready to succeed. For more

than 15 years, the Partnership has helped working parents pay for child care, improve the quality of child care and provided health and family support services to thousands of Durham County families with young children. The Partnership works to achieve its mission *To mobilize and unify the Durham community to create and support innovative and successful approaches to serving the needs of children birth to age 5 and their families*, by working with funded partners, groups and organizations in Durham County to support and coordinate efforts impacting young children and their families. The Partnership also administers the More at Four Pre-Kindergarten Program in Durham County serving more than 400 children and the new Early Head Start Grant serving Durham infants and toddlers. For more information about the Partnership, visit www.dpfc.net or call 919-403-6960, ext. 219.