



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Creating smooth transitions for Durham County kindergartners**

Durham's Partnership for Children and Durham Public Schools provide support for parents through Steps to School Parent Nights

**Durham, NC** – As a component of Durham's Transition to Kindergarten Initiative, Durham's Partnership for Children, a *Smart Start Initiative*, and Durham Public Schools (DPS) invites parents of incoming kindergartners to a **Steps to School Parent Night** on Tuesday, March 15 from 6 to 7:45 pm at the DPS Staff Development Center on Hillandale Road. Parents in attendance will rotate through three workshops on topics such as nutrition and physical activity, developing social skills and being healthy and ready for school. Presenters include a nutritionist, inclusion specialist, and two school nurses. Child care will be provided and Interpreters will be available.

Durham's Transition to Kindergarten Initiative is a collaboration between Durham's Partnership for Children and DPS. The transition from preschool or home to kindergarten is one of the most significant transitions that a young child experiences. The Transition to Kindergarten Initiative works to strategically plan experiences that result in schools being ready to receive kindergarten children and that sustain benefits for children by preparing them for success in school.

Research shows that a relationship between pre-kindergarten programs and the public school system can be instrumental in creating long-term positive effects for school children. By offering events like Steps to School Parent Nights, DPS and Partnership staff hope to provide support for parents of nearly 3,000 children entering kindergarten in DPS in the 2011-2012 school year.

The March 15<sup>th</sup> Parent Night is the second in a series of transition events that allows teachers and early educators to have meaningful interaction with parents and promote family engagement in children's learning. The first Steps to School Parent Night was held on February 15 and highlighted early literacy and the final Parent Night will focus on building early skills in science and math and will be held on April 14. For more information, please contact the Partnership.

#### **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](http://www.dpfc.net) or call 919-403-6960, ext. 219.