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For Immediate Release

Jeff Nash
Office of Community Relations
Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools
919-412-7947
jnash@chccs.k12.nc.us

Chapel Hill Public Library and CHCCS Announce *The IDEA Project* *Aimed at expanding student access to library resources*

Chapel Hill, NC – For over 12,000 students and 2,100 teachers and staff in the Chapel Hill-Carrboro City Schools, using Chapel Hill Public Library is about to get a lot easier. Starting in the 2018-19 academic year, students, teachers, and staff can use their school ID number to access all library resources. Called the IDEA Project because a school **ID** number gives **Easy Access** to library resources, the project lets students do everything they can do with a regular library card - log in to research databases, check out print and audio books, and download digital materials - using a familiar number.

Chapel Hill Public Library Director Susan Brown says the initiative reduces barriers to access and supports educational success, two key strategic goals for the Library. “Ask a student for their ID number and they can most likely recite it from memory. Ask them for their library card or card number, and they may have to dig for it. We want to make it as simple as possible to use the library, so we’ve worked out a way that the school ID can function as a library account number as well.”

While the project involves detailed technical processes on the back end, the front end experience is simple. For students who already have an account, this will be an additional way to access that account. For students who don’t have an account, this will create one for them. If they would then like a physical library card, they will just need to stop by the library and get one.

As part of the beginning of the school year process, parents will have the ability to opt out of the IDEA Project. Beginning in September, all students who have not opted out will automatically be enrolled and can use their ID number for easy access to library services and materials.

The IDEA Project grew out of President Barack Obama's national Leaders Library Card Challenge, which encourages local leaders, schools, and libraries to make sure every K-12 student has a library card and knows how to use it to access the learning and recreational resources available to them.

Chapel Hill Mayor Pam Hemminger says it was a challenge that the town was ready to accept. "CHPL and CHCCS have a long history of working together as educational partners. Both organizations share a focus on literacy and learning as a way to build a community where people thrive. The IDEA Project is a natural next step in deepening a relationship that benefits everyone in Chapel Hill."

CHCCS Superintendent Pam Baldwin says that improved literacy and academic achievement is only one benefit of the IDEA Project. "We appreciate the Chapel Hill Library and its partnership with our schools. We do expect that students will benefit academically while igniting their natural curiosity, leading them to become lifelong library users."

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Jeff Nash, Executive Director of Community Relations | jnash@chccs.k12.nc.us | 919-967-8211 x28227 | <http://www.chccs.k12.nc.us>