3-year-old Task Force

RSU 5
Early Childhood Special Education
Meeting 2

Durham Community School
Room 205

09/16/2026

While we settle

Please find your name tag, choose a seat and immerse yourself in the mindset of your favorite three-year-old.

If you require any adjustments to the room to maximize your visual or auditory access to the presentation and the speakers, please come to see Donna Casavant before we begin.



5:30-5:40

Welcome and Thank you

– Our hosts: Durham Community School facilitated by Kate Harrison and the DCS staff

– All 3-year-old task force members

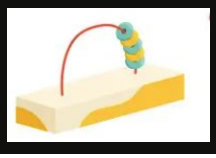
– Happy Birthday to Kelly Wentworth



5:30-5:40

3-year-old attention span version of Introductions: Recapturing our preschool selves; please introduce yourself by sharing:

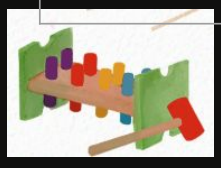
- Your **first name**
- A quick **memory** of words of wisdom from your 3-year-old self or that of a child you know



5:30-5:40

Meeting Norms: Collaboration expectations

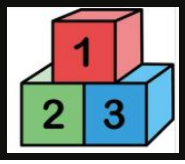
- Stay student centered
- Honor all perspectives
- Assume positive intent
- Speak from experience; listen for understanding
- Be present and engaged
- Keep in constructive and solution oriented
- Be mindful of time and space
- Work towards transparency and trust
- One conversation at a time
- End with commitment to the work



5:40-6:00

Purpose: 3-year-olds in 09/01/2027

- **NOW:** We are on the trajectory to meet the mandate for short term within specific parameters
- **NEXT:** Long term considerations to be expanded to move beyond the mandate



5:40-5:50

A Reminder:



5:40-5:50

A Reminder:



5:40-5:50

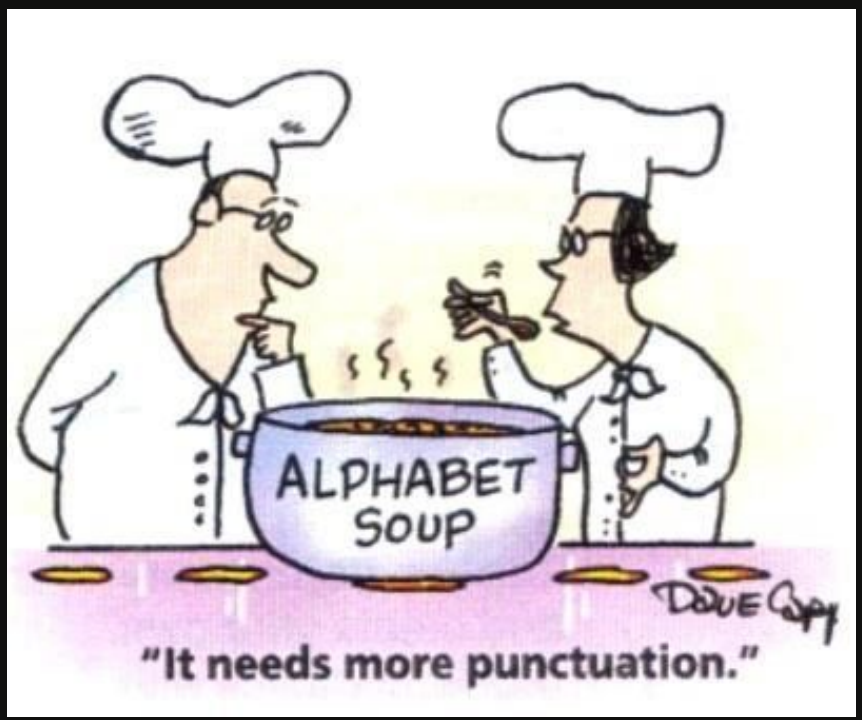
Review of 09/02/2026

- General feedback
- PMI Summary: Win! 75 >>> 31
- What are other districts doing?
- What #s are we expecting?



5:40 - 5:50

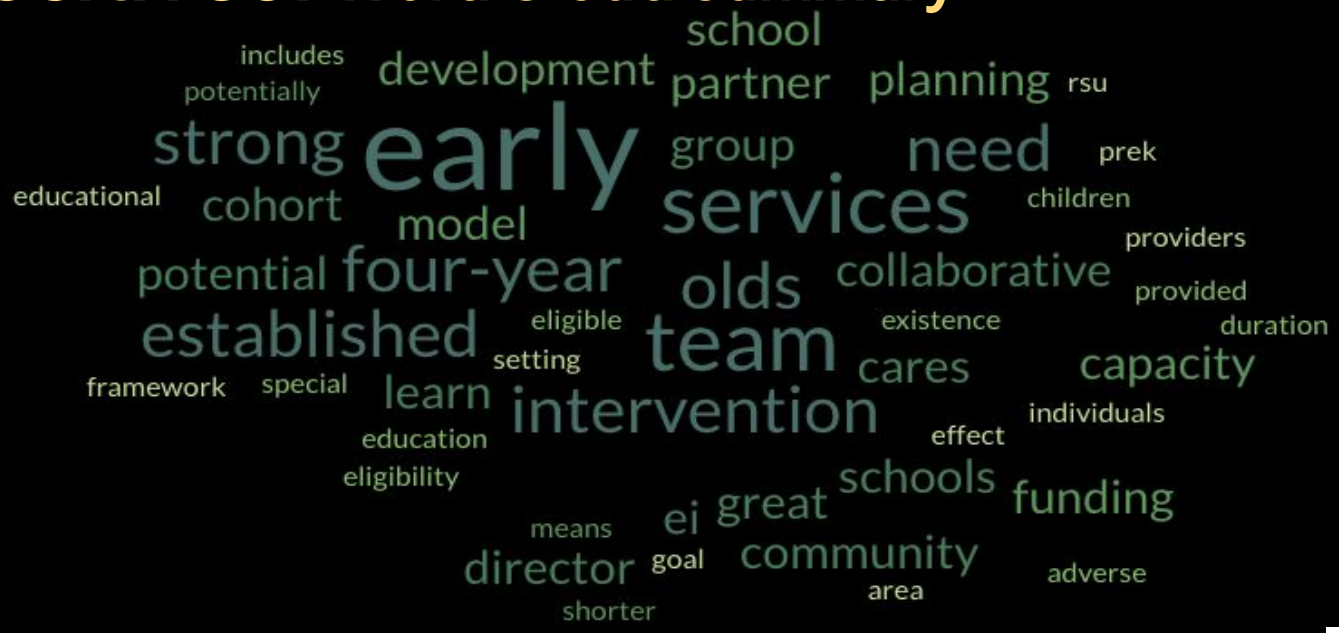
Apology for all the WORDS ahead:





5:40-5:50

Positives: Word Cloud Summary







5:40-5:50

Positives: Chat GPT Takeaway

The district appears **well positioned** to **expand** early intervention because it already has the **people, programs, partnerships, infrastructure**, and **experience** needed to create a **strong and sustainable model** for early learners.





5:40-5:50

Negatives: Word Cloud Summary





5:40-5:50

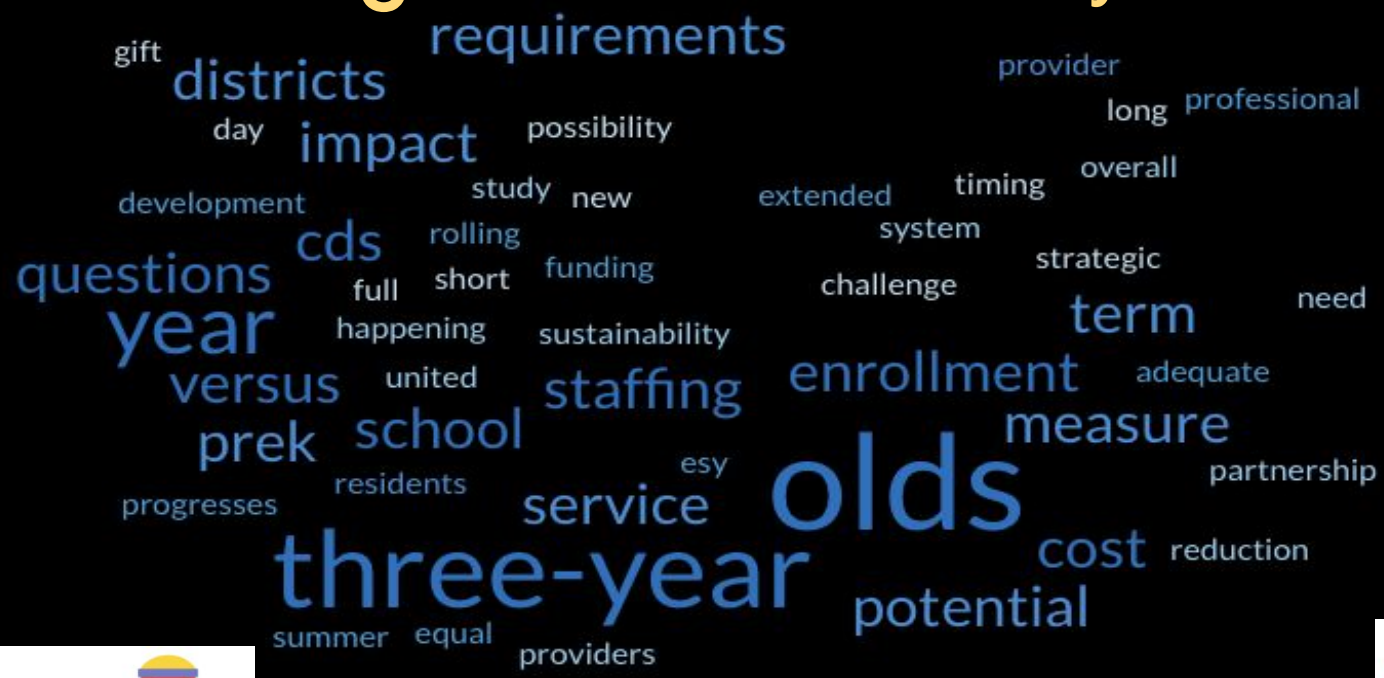
Negatives: Chat GPT Takeaway

The opportunity is significant, but moving forward will require **careful planning** around **financial sustainability, transportation, space, staffing, childcare partnerships, age-appropriate services,** and the **eventual scale and direction** of the program.



5:40-5:50

Interestings: Word Cloud Summary





RSU 5

5:40-5:50

Interesting: Chat GPT Takeaway

The district is facing a **complex** **set of decisions**, but the **mandate** could provide **an opportunity to rethink and strengthen** the early-childhood system for the **long term**. The immediate priorities are to understand the **population** being served, determine the most **sustainable service model**, assess **staffing** and **financial capacity**, learn from **other districts**, and establish clear **measures of effectiveness.**



RSU 5

5:50-6:15

Service Delivery Models: 2025 edition

School Based with access to Special Education Classroom: Center Based Model	School and Community Based with access to Special Education Classroom: Mixed Delivery Model	Community Based without access to Special Education Classroom: Itinerant Based Model
FAPE contingent on enrollment Specialized transportation (in the IEP) **Existing services (EIT)** **New Services** -Special Ed Classroom -Hires -Contracts for services (psych, TOD, TVI, Nurses, BCBA etc.)	**FAPE NOT contingent on enrollment** Specialized transportation (in the IEP and for Itinerants) **Existing services (EIT)** **New Service** -Special Ed Classroom -Hires -Contracts for services (psych, , TOD, TVI, Nurses, BCBA etc.) **Increased Providers** Itinerants in community	**FAPE NOT contingent on enrollment** Specialized transportation (for Itinerants) **Existing services (EIT)** **New Services** - No SpEd Classroom Staff -Hires -Contracts for services (psych, TOD, TVI, Nurses, BCBA etc.) **Increased Providers** Itinerants in community



5:50-6:15

What are other districts doing?

School A (Cohort 2): (parent interview)

- School based; PreK: Head Start, 4yo, embedded at elementary school, PreK for ME.
- 3yo with IEP in 4yo regular ed classroom
- Also assigned to self-contained preK
- SDI and supports either push in or pull out
- Parents appreciated the structure and professionalism of being in the school setting, noted use of best practices in school and lack of credentialing of day care staff (NOT ⭐⭐+ or ⭐⭐⭐ Quality stars).



5:50-6:15

What are other districts doing?

School B (Cohort 1):

- Mixed Delivery
- PreK: is not universal; lottery system for 4yo
  - Some 3yo with high SDI needs in school setting
  - Some 3yo served in daycares
- EI team strong case management and consultative models
- Contracted providers within daycare/preschools outside of school
- School had strong knowledge of daycares and their impact on preK student readiness (not necessarily aligned with ⭐⭐+ or ⭐⭐⭐ Quality stars).
- Successfully worked within block funding
- "Recalibrating" IEPs from those received by Part C

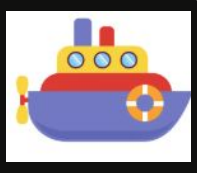


5:50-6:15

What are other districts doing?

School C (Cohort 1):

- Historically lack of access to childcare and EI
- School based with extensive community EI outreach
- PreK: Universal for all 3s and 4s; PreK for ME
  - Special Ed and Related Services
  - Evaluations students 2:5+
  - Case management and service delivery for all
- 40% of preK children with IEP (at the start)
- Begin work with children at age 2: developmental testing, playgroups, parent groups, open houses
- Special ed has steadily declined (⬇️15% two years running)
- Partnering with childcares



5:50-6:15

What are other districts doing?

School D (Cohort 1):

- Mixed Delivery: school in town of residence; one current 3yo with extensive SDI needs
- Mutually agreeable time, parents to bring student into school for services.
- Significant differentiation within classroom to meet needs of all students.
- Related service providers serving other students besides preK (billing separately for preK)
- One outside contracted provider for OT/PT in neighboring town
- Contract with CDS for private school or childcare
- Parent/Community Liaison
- Challenges: outside placements, secondary costs (related to playground equipment)



5:50-6:15

What kind of # are we expecting?

	2026
RSU 5 26 - 4yo	28
In referral	2
New referrals?	
Allocations and child counts	
Cut off for students turning 4 after 10/15/2026	

(as of 09/14/2026)	2027
CDS serving	15
27-28 3yo	6+
27-28 4yo	9+
Other 4s via Child Find	?
EI4ME (2:9)	?



6:15-6:30

Decisions Decisions Decisions: Round Table Discussion Take One

- **Remember we are thinking bigger than mandate**
  - **Exceptional service**
  - **Supports families**
  - **Builds a powerful foundation**
  - **Supports the community**



6:15-6:30

Decisions Decisions Decisions: Round Table Discussion

Which knight invented King Arthur's Round Table?

- Sir Cumference

Why was Sir Cumference the roundest knight at the Round Table?

- Because he ate too much pi



6:30-6:35

BREAK

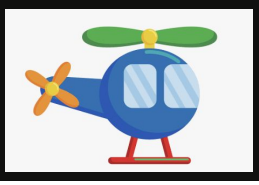
- Take a short break.
- Grab a snack or water.
- Feel free to discuss in pairs or small groups related to our first hour.



6:35-7:20

Decisions Decisions Decisions: Now what? Then what?

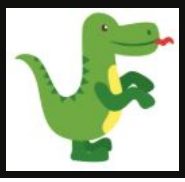
We, at RSU 5, aspire to create a high quality system that provides exceptional services to our youngest learners, supports families, and builds a powerful foundation for future success across the district.



6:35-7:20

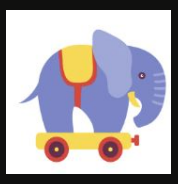
Short Term >>> Long Term: Needs & Wants

- Space and capacity:
  - preK space – currently one free classroom DCS pm.
  - Capacity for adding students to special purpose classroom
  - Minimal to no students on waitlist for preK currently
- “Recalibrating” IEPs received
- EI team model redefined from inception
- Predictability of numbers (people and $)
- Additional MOUs with contracted providers
- “Reasonable and necessary”
- Meeting or exceeding?



7:20-7:30

Closing: What is one dream you would like to see realized to take RSU 5 from mandate to marvellous regarding serving our youngest learners?



7:20-7:30

Thank you!



September 30, 2026
5:30-7:30
Morse Street School,
Music Room (105)



If you would have appreciated any adjustments to the room to maximize your visual or auditory access to the presentation and the discussion, please let Donna Casavant know so changes can be made before our next meeting. ank you.