

Proclamation of Support for Infant Feeding Practices in Durham Public Schools

WHEREAS, families are the priority in the Durham Public Schools, and part of helping families to thrive is ensuring that there is employer and community support to develop and sustain healthy lifestyles;

WHEREAS, according to the American Academy of Pediatrics, American Academy of Family Physicians, and other leading health organizations, human milk is the optimal food for infants; and

WHEREAS, breastfeeding and chestfeeding benefits the entire family and is associated with lifelong health for children, including social-emotional development and lower rates of childhood illness, such as obesity, diabetes, and infectious diseases, as well as maternal benefits, such as a reduced risk of maternal breast and ovarian cancers and a faster recovery from childbirth; and

WHEREAS, providing adequate time and comfortable lactation spaces, that are clean and are not bathrooms, to nurse or express their milk supports our teachers, students, and staff to continue to breastfeed/chestfeed and offer expressed milk, when they return to work or school; and

WHEREAS, providing a written policy and sharing it with employees and families reflects our commitment to promoting and supporting breastfeeding, chestfeeding, and human milk feeding; and

WHEREAS, encouraging schools to include breastfeeding, chestfeeding, and human milk feeding curricula as outlined in the NC Standard Course of Study normalizes breastfeeding by providing learning opportunities and books that illustrate nursing animals and babies; and

WHEREAS, providing sufficient refrigerated space ensures that all lactating teachers, staff and students in our schools are able to properly and safely store their milk; and

WHEREAS, providing a family-friendly environment includes actively inviting breastfeeding and chestfeeding families to volunteer at our schools and welcoming them to nurse their babies; and

WHEREAS, by providing a supportive and welcoming environment, lactation friendly schools encourage families of all races, ethnicities, and family structures to initiate and continue optimal infant feeding/nursing;

This, the 24 day of 2025