



NEWS RELEASE

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WAKE COUNTY INVESTMENT EXPANDS UNIVERSAL SCHOOL BREAKFAST PROGRAM

13 Additional Schools Now Offer Free Meals to All Students

More students in the Wake County Public School System can now start their day with a nutritious, free breakfast, thanks to funding from the Wake County Board of Commissioners. Their \$90,000 allocation in the Fiscal Year 2016 budget paid to expand the Universal School Breakfast program from 12 schools in FY15 to 25 schools in FY16.

“Research shows that children who eat breakfast in the morning do better in school and have fewer behavioral problems,” said Commissioner Matt Calabria who visited East Garner Elementary School during breakfast time this morning. “By more than doubling the number of schools where we offer this important meal for free, we can help more students shift their focus from being hungry to being successful in the classroom.”

Wake County partnered with WCPSS to make the expansion possible. All children – regardless of financial means – who attend the 25 schools offering Universal School Breakfast are welcome to take advantage of the free meals. This approach improves accessibility and helps remove any stigma associated with accepting reduced-price meals.

“We are committed to helping combat childhood hunger in Wake County, and expanding this program is a positive step towards achieving that goal,” said Dr. James West, Chairman of the Wake County Board of Commissioners. “I commend the County and the school system for working together to effectively support the health and educational needs of the youngest members of our community.”

The schools selected to offer Universal School Breakfast are chosen based on current eligibility levels and participation rates to maximize the program's benefits.

(Editor's note: Commissioner Matt Calabria will be available for media interviews today at 12:30 p.m. in front of the Justice Center entrance at the corner of Martin and McDowell

*streets. Photos of Commissioner Calabria touring East Garner Elementary during breakfast time today are available at *insert weblink*.)*

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