

RESOLUTION DIRECTING DISTRICT 97 COORDINATION WITH LOCAL GOVERNING BODIES TO DEVELOP AN INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT AND TO OUTLINE SUSTAINABLE FUNDING COMMITMENTS TO SUPPORT THE OBJECTIVES IDENTIFIED IN THE 2009 EARLY CHILDHOOD STRATEGIC PLAN DEVELOPED UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE COLLABORATION FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION

WHEREAS, Oak Park Elementary School District 97 is committed to assuring equality of opportunity for all residents and accepts that this commitment fundamentally requires that District 97 proactively take steps to enable all children to succeed and achieve their full potential; and

WHEREAS, developmental research conducted over a period of more than forty years has conclusively demonstrated that 85% of brain development occurs by age three; and

WHEREAS, economic and social policy research has determined that high-quality early learning environments coupled with support for at-risk families lead to lower rates of participation in special education, lower rates of involvement with the criminal justice system as both youths and into adulthood, higher rates of high school graduation, and higher incomes and rates of home ownership; and generate inflation-adjusted annual rates of return on investment of 7-10%; and

WHEREAS, families at all income levels experience isolation and stress when trying to locate early childhood services and almost all Oak Park families with children use some form of non-parental care for their children between birth and kindergarten; and

WHEREAS, the 4,800 children under kindergarten age in Oak Park represent an increase of 11% since the year 2000, and among this most fragile population 16%, or approximately 800 children, are at risk of academic failure due to circumstances including individual developmental delays, family income status, and stressed family situations; and

WHEREAS, Oak Park Elementary School District 97 struggles with a persistent achievement gap among students from differing racial and socio-economic subgroups, and research has established that two-thirds of this achievement gap is already in place among these children as they enter their kindergarten year; and

WHEREAS, in 2002-2003 the six independently elected local governing bodies (Oak Park Elementary School District 97, Oak Park and River Forest High School District 200, the Oak Park Public Library, Oak Park Township, the Park District of Oak Park, and the Village of Oak Park) jointly created the Collaboration for Early Childhood Care and Education ("Collaboration"), thereby bringing into existence an organization to focus on the needs of young children while acknowledging that, although no single jurisdiction is solely responsible for coordinating and providing early childhood services, all jurisdictions benefit and advance their missions through this engagement; and

WHEREAS, the Collaboration has worked in an innovative, inclusive, and effective manner to overcome the fragmentation and scarcity of services that typically characterize the early

childhood field, instead leveraging and integrating community resources to better meet the needs of Oak Park's and River Forest's youngest children and their families; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Education of Oak Park and River Forest High School District 200 and the Oak Park Village Board joined together in 2009 to fund a community-wide strategic planning process in which District 97 administrative leadership participated under the leadership of the Collaboration to identify the necessary components of a comprehensive, fully integrated early childhood system of high-quality programs and services, and to advance its development and implementation;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Education of Oak Park Elementary School District 97 does hereby commit District 97 to invest in high-quality early childhood programs and to work with fellow governing jurisdictions to develop and put forward for adoption an Intergovernmental Agreement specifying implementation timeframes and commensurate inter-jurisdictional support for the delivery of a comprehensive, fully integrated early childhood system of high-quality programs and services that foster physical, cognitive, and social-emotional development during the critical first five years of life, as contemplated in the strategic plan of 2009; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that, the Board of Education of Oak Park Elementary School District 97 directs the Superintendent to incorporate as part of the Fiscal Year 2014 Operating Budget, funding for its proportionate share of costs associated with implementation of the first year of these comprehensive services, predicated on a three-year implementation timeframe, and that the Board of Education of Oak Park Elementary School District 97 intends to continue to allocate its proportionate share of necessary funding in the future to support systems for early childhood development as set forth in the 2009 strategic plan;

THIS RESOLUTION shall be in full force and effect from and after its adoption and approval as provided by law.

ADOPTED and APPROVED this 22nd day of January, 2013 pursuant to a roll call vote as follows:

AYES:

NAYS:

ABSENT:

Peter Barber
President

ATTEST:

Sheryl Marinier

Secretary