



CASE FOR SUPPORT

Our Community – the challenge:

In 2013, Charlotte was ranked “50th out of 50 in economic mobility among the largest US cities – specifically the ability of a child born in the bottom income quintile to rise to the top income quintile as an adult.” The community reacted to this alarming study and the Economic Opportunity Task Force was established, charged with identifying existing barriers, understanding determining factors and providing tangible recommendations that will begin to address this disparaging “achievement gap” and “opportunity gap” in our community. In March 2017, the Economic Opportunity Task Force Report was released, specifying three major determinants: 1. Early Care & Education; 2. College and Career Readiness and 3. Child and Family Stability, each with strategies toward improving upward mobility.

Our Organization – the response:

Family Impact Fund (FIF) is positioned to address the three aforementioned determinants and the following specific strategies which best align with our organization’s mission:

- “Make the necessary investments to ensure all children in Mecklenburg County from birth to age five have access to quality early childhood care and education”
- “Expand and strengthen support for first-generation and other low-socioeconomic students who need help transitioning to and completing postsecondary education.”
- “Help more families get on and stay on a path to living-wage income and asset building”

Family Impact Board is committed to each of these determinants and strategies as reflected in our:

Mission

The Family Impact Fund provides tuition assistance to children from low-income families for high-quality early education and child care, helping parents to maximize their employment or continue their education.

Vision

Access to high-quality early education and child care interrupts the cycle of poverty, empowering two generations at a time. Parents realize financial sustainability and children are prepared for kindergarten, positioning families for a lifetime of success.

Our Program:

Our organization is committed to meet this challenge by decreasing the child care subsidy waiting list and expanding the “benefits cliff” (200% Federal Poverty Level < 100% State Median Income).

As there is limited government funding allocated toward child care subsidies for Charlotte each year, there is a perpetual waiting list - 1,567 children as of 8-2-18. Hence, parents who need to work aren’t securing employment, parents who need to attend school aren’t completing their degrees and children who need child care aren’t learning at an optimal level during the critical early developmental years.

Family Impact Fund is providing access for economically disadvantaged children (birth - pre-k) to experience high-quality (4 and 5 star-rated facilities), full-day/year-round education and child care which will positively impact their school readiness. This allows their parents to work full-time, advance in their jobs and/or continue their education.

In addition, when parents are offered a salary increase which places them over the maximum income eligibility level (the “benefits cliff”) of the Child Care Subsidy Program, they are forced to make a choice: Is the smallest salary increase over 200% Federal Poverty Level worth the loss of the subsidy for high-quality child care, such that a \$0.25/hour (\$43/month) raise will increase their child care cost for one child from \$400 to \$800 per month and two children from \$400 to \$1,600 per month. Our board recognizes this dilemma and is committed to continue funding child care costs for families going over the benefits cliff - between 200% Federal Poverty Level and 100% State Median Income, on a sliding income scale. This provides a path for families toward sustainable self-sufficiency in order to realize upward economic mobility.

Family Impact Fund is collaborating with the well-established, highly respected Child Care Resources, Inc.(CCRI) to administer our program. CCRI is identifying children from low-income families on the Child Care Subsidy waiting list and/or families that have or are approaching the maximum income level due to a salary increase.

Our Appeal:

According to esteemed researcher, James J. Heckman, “high-quality, birth-to-five early childhood programs for disadvantaged children yields a 13% return on investment per child”, which directly translates to improved education, economic, health, and social outcomes. Family Impact Fund needs your generous support to decrease both the “achievement gap” for economically disadvantaged children and the “opportunity gap” for their parents. Together, we can impact the most vulnerable in our community and transform their lives forever!