



NEWS from the Shelby County Mayor's Office

Lee Harris, Mayor

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**SHELBY COUNTY MAYOR LEE HARRIS ANNOUNCES LARGEST PRE-K
INVESTMENT IN COUNTY HISTORY IN FY2020 BUDGET**

Shelby County will have a dedicated funding source for Pre-K for the first time.

Memphis, TN - Shelby County Mayor Lee Harris announces \$6 million in the FY2020 budget for early childhood education. That represents one of the largest investments in Pre-K in county history. In addition, Mayor Harris' budget proposal is expected to outline a dedicated funding source for early childhood education.

“If funding is approved, we have a chance to increase literacy, the likelihood of high school graduation, and, further down the road, employability,” says Mayor Lee Harris. “We have a chance to ignite a boom in community benefit.”

“Strategic investments in our community, like saving and expanding Pre-K education, are incredibly important to our growth and success as a city and county,” says Shelby County Commissioner Michael Whaley, Chairman of the Education Committee. “We know how crucial a strong start is to a child's future, and by ensuring high quality Pre-K and early childhood education options we can provide more students in Shelby County with the opportunity to succeed.”

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In 2014, Shelby County received grant money to fund 50 classrooms and add 1,000 Pre-K seats. That funding is set to expire on June 30th.

The FY2020 budget includes \$5.5 million for traditional Pre-K classrooms. Another \$500,000 is allocated to Porter Leath for Early Head Start. Porter Leath will use the county investment to leverage more than \$4 million in additional resources.

Mayor Harris plans to present the full budget overview to the Shelby County Commission on April 29, 2019.

(end of release)