

Dear Parent,

Pitt County Schools has been invited to participate in **Early Supports for Student Success (ESSS)**, a program designed to meet student academic, behavioral, and emotional needs by integrating and strengthening our student support services.

ESSS is funded by the U.S. Department of Education through a grant to East Carolina University (ECU) for the 2021-22 to 2024-25 school years. As part of the project, ECU researchers will train our staff in special teaming and student support strategies. In addition, licensed behavioral health clinicians will be available for students who need one-to-one support at no cost to you (separate parental permission is necessary). ECU researchers will assess how well ESSS improves student outcomes, including grades, discipline, and academic test results, as well as the cost-effectiveness of the project when compared to typical practices. But prior to analyzing any results, your child's information will be completely de-identified (names removed).

The Institutional Review Board that oversees this research has determined that parental permission be "opt out." This means that if you do not want your child's data to be included in this research, you can "opt out" of the evaluation. To do so, please read and sign the attached form and return it to any one of your child's teachers or email your request to harrink@pitt.k12.nc.us. Otherwise, your child's de-identified data will be included in the program evaluation.

You will be notified separately if your child is referred for individual assistance at any point. One-to-one interventions will not be provided without your permission.

If you have any questions regarding ESSS, please contact Allison Dembowski, project coordinator (252)328-1377 or dembowskia22@ecu.edu or Dr. Brandon K. Schultz, Principal Investigator, at 252-737-4956. A website describing the study can be found at sites.ecu.edu/esss.