

Statement by Board Chair Erika Y. Mitchell on the Importance of Inclusive Economic Growth

Economic growth is most powerful when it is inclusive—when it creates opportunities for all, not just a select few. True progress is measured not only by financial gains but by the expansion of access, equity, and empowerment in every community, particularly those that have been historically marginalized.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s vision of economic justice remains as relevant today as it was decades ago. He understood that civil rights and economic rights are deeply intertwined, and that without financial empowerment, true freedom remains out of reach for many. As we gather for this historic town hall on April 4, 2025, we must ask ourselves: Where do we go from here?

To achieve inclusive economic growth, we must take bold and intentional steps:

1. Invest in Financial Literacy & Education – Equipping individuals with the tools to build wealth and make informed financial decisions is foundational to long-term economic stability.
2. Expand Access to Capital & Entrepreneurship – Small businesses are the backbone of our economy. Ensuring that minority-owned businesses and underserved entrepreneurs have access to funding and resources is critical.
3. Strengthen Workforce Development & Upward Mobility – Investing in job training, skills development, and equitable hiring practices will create pathways to high-paying, sustainable careers for all.
4. Bridge the Digital Divide – Technology is a driving force in today's economy. Ensuring universal access to digital tools, broadband, and STEM education will help level the playing field.
5. Commit to Policy & Corporate Accountability – Both public and private sectors must be accountable for fostering inclusive growth through equitable policies, fair wages, and meaningful community investment.

As we honor Dr. King's legacy, we must turn words into action. By working together—across sectors and communities—we can build an economy that truly works for everyone. The future of inclusive economics depends on our collective commitment to change.

Erika Y. Mitchell

Board Chair

Atlanta Board of Education

