



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** R-062-23, **Version:** 1

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Council Members McPherson, Whitman and Hobbs

**Recognizing Dr. Helen C. Cooks, creator of the University of Toledo TOLEDO EXCEL initiative, which, for more than 30 years has uniquely serviced the academic needs groups traditionally underrepresented in higher education.**

WHEREAS, Dr. Helen C. Cooks, creator and guiding light of TOLEDO EXCEL, recognized there was a gap in academic assistance offered to certain promising children of above average achievement and became determined to fill that need, so, in 1989, 50 rising high school freshmen with an above average Grade Point Average (GPA) from groups traditionally underrepresented in higher education became UT's first EXCEL class; and

WHEREAS, since it began in 1988, TOLEDO EXCEL, a scholarship incentive program at The University of Toledo, has been striving to prepare students for success in college, the makeup of which, involves student members of groups under-represented in higher education-including African, Appalachian, Asian, Hispanic and Native Americans-in pre-college academic programs to increase their self-esteem, cultural awareness of diversity, and civic involvement; and

WHEREAS, among EXCEL's services to high school students are Saturday School, Summer Institutes, tutoring, academic retreat weekends, campus visits, advising for strategic admissions and financial aid, and ethnographic field studies in the U.S. and abroad; and

WHEREAS, criteria for participation in EXCEL are stringent because applications far exceed space available, and come from students attend annual Summer Institutes and may travel within the U.S. or to countries such as Mexico, China, Ghana, or South Africa, and student attendance at academic retreats during the year, and parental support, are required; and

WHEREAS, each student is expected to maintain at least a 3.00 GPA in his/her high school academic curriculum, EXCEL's innovative curriculum, designed to challenge students with content not closely resembling "regular" school curricula, has included: The Aging Process, Ethnic America, Global Cities, The Civil Rights Movement, and Global Diversity, including the Partnership for Educational Awareness and Cultural Exchange (PEACE Project); and among academic skills, writing is emphasized, as is research on Civil Rights in the U.S. and Human Rights around the world; and

WHEREAS, to date, there are more than 1,500 students in the EXCEL "pipeline," and of groups I - XXVIII, 96% have enrolled in college, 74% have enrolled at UTOLEDO, and 84% of EXCEL scholars are college graduates or students matriculating towards college graduation. Students for EXCEL Group XXXIII are being recruited; and

WHEREAS, enrollment and achievements of EXCEL students is but a partial return on investment in the program, as is recognition that the program helps dreams be realized; NOW, THEREFORE,

Be it resolved by the Council of the City of Toledo:

SECTION 1. That, Dr. Helen C. Cooks, and the University of Toledo EXCEL initiative that she created, is recognized for the more than 30 years of unique services offered to fill the academic needs of groups traditionally underrepresented in higher education.

SECTION 2. That this Resolution shall take effect and be in force from and after the earliest period allowed by law.

Adopted: February 21, 2023, as an emergency measure:  
yeas 12, nays 0.

Attest:  
Gerald E. Dendinger  
Clerk of Council

Matt Cherry  
President of Council

Approved: February 22, 2023  
Wade Kapszukiewicz  
Mayor