

League of Women Voters Meeting Questions

SAY YES QUESTIONS:

1. How do you and the BOE plan to help resolve the Say Yes situation?

We will continue to work with Say Yes on connecting students with opportunities and services that can help them achieve greater success PreK-12 as well as access community services and supports, including scholarships, that will help them achieve post-secondary success. As a reminder, the Class of 2016 earned more than \$160 million in college scholarships, not counting the \$5.85 million awarded by Say Yes Guilford.

2. Can you share your thoughts about the future of the Say Yes program?

We understand Say Yes needed to change in order to continue support for those students who need it the most, but we are also deeply disappointed for our students and families who were expecting and counting on these funds to go to college. GCS will, as we always have, provide guidance for all of our students seeking financial aid in order to achieve their dreams of a college education.

Can you explain what happened with Say Yes? Is there a way to ramp up their fundraising big time?

While local and national leaders worked in good faith to create a scholarship program in the fall of 2015 that would be available to the class of 2016, the Scholarship Board determined that the formulas for scholarship awards were not sustainable for the long term. The fact is, the first year payout for scholarships was \$5.85 million. That is \$5 million more than was originally projected. The Say Yes Scholarship Board has stated it will not commit to spending money it does not have, and that it will continue to need community support to raise funds. I'm sure they would welcome assistance in this effort.

3. Do you have any insight into the solution of the "Say Yes" dilemma? – The adjustments to the scholarship program are designed to bring the total dollar amount of college scholarships awarded to Guilford County Schools high school graduates in line with anticipated fundraising, and to assure that scholarship awards give priority to students and families most in need. GCS is one of many partners in this community effort, and we support Say Yes Guilford's efforts in continuing to raise funds to support GCS graduates.

4. Sharon Contreras, what will happen to the "Say Yes" students who did not get into college? Who weren't given what was promised? – Under the revised scholarship program, the Scholarship Board was unable to "grandfather" students from the class of 2016. This is because total four-year costs for that class would be in the \$20-24 million range and the Board could not