

Report from the LWVPT Public Education Roundtable Discussion on Poverty in the Public Schools in Guilford County

The LWVPT Public Education Roundtable held its second community forum this fall on Thursday, November 30, with more than 30 people in attendance. The program focused on the effect of poverty on the lives of students in the Guilford County Schools, their family and the community. Speakers were Ashton Wheeler Clemmons, former principal at Brooks Global in Greensboro and Oak Hill Elementary in High Point, now assistant superintendent in the Thomasville City Schools where poverty is at 100%, Marcus Gause, Principal at Andrews High in High Point and Dr. Nora Carr, Chief of Staff for the Guilford County Public Schools. Elected officials included Dr. Goldie Wells, Greensboro City Council, District 2 and Dianne Bellamy-Small, member of the Guilford County Board of Education. Reporters from the News and Record and the High Point Enterprise were in attendance. Jessie Pounds of the News and Record wrote a front page article appearing in the Friday, December 1 paper that captured the speaker's remarks as to the high level of poverty in the Guilford County Public Schools and the myriad of implications and manifestations. In the December 2nd edition of the High Point Enterprise, a front page article by Cinde Ingram spoke to the growing percentage of families in the Guilford County Schools who live below the poverty line and lack the needed resources for opportunities as addressed by administrators Clemmons and Gause.

The engaged audience responded with deep concern and commitment to help address the issue. The League co-leaders invited those in attendance to send to them any ideas for follow-up. All suggested strategies for ways the League can address this issue will be considered by the LWVPT Public Education Roundtable Advisory Committee at its next meeting in early January.

The next Roundtable forum will address the re-segregation of schools and will be held in March, 2018. The Public Education Roundtable will present Lunch with the League the third Tuesday of February.