

LWV C-M Education Committee Statement

given at the 4/26/16 Charlotte Mecklenburg Board of Education Meeting

Good evening. I'm Beth Springston, Interim President of the League of Women Voters of Charlotte-Mecklenburg, an organization that has studied and advocated on education issues for over 96 years at the local, state and national levels.

We support the revised Guiding Principles you have drafted, They offer some mechanisms to:

(1) reduce concentrations of poverty and (2) increase socio-economic diversity. We believe this will advance the education of **all** students and prepare them for the 21st century work environments.

We support your proposal to construct attendance boundaries that will assemble more socio-economically diverse student populations in home schools - and will do this even more when new schools are brought on-line.

Similarly, we agree that such diversity can be promoted by (1) the strategic placement of magnet schools and (2) by considering socio-economic criteria in magnet and lottery decisions. The League applauds the School Board for using language in the Principles that calls on **all** municipal agencies to work together and to follow the Board's lead to find ways to reduce concentrations of poverty. Through advocacy, budgeting, planning and housing decisions, many facets of the problems stemming from segregated schools can be addressed.

The School Board cannot fix this alone, and we call on the rest of the community for solutions to realize the CMS vision for each child. One initiative that immediately comes to mind is your call for a bond package. We support the bond package and appeal to other elected officials and residents to support it, too.

The bond funding will be inextricably linked to the success of student assignment revisions. If we are serious about accomplishing the goals of the assignment plan, we need to provide the funding to implement it.

Thank you for your time