

'Say Yes' effort in Guilford County Schools gets \$5 million boost

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A partnership that could mean college scholarships for

public high school graduates in Guilford County got a \$5 million boost.

Today the Phillips Foundation announced a \$5 million donation toward the fundraising goal of organizations working to make Guilford County [a Say Yes to Education community](#). That is the largest donation the foundation has made to date.

"This is a once-in-a-generation opportunity for Guilford County," said Elizabeth Phillips, executive director of the foundation.

'Say Yes' initiative considers Guilford

The effort could help students graduate from high school and get

help with attending college.



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Guilford County is the lead contender to be the first Say Yes to Education partnership

community outside of the northeastern United States. For now, the nonprofit organization has partnership communities in New York state and in Philadelphia.

Guilford County Schools and the Guilford Education Alliance, along with the Community Foundation of Greater Greensboro and the Community Foundation of High Point, are working on securing the partnership. The initial fundraising goal is \$28 million.

The groups will also have to demonstrate community buy-in for the effort.

If successful, the local partnership would mean Guilford County Schools graduates get last dollar tuition scholarships, which would cover the gap between tuition costs and other scholarships and grants. The scholarships would be available to all students graduating from Guilford County Schools, regardless of income, starting with the Class of 2016.

A partnership with Say Yes would also mean more local support for issues occurring outside of school that might hinder a child's academic success, such as healthcare and legal assistance.

Almost 60 percent of Guilford County Schools students qualify for free or reduced-price lunch, a federal poverty indicator.

"This initiative is transformative in what it can do for our children and what it can do for our community," said Alan Duncan, chairman of the Guilford County Board of Education.

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