



SOLUTIONS FOR DELAWARE SCHOOLS

VOL 1.

*Redistricting in the City of Wilmington and
New Castle County: A Transition, Resource,
and Implementation Plan*

WILMINGTON EDUCATION IMPROVEMENT COMMISSION

Solutions for Delaware Schools

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Charles Park's statue "Louis L. Redding - Advocate for Equality" outside the Louis L. Redding City County Building on French Street in Wilmington, Delaware.

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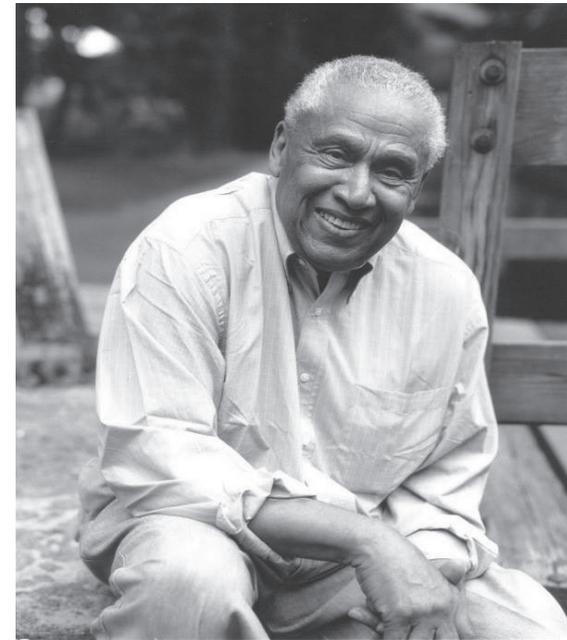
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In Memoriam

“Deeds, Not Words.”

JAMES H. GILLIAM, SR.
1920–2015

Preface: Strengthening Delaware Public Education

Delawareans:

This book is the first volume in the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission's series, *Solutions for Delaware Schools*. It will be followed by reports that focus on key areas of the Commission's mandate: meeting the needs of students in poverty, improving charter and district collaboration, and strengthening parent, educator, and community engagement in support of Delaware's public schools. The Commission also will submit an annual report to the people of Delaware, the Governor, General Assembly, and State Board of Education (State Board) that tracks progress against the milestones set out in this Plan and that also informs our citizens and leaders on actions needed to address the challenges facing public education throughout our state.

In front of us now—for the first time since *Brown v Board* (1954)—is the opportunity to equitably provide funding for low-income students, English language learners and other students with special needs statewide and to significantly reduce the variability and fragmentation, which is particularly acute in the City of Wilmington. There have been many attempts to get this right in our state's history and unfortunately, inertia has always won the day. This time must be different.

On August 4, 2015, Governor Markell signed two pieces of legislation passed with overwhelming support by the Delaware General Assembly: Senate Bill (SB) 122 and House Bill (HB) 148. These two pieces of legislation created the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission and gave it the opportunity to build an expansive coalition to transform Delaware schools. The Commission has done exactly that and produced the Plan published in this book as the first key step for the systematic improvement of Delaware public education to better serve all students.

The Commission was established with a broad statewide mandate, extending until June 30, 2021, to advise the Governor and General Assembly on improving the availability of high-quality public education, meeting the needs of all Delaware schools with high concentrations of low-income students, English language learners and other students at risk, and recommending policies to promote the continuous improvement of public education.

The initial focus of the Commission's attention has been Wilmington and New Castle County because SB 122 mandated the Commission to develop a plan for approval by the State Board of Education to alter district boundaries in Wilmington and New Castle County and submit it by December 31, 2015. That Plan was approved by the State Board on March 17, 2016 and is highlighted by provisions that stipulate the "necessary and sufficient resources" needed to carry out the plan, strengthen schools, and improve the learning outcomes of students. Implementation is subject to approval of a Joint Resolution of the General Assembly that must be signed by the Governor in support of the action of the State Board.

While the Plan presented in this book is focused on Wilmington and New Castle County, the Commission's work includes specific statewide support for improvements in schools with high concentrations of low-income students, English language learners and other students at risk.

After 60 years of inertia, waiting is no longer an option.



Tony Allen, Ph.D.
Chair, Wilmington Education Improvement Commission

Acknowledgements

Citizens—from every corner of Delaware and every side of the issues and recommendations we have highlighted—have been integral to the work of the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission and our predecessor group, the Wilmington Education Advisory Committee. More than 25,000 Delawareans have been directly engaged in our efforts and thousands more have watched intensely as the Commission has led the most substantive and transparent dialogue on any major public policy reform in a generation. That dialogue has shaped every solution we have presented since the fall of 2014 and will continue to be critical to our work as we move forward.

While all those who have been leading the charge are too many to name, special recognition goes to the following:

- Governor Jack Markell, who continues to hold steady in his belief that this is the moment we won't get again.
- Drs. Henry Harper and Joseph Pika, one a former superintendent and teacher and the other former State Board of Education president, who led the Commission's Redistricting Committee that came up with a plan that is much more about fundamental supports for kids than it is about simply redrawing the lines.
- Mike Jackson, Deputy Controller General of Delaware and Jill Floore, Chief Financial Officer for the Red Clay Consolidated School District, who led the Commission's Funding Student Success Committee that developed recommendations that could, for first time in 70 years, provide needed funding statewide for low-income students, English language learners and special education students, K-3.
- Attorneys Thomas Driscoll and Ian Connor Bifferato, of Bifferato, LLC, who have provided consistently excellent legal counsel at no cost to the Commission.
- The northern New Castle County School District Board of Education presidents, superintendents, and their staff, whose partnership was historic and led to a plan in which each made significant contributions to and included a renewed commitment to their respective city students.
- The members of the Delaware State Board of Education, led by President Dr. Teri Gray, whose due diligence in considering their own important and limited power in this process, asked hard and thoughtful questions, pressed us on the impact on student achievement, affirmed our plan and ultimately strengthened our work.

And last, Dr. Dan Rich and the staff and students of the Institute for Public Administration at the University of Delaware. Dan in particular has served as the Commission's Policy Director from the very beginning. If Dan were just providing his insight and counsel, both of which are particularly relevant and substantive in this work, we would have all been fortunate. But Dan has provided us much more than that. He is working hard to ensure that our efforts are grounded in research, put students first in everything we do, and can stand as a public record and legacy for many years to come. It is the capstone

in a career of an outstanding academician, university executive, teacher, activist, Delawarean, and man.

All of us on the Commission are very aware that we stand on broad shoulders of many crusaders who have come before us. In that spirit, what we have said to ourselves, and to those whose decisions on these matters could determine the educational future of thousands and thousands of kids throughout our state, is simple, "It's Our Turn! Let's not miss the moment ..."

The Commission has been fortunate to have attracted the contributions and support from individuals and institutions in all sectors.

The Committee of 100
 Delaware Black Caucus
 Delaware Business Roundtable
 Delaware State Board of Education
 Delaware State Chamber of Commerce
 League of Women Voters of Delaware
 Metropolitan Wilmington Urban League
 Nemours Health and Prevention Services
 New Castle County Chamber of Commerce
 Rodel Foundation of Delaware
 The Brooks Fellowship
 The Fund for Urban Education
 The Wilmington Education Strategy Think Tank
 University of Delaware
 Delaware State University
 United Way of Delaware
 Vision Coalition of Delaware
 Wilmington Head Start, Inc.

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Wilmington Education Historical Timeline²

1897	Separate educational system is encoded in 1897 constitution.
1921	Delaware General Assembly (GA) requires separate but equal schools; 50 separate school districts operate in the state.
1954	Brown v. Board of Education; desegregation ordered, but compliance is limited.
1956	Evans v. Buchanan first brought to court; court orders desegregation, but implementation is delayed.
1957	U.S. District Court requires Delaware to develop a comprehensive desegregation plan.
1965	State Board of Education (State Board) adopts resolution to close smaller schools and phase out the last “black school district.”
1968	GA passes Education Advancement Act, consolidates smaller districts (Wilmington excluded), and provides equalization funding.
1971	Education Advancement Act is challenged in U.S. Supreme Court; Evans v. Buchanan reopened.
1974	U.S. District Court decides Wilmington schools are segregated; Education Advancement Act declared unconstitutional.
1976	Evans v. Buchanan; court-mandated inter-district busing upheld through repeated appeals.
1978	“9–3” busing school-desegregation plan is implemented.
1980–1981	GA passes law prompting State Board to create four districts in New Castle County; court upholds.
1980–1990s	Sustained pressure to desegregate districts in Delaware, but also gradual loosening of desegregation standards nationally.

1993	State of Delaware requests unitary status for four districts; U.S. District Court assents (1995).
1995–1996	Court-ordered federal supervision of desegregation ends; busing continues largely unchanged.
1995	GA formally amends state constitution to abolish separate education system.
1995	GA passes legislation allowing charter schools.
1996	Delaware School Choice Program is approved (partly a response to busing).
1998	Wilmington High School closes as a traditional school and building reopens with a magnet school (Cab Calloway School of the Arts) and a charter school (Charter School of Wilmington).
2000	Neighborhood Schools Act dramatically reduces busing.
2001	Report mandated by Neighborhood Schools Act titled “They Matter Most” is released; the report is adopted by Wilmington City Council with additional recommendations, but no state action is taken on the recommendations.
2006	Coalition of government, education, business, and community leaders establishes Vision 2015 and releases plan to develop world-class public education for Delaware.
2006	Hope Commission Report is produced and a new nonprofit is created; recommendations are made with no action.
2008	Wilmington Education Task Force convened by Senator Margaret Rose Henry; recommendations are made with no action.
2013	Mayor’s Youth, Education and Citizenship Strategic Planning Team is established but issued no formal report.
2014	Governor Markell creates the Wilmington Education Advisory Committee (WEAC).

² Hoff, S. (2007, August 14). Delaware’s constitution and its impact on education. Eccel, J. (2012, April 1). History of public education in Delaware during past 50 years.

- 2015 GA approves and Governor Markell signs House Bill 148 establishing the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission (WEIC, herein referred to as the Commission).
- 2015 GA approves and Governor Markell signs Senate Bill 122 authorizing the State Board to change boundaries of northern New Castle County school districts in a manner consistent with the WEAC final report, based on a transition, resource, and implementation plan developed by the Commission and submitted by December 31, 2015.
- 2015 The Commission releases interim plan for public comment on November 17, 2015.
- 2015 The Commission submits final plan to the State Board on December 17, 2015.

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“[State leaders] need to do something. They need to say they agree or not. They need to say what needs to be done, what they like or not like. Something has to be done.”

JOHNNY MEANS

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT AND MEMBER OF THE
WILMINGTON EDUCATION IMPROVEMENT COMMISSION

December 2015

Foreword: ‘Those Kids’ Deserve a Chance at a Successful Future, too.

Each morning, I and hundreds of other educators travel to Wilmington schools to undertake the daunting task of teaching students whose lives reflect all the traumas of deep poverty and the dysfunctions of communities in turmoil. We are routinely asked why we would ever want to work in some of Delaware’s toughest schools where there is a lack of resources in the classrooms, and where violence is prevalent in the surrounding community.

I do it because I believe schools can change lives.

Our students in the inner city deserve to have educators who believe in them. Our students deserve to have their community and their state stand behind them. Our students deserve a fighting chance for rewarding and fulfilling lives and it’s our goal to help them reach their potential. It’s our goal to give them the tools they need to believe in themselves and to keep striving for greatness. We see where our students can go and the endless possibilities they have. When others give up, we keep fighting for them. Schools change lives.

Being an educator in one of our inner city schools is difficult and challenging work. However, it’s this hard work that makes it so rewarding. Educators see first-hand the effects that deep poverty can have on children and families. Some of our children tell us about the gunshots they hear at night. They experience hunger, homelessness, and fear. Some of our students end up being “window children” because it’s not always safe to go outside.

Many inner-city educators face the continuous allegations made against our students and their families by those who do not know them. We have heard our inner-city students referred to as a cancer, with the expectation that if these students move to other schools or districts the cancer would spread. We have heard our inner-city students referred to as “those kids” who are going to end up in prison, or “those kids” who can’t learn, or “those kids” who don’t have parents who care. In my classroom, I refer to my students as scholars. Imagine walking into a classroom and looking into the eyes of each of my scholars knowing some of the individuals in the world and in their own state around them have already given up on them and don’t even want to give them a fighting chance. Sometimes as educators, we are the only advocate and champion for our students and their families.

My students are not “those kids.” They are kids who were given life circumstances they did not ask for, with odds increasingly stacked against them.

They are kids with overwhelming resiliency. They still show up every day, despite those odds, ready to do their best work. If you want to see the face of resiliency, then look at face of every one of my students. They are kids who have dreams like you and me. They are kids who have families doing the very best they can with what they have, and, despite the misconceptions, they have families who are involved and who care.

We have an opportunity to change the future of our Wilmington schools. One of the proposals from the commission is to redraw district boundaries in order to consolidate accountability for student outcomes. Another is to target more dollars to schools with high concentrations of students living in poverty. These are important changes but by the commission's own admission, they are not the only answers. Comprehensive reform involves many things: improving early childhood education, having culturally competent and highly qualified teachers in our most challenging schools, enhancing instruction and learning by streamlining best practices, updating our facilities, extending in-school and out of schools services, enhancing career and college readiness programming, and developing an effective way to measure the growth and success of our inner city schools and educators. And all of these areas are a part of the commission's work over the next five years.

A second-grader once told me he would never live to the age of 28. I was curious as to why a young child would say this. He said 28 was old and he would be shot before he ever was that old. Imagine being in second grade with this type of view of your future. We must change. The time is now to make the commission's vision of the future of Wilmington education a reality and to give our students and families a fighting chance.

KAREN ELLER

FOURTH-GRADE TEACHER, CHRISTINA SCHOOL DISTRICT
MEMBER, WILMINGTON EDUCATION IMPROVEMENT COMMISSION

Editorial to The News Journal | 2015

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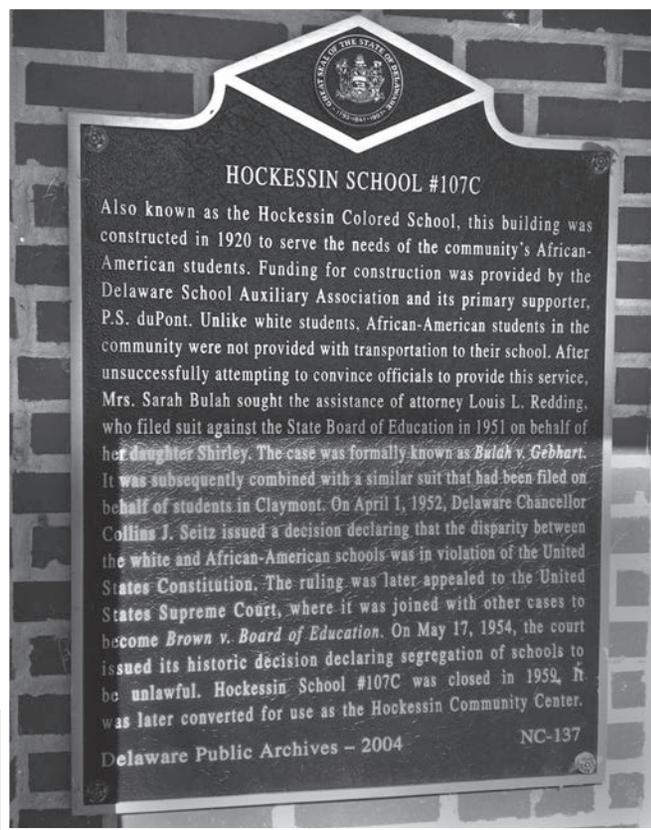
Vol 1.

*Redistricting in the City of Wilmington and
New Castle County: A Transition, Resource,
and Implementation Plan*

Timetable for the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission and State Board of Education Action

Aug. 2015	Wilmington Education Improvement Commission (WEIC, herein referred to as the Commission) is established.
Aug.–Sept. 2015	Commission presents to all four school district boards on WEIC and the planning process.
Sept.–Nov. 2015	Commission conducts town hall meetings in all school districts on WEIC and the redistricting planning process.
Sept. 15, 2015	IPA reviews schedule, outline, and analysis plan with the Commission and Redistricting Committee.
Sept. 17, 2015	Commission presents to the State Board of Education (State Board) on WEIC, the redistricting plan schedule outline, and public record.
Oct. 15, 2015	Commission presents to the State Board an update on plan and its development, including the defined public record.
Nov. 5, 2015	Commission leadership meets with the State Board at the State Board of Education retreat.
Nov. 17, 2015	Commission reviews draft plan and makes it available for electronic and written public comment.
Nov. 19, 2015	Commission delivers draft plan to the State Board.
Nov. 17, 2015– Jan. 14, 2016	State Board receives electronic and written public comment.

Nov. 30, 2015– Dec. 4, 2015	Six public hearings are convened.
Dec. 9, 2015	Commission meets to review possible revisions to draft plan.
Dec. 15, 2015	Commission approves plan for submission to the State Board.
Dec. 17, 2015	Commission presents and submits final plan to State Board.
Jan. 21, 2016	Projected date for State Board action on plan as a package.
March 31, 2016	Commission and State Board authority ends.



“As two educators, who have made Delaware public education a central part of our work, no one has convinced us that the path of the last 60 years is sustainable, appropriate, or fair. To change that path, we need to act boldly and without equivocation.”

JOSEPH PIKA, PH.D.
FORMER PRESIDENT, DELAWARE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

HENRY HARPER, PH.D.
FORMER SUPERINTENDENT, APPOQUINIMINK SCHOOL DISTRICT
Editorial to The News Journal | 2015

Executive Summary

Legislation approved in 2015 authorizes the State Board of Education to change or alter the boundaries of school districts in northern New Castle County in a manner consistent with some or all of the redistricting recommendations made in the final report of the Wilmington Education Advisory Committee, provided that the General Assembly passes, and the Governor signs, a Joint Resolution supporting the proposed changes. In its decision the State Board of Education shall adopt a transition, resource, and implementation plan developed by the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission. This plan fulfills that mandate.

The Case for Redistricting

- Twenty-three separate governing units, including 17 located in the City of Wilmington, now are responsible for delivering public education to 11,500 Wilmington children with no unified plan, little collaboration, and no requirements for coordination.
- The district arrangement imposed by court order in 1976 to improve the education of black students in Wilmington has failed to achieve its purpose.
- Accelerating learning for all students requires a coherent and responsive governance arrangement.

The Action Agenda for Improved Wilmington Student Outcomes

Redistricting is part of a multi-step action agenda for the improved outcomes depicted on the final page of the Executive Summary.

Three streams of action are required: creating responsive governance, funding student success, and meeting Wilmington student needs.

Creating Coherent and Responsive Governance of Wilmington Public Education

Streamlining traditional districts responsible for Wilmington public education is a key part of the process needed to focus responsibility and leadership for the education of Wilmington students. The Commission's recommenda-

tions will consolidate more than 50 percent of Wilmington’s students in a single school district, thereby enhancing both accountability and alignment of instructional programs. It is not the only part, however. Collaboration among charters, among districts, and among charters and districts must be improved and sustained. A complementary part of the Commission’s mandate is to actively promote and support such collaboration, so that the sum of the public education assets represented by the diversity of Wilmington schools can benefit more students in more ways than at any time in the past or present.

Funding Student Success

Strengthening the overall education finance structure is of fundamental importance to public education across Delaware. While Delaware spends a great deal on public education, the expenditure of those funds must focus more effectively on meeting the needs of Wilmington students—and other students at risk throughout Delaware. Actions are needed to ensure a sufficient and reliable revenue base at both the state and local levels and also to ensure that funds are allocated in ways that most directly and effectively address the diverse and often complex needs of students at risk.

Meeting the Needs of Wilmington Students, Most Especially Students in Poverty

Addressing the challenges of students in poverty² requires a developmental approach that focuses on alignment of needed supports and services starting in early childhood and extending through entry into a career or higher education. This stream of action requires coordinated efforts from all sectors, including more effective integration of state services and the alignment and mobilization of cross-sector initiatives and partnerships. It also requires greater parent and community engagement in Wilmington schools and in support of the continuous improvement of Wilmington public education. The combination and synergy of all of these changes are essential to increasing in-school and out-of-school supports, from early childhood until the transition to work or higher education. A key dimension of meeting the needs of all Delaware students is an investment in culturally competent educators.

Progress on all three streams together is needed to improve student outcomes and the Commission’s redistricting plan establishes a path for progress along each stream.

Under the enabling legislation, the State Board must act on the plan in its entirety, recognizing that implementation requires actions by many institutions over four years.

The implementation of redistricting should be contingent upon the provision of the resources needed to improve student outcomes.

Redistricting Recommendations

- Effective July 1, 2018, the boundaries of the Christina School District should be altered so that it no longer serves the City of Wilmington and should focus on serving the students in the western portion of the current district. The Christina Board of Education reviewed and approved by a vote of 5–1–1 the framework for planning developed by the Christina administrative staff in collaboration with the staff of the Red Clay Consolidated School District (Appendix B).
- Effective July 1, 2018, the boundaries of the Red Clay Consolidated School District should be altered to include the portion of the City of Wilmington now served by the Christina School District. The Red Clay Board of Education has voted 6–0 to support this change pending the allocation of funding needed for the effective education of its students, their continued engagement in the process, and an appropriate timeline for implementation. By a vote of 4–1, the Red Clay Consolidated School District Board of Education approved the interim framework for planning to be part of the Commission’s plan to be submitted to the State Board of Education. That plan and the accompanying transmittal letter are included as Appendix C.
- Effective July 1, 2018, the schools and students currently served by Christina School District in the City of Wilmington should be assigned to the Red Clay Consolidated School District.
- All students can choose to remain in their current schools as of the end of the 2017–2018 school year until their programs are complete.
- The Christina and Red Clay Consolidated School Districts will continue to collaborate on the interim frameworks for implementation already approved by each of their Boards of Education. This collaboration will ensure the smooth, minimally disruptive transition of students, staff, and facilities.

² Poverty is a societal condition that the Commission is working to address. Schools use the term “low income” as a proxy measure for poverty. For this reason, these terms are used interchangeably throughout this plan.

- The Colonial and Brandywine School Boards of Education both voted to affirm their commitment to continue to serve students in the City of Wilmington within their current boundaries.
- The Commission is confident the Colonial School District can be a leader in expanding collaborations and new programs that will strengthen opportunities and support for Wilmington students. The district could expand upon existing collaborations, establish new partnerships that take advantage of existing choice patterns for its Wilmington students and, work with the Commission and other partners to provide families with information about the full range of options for meeting the needs of their children within the Colonial School District and in other nearby districts and charters. Comparable initiatives to expand collaborations and provide families with information about choice options should be undertaken by all districts and charters operating in Wilmington, and the Commission will support these efforts.

Funding Student Success

The enabling legislation stipulates that the Commission’s plan will identify the state, district, and local resources that will be required to support the redistricting transition and provide for the effective ongoing education of all the affected students, and for the support of schools with high concentrations of low-income³ students and English language learners.

The Commission’s recommendations address the key priorities identified in the final report of the Wilmington Education Advisory Committee, as summarized below.

1. An allocation formula for public school operating funds that responds to the added resource needs of schools with high percentages of low-income students, English language learners, and other students at risk.
2. An array of transition and capital resources needed to effectively implement the proposed district realignment.
3. A sufficient revenue base to support the overall rising costs of the public education system.
4. An allocation of funding for the additional programs and services, such

³ Poverty is a societal condition that the Commission is working to address. Schools use the term “low income” as a proxy measure for poverty. For this reason, these terms are used interchangeably throughout this plan.

as high-quality early childhood programs, required to meet the needs of students in poverty.

The Funding Student Success Committee considered these and other factors that are critical to the effectiveness of redistricting in strengthening student learning.

The Commission reaffirms the position of the Wilmington Education Advisory Committee that redistricting must be accompanied by the resources needed to better serve students and, specifically, the resources needed to fully address the needs of low-income students, English language learners, and other students at risk.

The Commission also reaffirms the commitment that there should be no undue burden on taxpayers in the affected districts as a result of the process of redistricting.

Pending approval during the next legislative session, the funding requirements to support redistricting must be implemented at each stage of the process, beginning with fiscal year 2017.

- Fiscal Year 2017 Planning Stage
- Fiscal Year 2018 Transition Stage
- Fiscal Year 2019 Implementation Stage

Fiscal Year 2017: Planning Stage

1. Establish weighted unit funding to address the needs of low-income students, English language learners, and basic special education units for grades K-3. This recurrent funding should begin with support for low-income students, English language learners, and basic special education units for grades K-3 in Red Clay Consolidated School District and the current Christina School District schools in the City of Wilmington—the schools impacted by redistricting—thereby providing the necessary and sufficient funding to proceed with redistricting. This recurrent funding should be expanded to include all City of Wilmington students and then statewide as rapidly as possible. A Wilmington Redistricting Transition Fund should be established with non-recurrent funds to support the planning and development of new models and proposals on facilities.
2. Epilogue language or legislation should designate the expansion of the low-income/ELL/special education unit over three years as described

in fiscal years 2018 and 2019 below, leading to eventual statewide coverage.

3. Invest to sustain and accelerate improvements in early childhood education.
4. The Commission endorses House Bill 30 (see Appendix A) to target funding for basic special education units for grades K-3.

Fiscal Year 2018: Transition Stage

1. Recurrent funding of the low-income/ELL/special education unit is expanded to all Christina School District schools and continued for all Red Clay Consolidated School District schools.
2. Additional non-recurrent funds will be needed in the Wilmington Redistricting Transition Fund to support continued planning and development of new educational and program models as well as facilities configurations.
3. Capital funding for the reconfiguration of the Red Clay Consolidated and Christina School District schools located in the City of Wilmington and possible planning funds for a new Wilmington high school.
4. Initiate property tax reassessment process.
5. Authorization for impacted districts to make limited tax rate adjustments effective for fiscal year 2019 to meet operating expenses.

Fiscal Year 2019: Implementation Stage

1. Recurrent funding of the low-income/ELL/special education unit expands beyond the Red Clay Consolidated School District and Christina School District schools to include Brandywine School District, Colonial School District, and all charter schools in the City of Wilmington and continues for all Red Clay Consolidated School District and Christina School District schools. Recurrent funding should expand to all schools statewide as rapidly as possible.
2. Capital funding for a new Wilmington high school or repurposed school configuration, to be determined during planning phase in fiscal year 2017.
3. Contingency funding for the adjustments needed in the New Castle

County tax pool.

4. Impacted districts to make limited tax rate adjustments to meet operating expenses.

Longer-term recommendations focus on strengthening the revenue base supporting public education at both the state and local levels, including property reassessment, and adjustments in the public education allocation system to fully address the needs of low-income students, English language learners and other students at risk.

Mobilizing Cross-Sector Resources

The Commission is committed to the alignment of supports and services through a strong partnership between the community and its schools. All sectors of the community should be mobilized including community-based partners, such as the Metropolitan Wilmington Urban League, FAME, Inc., One Village Alliance, Education Voices, Inc., Delaware libraries, the Latin American Community Center, the Delaware Hispanic Commission, the Vision Coalition of Delaware, the Interdenominational Ministers Action Council, and many others engaged directly with improvement of education. In addition, community institutions that provide significant opportunities and supports for students and families must be mobilized, including the YMCA, the Boys & Girls Clubs of Delaware, providers of after-school and outside-of-school services for children and families as well as cultural and sports institutions.

The Commission’s plan is aligned with key initiatives already underway, including:

- Delaware’s early childhood education strategic plan and strategies;
- Student Success 2025;
- Education Funding Improvement Commission;
- Wilmington Education Strategy Think Tank;
- Statewide Review of Education Opportunities and Strategic Plan; and
- Access to Justice Commission.

The Commission will mobilize cross-sector engagement and support including:

- More effective coordination of state programs and services;

- Enhanced alignment of nonprofit and community support led by the United Way;
- Wilmington Office of Education and Public Policy;
- University of Delaware Partnership for Public Education;
- Enhanced charter and district collaboration;
- Increased parent, educator, and community engagement; and
- Active engagement with the full range of community institutions and partners from all sectors that support improved student learning.

Red Clay Consolidated and Christina School Districts Transition, Resource, and Implementation Plan

The Commission, in collaboration with the districts, has developed a transition, resource, and implementation plan that follows a four-year timeline for final implementation:

- December 17, 2015 to June 30, 2016 Approval Stage
- July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017 Planning Stage
- July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018 Transition Stage
- July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019 Implementation Stage

The plan addresses the following considerations.

- Orderly and minimally disruptive reassignment of students affected by the boundary changes and the reassignment of governance responsibilities;
- Implications for educators, administrators, and other personnel that may lead to equitable adjustments to local collective bargaining agreements;
- Distribution of capital assets;
- Student transportation;
- Engagement of educators, staff, parents, district personnel, and community members;
- Plans for special schools and programs;

- Choice options and policies;
- Alignment of technology;
- Child nutrition services; and
- Alignment of curricular materials.

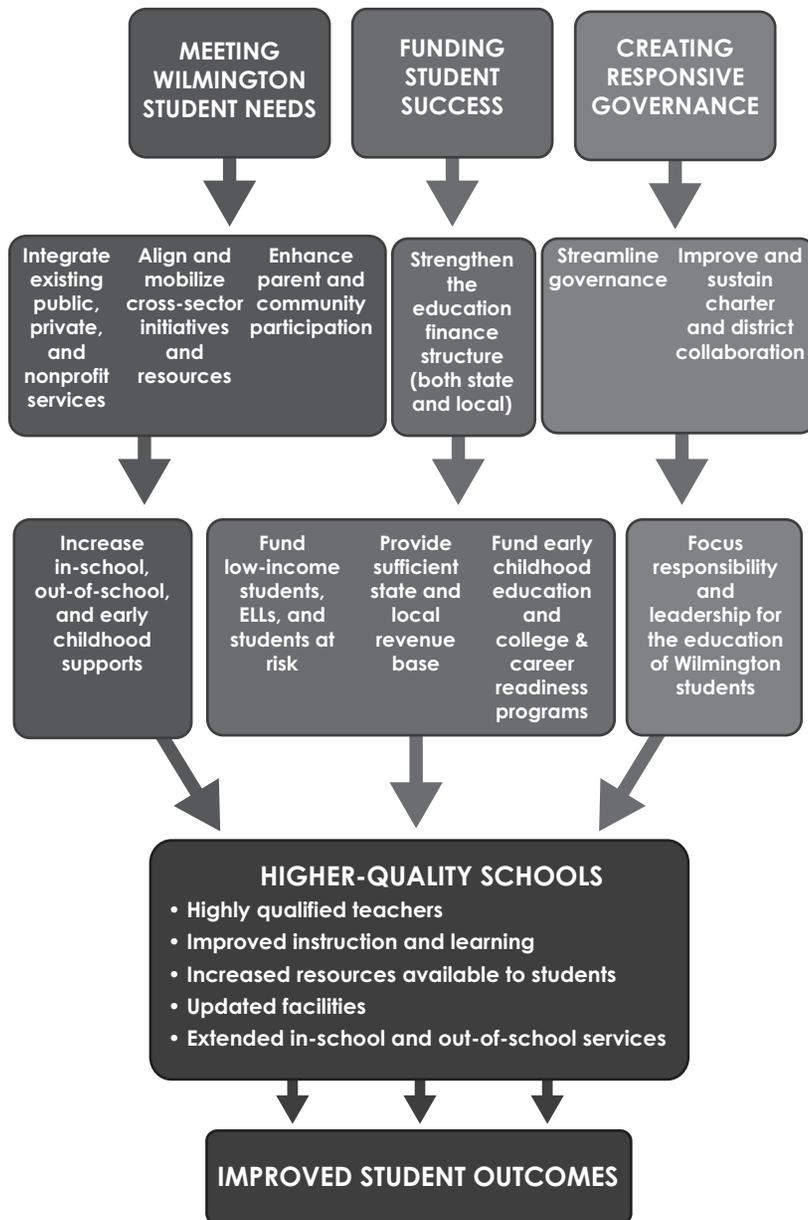
Confirming District Boundaries

- The existing boundaries of New Castle County school districts are confirmed as defined in Part VIII of this plan.
- The State Board should confirm the altered boundaries of New Castle County school districts, effective July 1, 2018, as defined in Part VIII of this plan.

Milestones and Measures of Success

- The Commission will submit an annual evaluation of progress to the State Board, Governor, and General Assembly that will focus on milestones and measures of success for improved student outcomes.
- Interim outcomes include: increased attendance, persistence, and engagement rates; reduced student trauma and disciplinary incident rates; and growing participation in high-quality early childhood education programs and other in-school and out-of-school programs that support enhanced developmental progress and learning.
- Long-term outcomes include: increased graduation rates; reduced achievement gaps in standardized tests; improved college and workforce readiness; reduced youth incarceration and recidivism rates; and greater access to opportunities that result in productive and rewarding lives.

Action Agenda for Improved Wilmington Student Outcomes



Redistricting Resolution

WHEREAS, 14 Del. C. § 1026(d) authorizes the Board of Education of the State of Delaware (the “Board of Education”) to alter school district boundaries in New Castle County “in a manner consistent with some or all of the redistricting recommendations made by the Wilmington Education Advisory Committee in the report issued March 31, 2015 (the ‘Report’)” and based on adoption of a transition, resource, and implementation plan developed by the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission (“Commission”); and

WHEREAS, the Commission’s plan, herein submitted, addresses all provisions identified in the enabling legislation and also describes the ways in which redistricting combined with other actions will lead to higher-quality schools and improved student outcomes; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Education has reviewed the plan for redistricting of the school districts located in New Castle County (“the Plan”) proposed by the Commission, and provided comments and suggestions on the Plan; and

WHEREAS, such public hearings regarding the Plan, as required by 14 Del. C. § 1026(d) (2) have been held; and

WHEREAS, the Christina School District Board of Education has approved by a vote of 5–1–1 the framework for planning developed by the Christina administrative staff in collaboration with the administrative staff of the Red Clay Consolidated School District; and

WHEREAS, the Red Clay Consolidated School District Board of Education (the “Red Clay Board of Education”) voted 6–0 to support this change pending the allocation of resources needed for the effective education of its students, their continued engagement in the process, and an appropriate timeline for implementation. By a vote of 4–1, the Red Clay Consolidated School District Board of Education also approved the interim framework for planning to be part of the Commission’s plan to be submitted to the Board of Education;

WHEREAS, the Colonial School District Board of Education has voted 4–2 to affirm its commitment to continue to serve students who reside in the City of Wilmington within its current boundaries; and

WHEREAS, the Brandywine School District Board of Education has voted 5–2 to affirm its commitment to continue to serve students who reside in the

City of Wilmington within its current boundaries; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Education has found that the Plan is in the best interests of the students served by the districts in New Castle County, and the timetable for implementation and the proposed resources are consistent with the objective of improving student outcomes; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Education understands that the plan must be approved and implemented as a package, that there are milestones to be achieved prior to the alteration of district boundaries, and that necessary and sufficient funding is required for implementation to proceed.

BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Education, after careful consideration that:

1. The full and complete Plan as specified in all sections of this document is hereby approved. The full and complete Plan is attached hereto.
2. Upon passage of the Joint Resolution by the General Assembly, and signature by the Governor, the Plan, with stipulated milestones at each stage shall be carried out according to the timetable specified if the necessary and sufficient funding, recommended action, and related transition supports are provided in the timeframe and manner proposed, as confirmed by the Commission in consultation with the affected school districts. If the necessary and sufficient funding and transition supports, as laid out in the Compendium dated February 11, 2016, are not provided by the conclusion of each stage and in the manner proposed, the Commission, after consulting with the affected districts, shall suspend the timetable for implementation until the resources and supports are provided. If the necessary and sufficient funding and transition supports are not confirmed by the Commission in consultation with the affected districts by July 2018, the plan will expire.

The stages included in the attached plan are:

- December 17, 2015 to June 30, 2016 Approval Stage
- July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017 Planning Stage
- July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018 Transition Stage
- July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019 Implementation Stage
(altered district boundaries)

3. Upon Board of Education approval, the Plan shall be submitted to the Governor and the General Assembly for the passage of a joint resolution confirming the Board of Education's action.
4. If the above requirements are met, the boundaries of the school districts in New Castle County shall be as described in the Plan, with the approved changes being effective July 1, 2018.
5. The Commission will provide an annual evaluation of the progress on the implementation of redistricting to the Board of Education that will include an assessment of milestones and measures of success as specified in the Plan, in particular the Commission will provide progress reports for the affected schools which is intended to show higher achievements and improved student outcomes.
6. The Commission's annual evaluation to the Board of Education will be incorporated in the annual report on the Commission's work presented to the Governor and General Assembly.



“The goal of public education is to make sure that every student has a chance to excel, both in school and in life. Education is not “the great equalizer” when schools serving low-income students receive fewer resources, face greater difficulties attracting the best teachers and are ill equipped to meet the diversity of student needs.”

YVONNE JOHNSON

RESIDENT, RED CLAY CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL DISTRICT
PARENT ADVOCATE

CHANDRA PITTS

WILMINGTON PARENT, RED CLAY CONSOLIDATED SCHOOL DISTRICT
PRESIDENT AND CEO, ONE VILLAGE ALLIANCE
Editorial to The News Journal | 2015

Part I: Introduction

The Case for Redistricting

Strengthening Wilmington education requires more coherent and responsive governance of Wilmington public schools. Improved governance will not solve all the problems facing public education in Wilmington, but it should be the starting point. Without changing the governance of Wilmington public education, all other improvements will be made more difficult or simply not possible. This has been the conclusion of every working group focused on Wilmington education since 2001. All have proposed the need to create a system of governance that is streamlined, more responsive to the needs of Wilmington’s children and their families, and more deeply connected with the community that it serves. A range of proposals has been offered—from district consolidation to the creation of a Wilmington charter district—but none has been implemented. Indeed, the fragmentation of Wilmington public education governance has become more acute. (Wilmington Education Advisory Committee (WEAC), 2015, p.19)

Today, twenty-three separate governing units—including 17 governing units located in the City of Wilmington and six outside the city—are responsible for delivering public education to approximately 11,500 Wilmington children with no unified plan, few efforts at collaboration, and virtually no requirements to function as a coordinated public education system. The five districts operating in the City of Wilmington (Brandywine, Christina, Colonial, Red Clay Consolidated, and New Castle County Vocational Technical) have been joined by 18 charter schools, each of which is a separate policymaking entity. Each district or charter is responsible for the education of its own segment of the City of Wilmington student population, but no district or charter is responsible for improving the education of all City of Wilmington students.

The fragmentation of governance responsibilities is no accident. It emerged over four decades as the result of separate and sometimes conflicting efforts to improve the learning of City of Wilmington students.

- A federal district judge mandated busing students to achieve integration to ensure equality of educational opportunity. Eleven New Castle County districts became one, and then one district became four.

- Several governors and legislators spanning multiple general assemblies expanded the number of charter schools to encourage innovation and expand family choice. However, the increase of charter schools had unintended consequences of further fragmenting public education responsibilities and negating much of the rationale for the court-ordered district structure.
- Governor Minner and the General Assembly passed the Neighborhood Schools Act believing that attending neighborhood schools would enhance students' educational experience, which further negated the rationale for the district structure ordered by the federal court.

The results of these and related decisions and actions have been consistent and disappointing: incoherent and fragmented governance, disjointed and uncoordinated educational programs and efforts, and, most importantly, poor education outcomes for low-income⁴ City of Wilmington students who are predominantly black or Latino. The current fragmentation encourages competition and displacement among district, vocational-technical (vo-tech), and charter schools. Cooperation, collaboration, and shared learning across the sub-systems are the exception rather than the norm. Efforts to improve student learning seldom follow a unified or coordinated strategy across districts and charters and even when such strategies are proposed, coordinated implementation is rare—and often resisted. Increasingly, public resources are dispersed among competing units at growing public expense. Most disconcerting, when a district or charter does succeed in improving educational outcomes, there is no consistent substantive structure to share these successes, and as such it is virtually impossible to scale-up that success to the public education system as a whole. Indeed, the operation of this system has become increasingly contentious; there is rarely any vision projected of how the complex and often competing arrangement of districts and charters will result in stronger public education for all students.

The educational result of all these actions, despite the efforts of many dedicated educators, administrators, advocates, and reformers, is clearly stated in the final report of the Wilmington Education Advisory Committee (2015):

Today thousands of Wilmington children, most of them poor, black, or Latino, still do not have access to high-quality public education. Judged on most outcomes—test scores, truancy, graduation rates, college

attendance, socio-emotional well-being, drug use, homelessness, arrests, and unemployment—these children have become data points for a system of failure. (p.13)

The evidence is overwhelming: The arrangement of districts imposed by court order for the express purpose of improving the conditions of black students who had been systematically disadvantaged by segregation and unequal resources has failed to achieve its purposes and has no justification other than inertia.

- The arrangement has failed to achieve and maintain the racial integration that was its principal rationale. As a result of subsequent policies, including the Neighborhood Schools Act, City of Wilmington schools in the four traditional school districts are among the most racially segregated schools in Delaware, and their concentration of low-income students is among the state's highest.
- The arrangement has failed to ameliorate the resource inequity that was a major motivating factor in the court-ordered district plan. The needs of students in many schools in the City of Wilmington and northern New Castle County often far exceed what can be addressed through a standard allocation of state and local funds. In essence, the resource inequity that typified segregated schools in Delaware is manifested in new ways with equally debilitating consequences for student learning and student lives.
- The arrangement has failed to overcome the barriers to student learning and achievement. After forty years of experience with the current district arrangement and after four decades of educational reform efforts, City of Wilmington children, most of them poor, black or Latino, still have educational outcomes far below those of students across the county and across the state. Delaware Comprehensive Assessment System (DCAS) results for the past two years confirm that the majority, and in some cases the overwhelming majority, of low-income students living in the City of Wilmington are not proficient in English Language Arts and Math (see Tables 1–4). Indeed, for all districts and for all but two charters, the performance of low-income students is below the performance of students for the district or charter as a whole. Moreover, in all districts and most charters, the performance for low-income students living in the City of Wilmington is significantly worse than the performance of low-income students across the district or charters.

⁴ Poverty is a societal condition that the Commission is working to address. Schools use the term "low income" as a proxy measure for poverty. For this reason, these terms are used interchangeably throughout this plan.

Table 1: 2014 ELA DCAS Proficiency: District-Wide Compared with Low-Income and Low-Income City of Wilmington Student Performance

District	Grade Level	District-Wide		Low-Income		Difference		Low-Income City of Wilmington		Difference	
		Students	Proficiency	Students	Proficiency	Students	Proficiency	Students	Proficiency	Students	Proficiency
Brandywine	K-12	6,481	74%	2,061	57%	-17%		730	51%	-23%	
Red Clay	K-12	10,114	68%	3,759	49%	-19%		1,568	41%	-27%	
Christina	K-12	9,532	62%	4,298	53%	-9%		1,138	38%	-24%	
Colonial	K-12	6,158	65%	2,669	57%	-8%		133	41%	-24%	
NCC	9-12	2,327	76%	720	71%	-5%		183	63%	-13%	
Vo-tech											

Source: Delaware Department of Education, 2014.
 Note: Difference in both cases is calculated against the district or school-wide percent proficient.

Table 2: 2014 ELA DCAS Proficiency: School-Wide Compared with Low-Income and Low-Income City of Wilmington Student Performance

District	Grade Level	District-Wide		Low-Income		Difference		Low-Income City of Wilmington		Difference	
		Students	Proficiency	Students	Proficiency	Students	Proficiency	Students	Proficiency	Students	Proficiency
Charter School of Wilmington	9-12	505	99%	17	100%	0%		*	*	*	*
Delaware Academy of Public Safety and Security	9-12	220	64%	71	56%	-8%		*	*	*	*
Delaware College Prep	K-5	54	54%	42	62%	8%		29	62%	8%	8%
Delaware Military Academy	9-12	294	89%	27	78%	-11%		*	*	*	*
EastSide Charter School	K-8	230	58%	191	57%	-1%		153	55%	-3%	-3%
Edison Charter School	K-8	448	58%	343	54%	-4%		245	51%	-7%	-7%
Family Foundations	K-8	445	72%	203	66%	-6%		60	62%	-10%	-10%
Gateway Lab School	3-8	192	38%	52	31%	-7%		*	*	*	*
Kuumba Academy Charter School	K-7	148	74%	91	71%	-3%		58	74%	0%	0%
Las Américas ASPIRA Academy	K-8	204	79%	49	67%	-12%		*	*	*	*
Odyssey	K-7	333	91%	60	77%	-14%		15	*	*	*
Prestige Academy	5-8	267	48%	164	41%	-7%		107	37%	-11%	-11%

Source: Delaware Department of Education, 2014.
 *Fewer than 15 students. Note: Difference in both cases is calculated against the district or school-wide percent proficient.

Table 3: 2014 Math DCAS Proficiency: District-Wide Compared with Low-Income and Low-Income City of Wilmington Student Performance

District	Grade Level	District-Wide		Low-Income		Difference	Low-Income City of Wilmington		Difference
		Students	Proficiency	Students	Proficiency		Students	Proficiency	
Brandywine	K-12	6,552	67%	2,092	48%	-19%	747	38%	-29%
Red Clay	K-12	10,206	63%	3,791	43%	-20%	1,574	36%	-27%
Christina	K-12	9,543	60%	4,274	49%	-11%	1,125	33%	-27%
Colonial	K-12	6,188	61%	2,679	52%	-9%	134	41%	-20%
NCC	9-12	2,329	81%	719	76%	-5%	183	74%	-7%
Vo-tech									

Source: Delaware Department of Education, 2014.
Note: Difference in both cases is calculated against the district or school-wide percent proficient.

Table 4: 2014 Math DCAS Proficiency: School-Wide Compared with Low-Income and Low-Income City of Wilmington Student Performance

District	Grade Level	District-Wide		Low-Income		Difference	Low-Income City of Wilmington		Difference
		Students	Proficiency	Students	Proficiency		Students	Proficiency	
Charter School of Wilmington	9-12	505	99%	17	100%	1%	*	*	*
Delaware Academy of Public Safety and Security	9-12	221	62%	71	59%	-3%	*	*	*
Delaware College Prep	K-5	55	44%	43	40%	-4%	30	*	*
Delaware Military Academy	9-12	294	86%	27	78%	-8%	*	*	*
EastSide Charter School	K-8	232	63%	193	62%	-1%	154	62%	-1%
Edison Charter School	K-8	448	58%	343	54%	-4%	245	53%	-1%
Family Foundations	K-8	447	68%	205	60%	-8%	60	62%	-6%
Gateway Lab School	3-8	203	26%	58	22%		*	*	*
Kuumba Academy Charter School	K-7	149	79%	92	76%	-3%	59	71%	-8%
Las Américas ASPIRA Academy	K-8	205	67%	49	51%	-16%	*	*	*
Odyssey	K-7	333	96%	60	88%	-8%	15	*	*
Prestige Academy	5-8	273	32%	167	26%	-6%	108	20%	-12%

Source: Delaware Department of Education, 2014.
* Fewer than 15 students. Note: Difference in both cases is calculated against the District or School-Wide Percent Proficient.

Since 2001, four separate commissions and citizen committees have been formed to address the problems of education in the city. All have recommended a version of the same proposal: reduce the number of school districts serving the City of Wilmington and find ways to coordinate the work of those units remaining—both districts and charters—to produce positive outcomes for all students. See Appendix E for an overview of past report recommendations.

Redistricting alone will not turn around City of Wilmington education, but consolidating authority is a necessary step before the other changes recommended in this plan can be made to improve educational outcomes. The combined actions in this plan, specifically assembling financial, institutional, and community resources and mobilizing all sectors, will create a capacity to effectively support learning for City of Wilmington students in ways that have never been attempted or accomplished in the past.

This positive change must start with the State Board’s approval of the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission’s plan as an integrated whole.

Redistricting and Student Success

Around the world, public education systems that have made significant progress in accelerating learning for all of their students have a coherent and responsive governance arrangement; one that can:

- Focus responsibility for leadership;
- Help students and parents benefit to the maximum degree from all the assets and opportunities in the system;
- Maximize the benefits of public investment in support of the overall improvement of public education; and
- Measure progress not by the relative and transient standing among the uncoordinated and competing parts, but instead, by the effectiveness of the system as a whole in supporting higher levels of learning for all students.

Our goal in this plan is to move toward a system of responsive educational governance and provide the resources required for success for all students. Redistricting, accompanied by the other recommended changes in resources and institutional support, is the essential step.

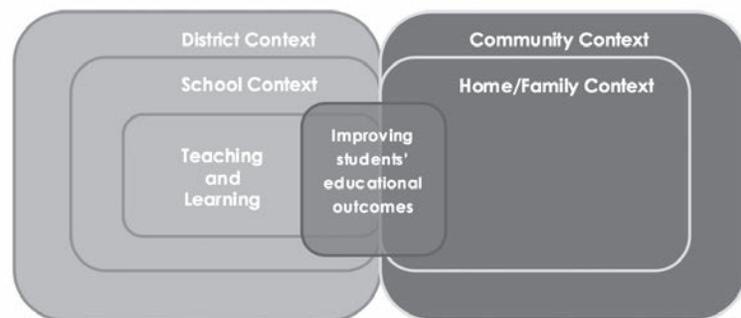
Delaware, City of Wilmington, and New Castle County students would be better off having a rich diversity of educational assets—traditional schools,

vo-tech schools, magnet schools, charter schools, and many different programs and options within schools—but much of that potential benefit is being squandered because the focus of efforts is now on the parts and not the whole. Taking best advantage of these assets is not easy and at times not even possible. Even the process of producing this redistricting plan has been influenced by the fragmented responsibilities for City of Wilmington public education. The Wilmington Education Improvement Commission (the Commission) separately engaged school districts, which quite naturally focus on the benefits and impacts for each district rather than on how the sum of the separate district decisions will impact the overall strengthening of public education for all students in the City of Wilmington and northern New Castle County. This is not the product of indifference on the part of district leaders or boards, but quite the contrary, the product of dutifully carrying out their designated and separate responsibilities under the current arrangement of public education. Even so, the Commission has no interest in promoting winners and losers among the components of the public education system nor in exercising fidelity to the interest of one district over others; our interest is strengthening the overall performance of the public education system on behalf of all students. Doing so requires that all of our educational assets be engaged and mobilized such that the sum of those assets provides the maximum possible educational opportunities and benefits to all students.

Scholarly research documents the importance of coherent and responsive governance, specifically the leadership role of school districts in supporting improved student outcomes. This research recognizes that improving student outcomes is a complex process influenced by both the educational system and the larger environment in which students live. Though simplified, we might conceptualize student outcomes as a product of the educational and community environments, as illustrated in Figure 1. Student outcomes are at the center, influenced most immediately by teaching and learning opportunities in the classroom and school as well as the immediate community and home context in which students become ready to learn. Teaching and learning—including curriculum and instruction—are shaped by the school context—including leadership, school culture, and resources—that are in turn shaped by leadership and policy at the district level. Home and family, similarly, are shaped by the community context—including safety, engagement, poverty⁵, and opportunities outside of school.

⁵ Poverty is a societal condition that the Commission is working to address. Schools use the term “low income” as a proxy measure for poverty. For this reason, these terms are used interchangeably throughout this plan.

Figure 1: Multiple Contexts for Student Success



Significant research has established the importance of school district leadership in supporting and engendering change in education^{6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13} and in supporting student achievement.¹⁴ Districts can contribute to system alignment and instructional coherence^{13,15,16,17,18} and do so through decisions about

curriculum and instruction, supporting instructional practice through professional development, evaluating results or otherwise providing a feedback loop between decision-making and instructional practice.² Thus districts are positioned to influence school, teaching, and learning contexts, thereby influencing student outcomes. When district responsibilities are fragmented, these central leadership roles and responsibilities are weakened.

Beyond their direct influence on school performance and educational outcomes, districts may also contribute to supportive family and community environments or mitigate challenges in students' families and community environments. For example, community-school partnerships are often found at the district level and can serve to build the social capital necessary for social and economic growth for both students and communities.¹⁹ Additionally, data indicate that urban students, such as those living within City of Wilmington boundaries, experience a great deal of mobility that can create not only stressful home conditions but generate instability in the learning process, which contribute to lower achievement and behavior problems.^{20,21} In the case of the City of Wilmington, shifts between not only schools but districts may mean students and their families are faced with new curriculum, different expectations, and divergent processes/procedures related to success in school. Steps taken by districts to improve instructional coherence across schools as well as to retain students within districts are likely to minimize negative effects of high levels of student mobility. When responsibilities are fragmented, the contribution of districts and their community partners to mitigating the challenges faced by City of Wilmington students in poverty is dispersed and weakened.

First steps are important but do not complete a journey. A more coherent and responsive district governance structure for City of Wilmington schools will enable improvements in citywide student outcomes. However, that alone will not be enough to achieve continuous improvement in student learning. To make quality education available to all students requires actions that go far beyond an alteration of boundaries among traditional school districts. Most of all, the change in boundaries must be accompanied by a **new vision**, backed by **common commitment**, on strengthening public education in the City of Wilmington and northern New Castle County—and by extension all

6 Corcoran T, Fuhrman SH and Belcher CL (2001) The district role in instructional improvement. *Phi Delta Kappan* 83(1): 78–84.

7 Elmore, R. E., and D. Burney. 1997. *School Variation and Systemic Instructional Improvement in Community School District #2*, New York City. Pittsburgh: Pittsburgh University. pp. 1–41.

8 Datnow A and Castellano M (2003) Leadership and success for all. In: Murphy J and Datnow A (eds) *Leadership for School Reform: Lessons From Comprehensive School Reform Designs*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press. 187–208.

9 Honig MI, Lorton JS and Copland MA (2009) Urban district central office transformation for teaching and learning improvement: beyond a zero-sum game. *Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education* 108(1): 56–83.
Honig MI, Copland MA, Lorton JA, et al. (2010) *Central Office Transformation for Districtwide Teaching and Learning Improvement: A Report to the Wallace Foundation*. Seattle, WA: The Center For Teaching and Policy, University of Washington.

10 McLaughlin MW and Talbert J (2003) *Reforming Districts: How Districts Support School Reform*. Seattle, WA: University of Washington.

11 Marsh JA, Kerr KA, Ikemoto GS, et al. (2005). *The Role of the District in Fostering Instructional Improvement: Lessons From Three Urban Districts Partnered with the Institute for Learning*. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation.

12 Massell D (2001) The theory and practice of using data to build capacity: state and local strategies and their effects. In: Furrman SH (ed.) *From the Capitol to the Classroom: Standards-Based Reform in the States*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press. 148–169.

13 Supovitz JA (2006) *The Case for District-Based Reform: Leading, Building, and Sustaining School Improvement*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.

14 Maclver, M. A., & Farley-Ripple, E. (2008). *Bringing the District Back in: The Role of the Central Office in Instruction and Achievement*. Educational Research Service.

15 Bowers, A. J. 2008. "Promoting Excellence: Good to Great, NYC's District 2, and the Case of a High Performing School District." *Leadership and Policy in Schools* 7 (2): 154–177.

16 Knapp, Michael S. 2008. "How Can Organizational and Sociocultural Learning Theories Shed Light on District Instructional Reform?" *American Journal of Education* 114 (4): 521–539. doi:10.1086/589313.

17 Skrla, L., K. B. McKenzie, J. J. Scheurich, and K. L. Dickerson. 2011. "Home-town Values and High Accountability: A Texas Recipe for Districtwide Success in an Urban School District." *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk* 16 (2): 137–165. doi:10.1080/10824669.2011.559902

18 Thompson, C. L., G. Sykes, and L. Skrla. 2008. "Coherent, Instructionally-focused District Leadership: Toward a Theoretical Account." Accessed January 19, 2014. http://education.msu.edu/epc/forms/Thompson_et_al_2008_Coherent_Instructionally_Focused_District_Leadership.pdf.

19 Sanders, M. G. (2003). Community involvement in schools from concept to practice. *Education and Urban Society*, 35(2), 161–180.

20 Rumberger, R. W. (2003). The causes and consequences of student mobility. *Journal of Negro Education*, 72 (1), 6-21.

21 Ingersoll, G. M., Scamman, J. P., & Eckerling, W. D. (1989). Geographic mobility and student achievement in an urban setting. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 11(2), 143-149.

of Delaware. That vision must focus on all facets of the system, including how vo-tech and charter schools may better enrich the overall performance of the public education system rather than largely function as publicly financed alternatives. Adequate resources to fully meet the challenges facing schools with high concentrations of low-income students and other students at risk must also accompany the boundary change. The plan must mobilize the capacity of all sectors and all facets of our communities in stronger, more sustained, and more coordinated support of all of our schools. These are essential ingredients of a system that will strengthen student learning in a continuous and sustainable fashion so that all students have the opportunity to meet their potential. Redistricting is the critical starting point for a more coherent and responsive system of public education governance that can better address the learning needs of all students in the City of Wilmington and northern New Castle County.

The Delaware General Assembly, with large bipartisan majorities, and Governor Jack Markell have given the State Board the authority to embark on a new pathway for public education in the City of Wilmington and northern New Castle County. This is the first and only affirmation of the need for action on redistricting by Delaware state government since *Brown v. Board of Education* in 1954. The State Board has a unique opportunity. Approval of this redistricting plan will take advantage of this opportunity. It is time to act.

The Action Agenda for Improved Wilmington Student Outcomes

Redistricting is an essential part of a multi-step action agenda for improved Wilmington student outcomes. That action agenda is depicted in Figure 2. The action agenda builds upon the improvements already underway, such as recent gains in early childhood education and college and career readiness. It enables those gains to be accelerated and sustained. Similarly, the Wilmington schools identified as priority schools in the Red Clay Consolidated School District are already operating under the planning agreement reached between the district and the Department of Education. The Red Clay Consolidated School District signed a memorandum of understanding on the priority schools with the Department of Education, received funding to implement its plan, and is doing so during this school year. That process will continue and will be sustained and accelerated by the redistricting process. The Christina School District's priority schools are operating under a transition agreement

with the Department of Education with the expectation that the implementation of redistricting will move those priority schools and their students to the Red Clay Consolidated School District.

The action agenda will add critical capacity in the core areas recommended by the Advisory Committee's final report: creating more responsive governance, funding student success, and meeting Wilmington student needs. Strengthening Wilmington education requires that actions be taken in each of these areas in a systematic, coordinated, and sustained fashion. The effectiveness of the action agenda in each of these areas is highly dependent upon the implementation of the action agenda in the other areas. Each area represents a stream of required decisions and initiatives. Progress on any one stream alone will not be sufficient to support and sustain improved Wilmington student outcomes. Progress on all three of these streams together will result in improved student outcomes. The Commission's plan for redistricting is designed to support progress in all three streams.

Creating Coherent and Responsive Governance of Wilmington Public Education

Streamlining traditional districts responsible for Wilmington public education is a key part of the process needed to focus responsibility and leadership for the education of Wilmington students. It is not the only part, however. Collaboration among charters, among districts, and among charters and districts must be improved and sustained. A complementary part of the Commission's mandate is to actively promote and support such collaboration, so that the sum of the public education assets represented by the diversity of Wilmington schools can benefit more students in more ways than at any time in the past or present. This is essential in order to scale-up school success for the benefit of all students. Beyond the decisions and actions taken to implement this redistricting plan, the Commission is committed to promoting a new vision of public education through which all units—traditional districts, the vo-tech district, and charter schools, accept a shared responsibility for and act in concert to support the effective education of all Wilmington students.

Funding Student Success

Strengthening the overall education finance structure is of fundamental importance to public education across Delaware. While Delaware spends a great deal on public education, the expenditure of those funds must focus more effectively on meeting the needs of Wilmington students—and other

students at risk throughout Delaware. Actions are needed to ensure a sufficient and reliable revenue base at both the state and local levels and also to ensure that funds are allocated in ways that most directly and effectively address the diverse and often complex needs of students at risk. The stream of decision and action requires the allocation of funds to support low-income students, English language learners, and other students at risk. While the challenge of addressing these needs is statewide, it is particularly acute in the City of Wilmington, which has the highest rate of poverty in the state. All previous working groups addressing Wilmington education have recommended changes in education funding to better support Wilmington schools and students. All have addressed the unique needs of students in poverty and the additional challenges faced by schools with high concentrations of students at risk. Additional funding is needed in many areas across the educational lifespan of children—from early childhood education, through K-12, to college and career readiness. Funding also is required to attract and retain the most highly qualified teachers in Wilmington schools.

Meeting the Needs of Wilmington Students, Most Especially Students in Poverty

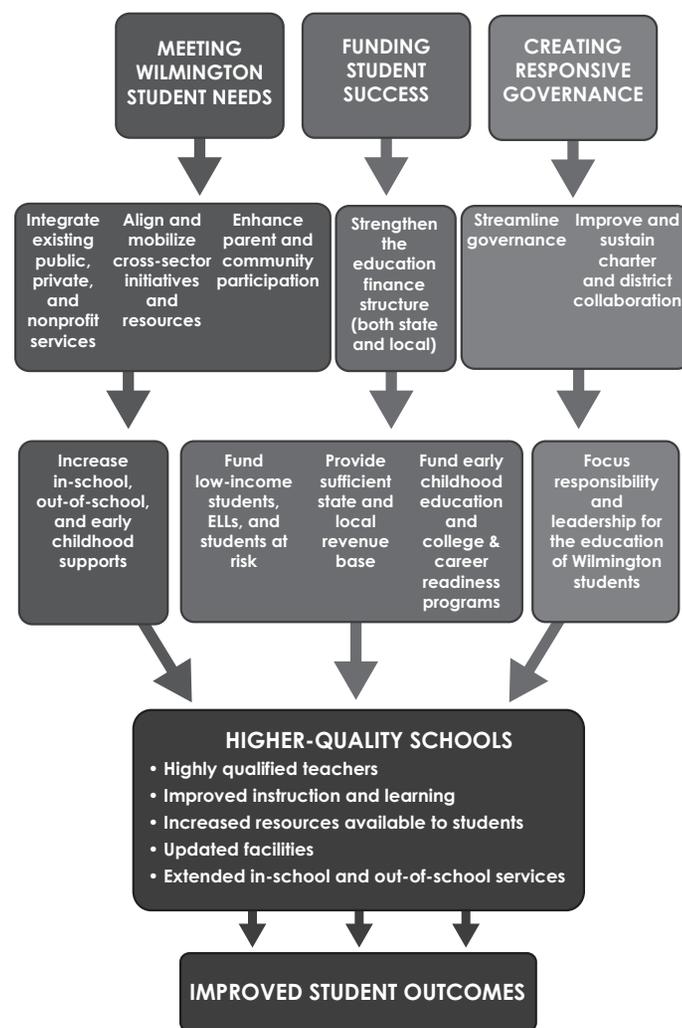
Addressing the challenges of students in poverty requires a developmental approach that focuses on alignment of needed supports and services starting in early childhood and extending through entry into a career or higher education. As the Advisory Committee final report proposed:

Alignment of supports and services requires a strong partnership between the community and its schools. All sectors of the community should be mobilized.... Existing services provided by public, private, and nonprofit institutions should be more effectively and efficiently integrated at each stage of child development and in the transition from one state to another. The range of services needed include access to high-quality early childhood education; expanded school time and attention—including enhanced in-school services, such as school psychologists and social workers; availability of after-school programs; expanded school-to-work partnership programs; and more concerned efforts to reach and engage families in student learning and connect them to available services and supports. (2015, p. 50-51)

This stream of action requires coordinated efforts from all sectors, including more effective integration of state services and the alignment and mobilization of cross-sector initiatives and partnerships. It also requires greater

parent and community engagement in Wilmington schools and in support of the continuous improvement of Wilmington public education. The combination and synergy of all of these changes are essential to increasing in-school and out-of-school supports, from early childhood until the transition to work or higher education.

Figure 2: Action Agenda for Improved Wilmington Student Outcomes



To provide high-quality schools for all Wilmington students, these three streams must converge and reinforce each other. Successful schools require highly qualified teachers, improved instruction and learning, increased resources and supports for students, updated facilities, and extended in-school and out-of-school learning opportunities and services. Convergence of the three streams cannot and does not emerge at a single point in time. Over a number of years, the three streams of action will move forward in ways that provide the needed foundation for improvements in teaching and learning. The action agenda charts the pathway to improved student outcomes.

The Commission’s redistricting plan is framed around the action agenda for improving Wilmington student outcomes. It is essential that all three streams proceed in a coordinated and sustained fashion; all three streams must converge to support high-quality schools and student success.

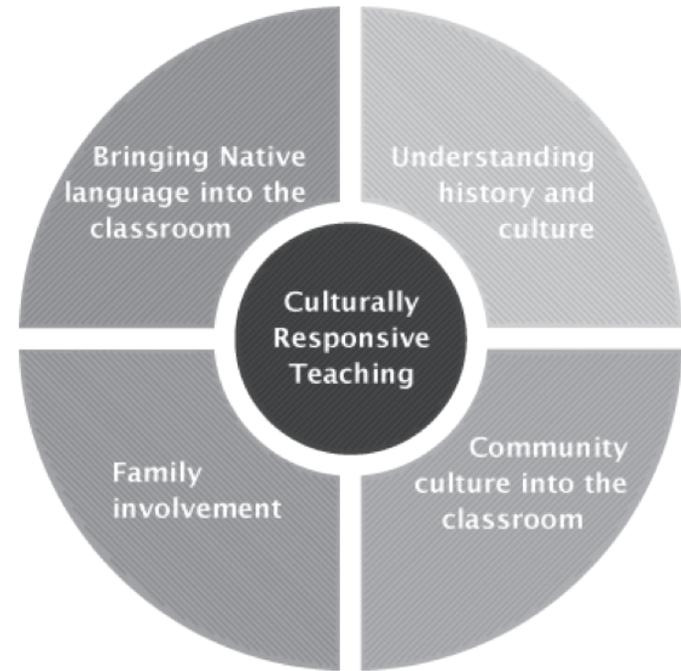
Culturally Competent Educators for a Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Student Population

There is a cultural gap in many of the nation’s schools, as a growing number of educators struggle to better serve students from cultures other than their own. This is due to dramatic demographic changes that have created culturally diverse schools in many areas of the United States. The cultural gap between students and their teachers can be a factor in students’ academic performance and contribute to achievement gaps among different student groups. The Wilmington Education Improvement Commission will advocate for Delaware to create policies to better equip educators to be culturally competent practitioners who can better serve diverse students. When applied to education, cultural competence centers on the skills and knowledge to effectively serve students from diverse cultures.

It is necessary to understand and address cultural competence and the linguistic needs of students so that schools become respectful places for culturally diverse students to learn. Promoting educators’ cultural competence will allow schools and educators to better serve culturally diverse students and build partnerships with families. Schools play a critical role in affirming the pluralism that students and their communities reflect; challenging discrimination and intolerance; and developing the attitudes and values necessary for an inclusive and respectful state. We believe that racial, ethnic, socioeconomic and cultural diversity creates a global Delaware as a tapestry that enriches us all. The Commission understands that the need for culturally competent educators will continue to grow as Delaware’s students become more diverse.

The Commission considers cultural competence a key policy issue to successful implementation of the redistricting plan. For a description of culturally responsive teaching, please see Figure 3 below.

Figure 3: Promoting Educators’ Cultural Competence to Better Serve Culturally Diverse Students and Build Partnerships with Families



Source: Promoting Educators’ Cultural Competence To Better Serve Culturally Diverse Students, NEA Policy Brief 2008, Human and Civil Rights Department.

The Commission will identify a working group to address the need for cultural competency in schools. The working group will recommend policy changes to the Commission for inclusion in the Commission’s yearly report to the Delaware General Assembly. With these recommendations, the Commission will work with the districts to establish stronger cultural competency in all schools for improved school contexts.

State Board Action on the Comprehensive Redistricting Plan

The redistricting plan is a complex undertaking that must be viewed as an integrated whole. The parts of the plan are interconnected and interdependent elements of the action agenda for improved student outcomes. Simply altering district boundaries without the other critical changes in resources, cross-sector community support, and the development and application of stronger educational and learning models will be insufficient and should be unacceptable. The State Board has spoken loud and clear: It expects that changes in district boundaries should improve student learning. The Commission agrees and presents this comprehensive and integrated redistricting plan to carry forward the action agenda needed to improve student outcomes.

Under the provisions of Senate Bill 122, the State Board has the authority to act upon the plan submitted by the Commission in its entirety. The redistricting resolution that follows enables the State Board to approve the submitted plan in its entirety, inclusive of all provisions in the body of this document.

The State Board's authority to approve the plan is separate and distinct from the authority required to carry out the plan. Virtually all public-education plans require the actions of many institutions and individuals to bring about the prescribed changes. In approving the plan, the State Board is affirming the full framework for redistricting, inclusive of the student, personnel, resource, facilities, and related provisions needed to ensure that implementation can reliably result in higher levels of student learning. Carrying out the plan requires actions by many institutions over a period of three to four years.

- The **school districts** must develop and carry out their own more detailed plans to reassign students in a manner that is *minimally disruptive* and *enhances learning opportunities for all students*.
- The **Board of Elections** must *adjust nominating districts for the election of school board members* reflecting the changes in district boundaries and resulting population shifts.
- The **district administrations** working with **local bargaining units** must make *equitable adjustments in the assignments of educators, administrators, and other personnel consistent with collective bargaining agreements*.
- The **Governor, General Assembly, and school districts** must allocate *the resources needed to support the redistricting transition* and provide for the equitable and effective *education of all students* and for

the support of *schools with high concentrations of low-income students and English language learners*. Institutions from all sectors, including **higher education, nonprofit and community service organizations, foundations, and the private sector** must *mobilize support* for City of Wilmington schools and students.

- **Educators, staff, parents, families, district personnel, community members and institutions, and members from all sectors** must be *engaged in meaningful collaboration to accomplish the multi-year transition process* in order to enhance student learning.
- The **Wilmington Education Improvement Commission** must **monitor and facilitate** the various stages of implementation, working with all those who are central to implementing the plan and reporting on progress to the Governor, General Assembly, and the State Board.

All of this and more will be set in motion by the State Board's approval of this plan and the subsequent confirmation of that approval by the passage of a joint resolution by the General Assembly and signing into law by the Governor. Upon State Board approval, the Commission will initiate the set of concurrent actions needed for the next stage of implementation in 2016–2017. This will include

- Submission of legislative proposals for funding;
- Coordination with the Delaware Department of Education (DOE) and districts of the detailed planning for all impacted schools, including those schools previously designated by doe as priority schools;
- Mobilization of support from partner institutions, including higher education, nonprofit and community institutions, Student Success 2025, the Access to Justice Commission, the state's Education Funding Improvement Commission, and others; and
- Commission engagement and collaboration with the districts and other partners in support of all facets of the next stage of implementation.

Each year the Commission will facilitate implementation and undertake a parallel process of public engagement and collaboration. The Commission will report back to the State Board on a continuing basis on the progress of each stage of implementation and confirm whether or not the needed decisions, resources, and institutional supports are in place to move forward at each stage of the process.

Organization of the Plan

This introduction is followed by the Redistricting Resolution for State Board action. Approval of the Redistricting Resolution will signify adoption of all parts of the plan.

Part II of the plan presents the foundations for State Board action, beginning with the analysis and recommendations of the Advisory Committee, the resulting and applicable legislation, and the work of the Commission. Part II concludes with a profile of the City of Wilmington and New Castle County students and families as well as a description of schools and enrollments.

Part III reviews the specific redistricting recommendations in the final report of the Wilmington Education Advisory Committee (the Advisory Committee), *Strengthening Wilmington Education: An Action Agenda*. The analysis in Part III then focuses on each of those recommendations, beginning with the recommendation that the Christina School District should no longer serve City of Wilmington students and that the Red Clay Consolidated School District should take responsibility for City of Wilmington students and schools now in the Christina School District. Part III then addresses the Advisory Committee's recommendation that the Colonial School District should no longer serve City of Wilmington students. The Commission's recommendations on both of these changes form the basis for the subsequent sections of the transition, resource, and implementation plan.

Part IV illustrates the likely impacts of redistricting on the demographic and enrollment characteristics of all four New Castle County traditional districts and considers as well the ways in which choice, charter, and vo-tech enrollment may influence these impacts.²²

Part V addresses the resources needed to fund student success, beginning with the need for funding that addresses the needs of students in poverty, English language learners, and other students at risk. Part V reviews the resources needed for the redistricting transition and for student success after the transition. The analysis also addresses key actions needed to strengthen the revenue structure and capacity at both the state and local levels and the priority of support for early childhood education and college and career readiness.

Part VI addresses community and institutional-support resources needed for the success of schools with high concentrations of low-income students, English language learners, and other students at risk. It describes how the

work of the Commission, through its committees on meeting the needs of students in poverty, charter-district collaboration, and parent, educator, and community engagement will mobilize support needed for these schools and students. Part VI identifies concurrent Delaware initiatives that align with the changes proposed by the Commission and that will positively reinforce the student learning outcomes from the recommended changes.

Part VII provides a transition plan for redistricting between the Christina and Red Clay Consolidated School Districts that addresses all requirements stipulated in the legislation and also describes how the transition will be conducted with minimal disruption to students, parents, and educators and with strong collaboration between the two districts. Part VII is based on the extensive work of the two districts and is fully consistent with the framework for planning developed by each district that have been reviewed and approved by the Christina and Red Clay Consolidated School Districts' Boards of Education. Each district's framework for planning is included in entirety as Appendices B and C.

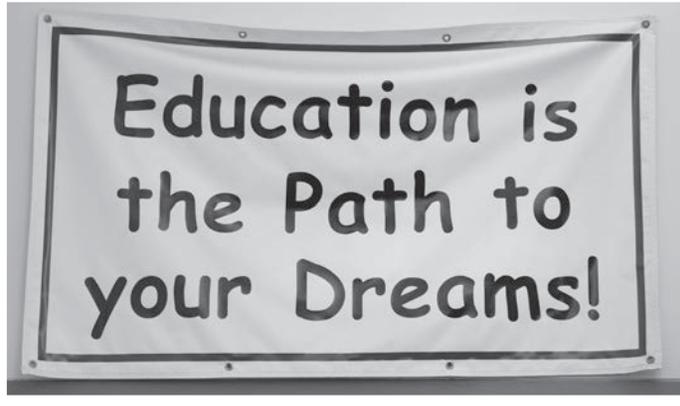
Part VIII provides the full narrative and graphic descriptions of the current boundaries of the four New Castle County districts. These boundaries have been confirmed with each of the districts. Part VIII also provides the full narrative and graphic descriptions of the altered boundaries to be approved by the State Board.

Part IX describes the milestones and measures of progress to be used in evaluating the success of the action agenda underpinning the Commission's plan and also for identifying key transition points at various stages of implementation.

The appendices to the plan are of particular importance since they contain much of the documentation supporting key facets of redistricting action. The appendices include the history of legislation, the transition plans developed by the Christina and Red Clay Consolidated School Districts, the record of activities and actions by the Commission, the description of the information constituting the public record, and other documentation and evidence of consequence to the State Board's action.

²² Note: The illustrations in this section use data for 2013 and will be updated once a new data set is available and analyzed.

Part II: The Foundations for State Board of Education Action



“What we need most is the collective will to improve the education of all Delaware children. We need to level the playing field for those low-income students and other students at risk who currently do not have access to the educational opportunities that can and should transform their lives and enrich our community. The future of Wilmington and our state depends upon it.”

THE HONORABLE
CHANDLEE JOHNSON KUHN, ESQ.
FORMER CHIEF JUDGE, THE FAMILY COURT

JACQUELINE JENKINS, ED.D.
EDUCATIONAL POLICY ADVISOR, WILMINGTON MAYOR'S OFFICE

MICHELLE A. TAYLOR
PRESIDENT AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, UNITED WAY OF
DELAWARE
Editorial to The News Journal | 2015

Part II of the implementation plan provides a framework for action by the State Board of Education (State Board), focusing on four key foundational elements: (1) the work of the Wilmington Education Advisory Committee (Advisory Committee); (2) the legislative framework for action including a description of the elements of the plan specified to be submitted to the State Board; (3) the work of the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission (the Commission) in reviewing the recommendations of the Advisory Committee final report and obtaining additional input and analysis to inform its recommendations regarding redistricting and the transition, resource, and implementation plan to be submitted to the State Board as the basis for its decision; and (4) the demographic characteristics of the City of Wilmington and New Castle County students and families including a profile of student enrollment in the City of Wilmington and New Castle County schools.

Foundation One: Wilmington Education Advisory Committee

The recommendations of the Advisory Committee serve as the foundation of the redistricting plan. In September 2014, Governor Jack Markell formed the Advisory Committee to recommend how to strengthen the public education system for all City of Wilmington students. The Advisory Committee's mandate was to recommend how to strengthen the public education system for all City of Wilmington students. Governor Markell charged the Advisory Committee with addressing the underlying challenges facing public education in the City of Wilmington and proposing actions that will propel continuous improvements in City of Wilmington schools.

The starting point for the work of the Advisory Committee was the documented failure of public education for many City of Wilmington students combined with the absence of collective responsibility for that failure.

Today, thousands of Wilmington children, most of them poor, black, or Latino, still do not have access to high-quality public education. Judged on most outcomes—test scores, truancy, graduation rates, college attendance, socio-emotional well-being, drug use, homelessness, arrests,

and unemployment—these children have become data points for a system of failure. Various groups address these challenges by blaming each other; government officials, parents, educational advocates, community and business leaders, unions, educational administrators, teachers, and, at times, even the children themselves are blamed for the failures of public education. This confrontational dialogue, which has generally focused on how one group can hold another group accountable, is now an embedded feature of Wilmington education. (WEAC, 2015, p.13)

The Advisory Committee affirmed, “The simple and undeniable historical fact is that our entire Delaware community is responsible for the conditions that currently exist,” and “only the entire community, acting together, will change these conditions, and even then it will not be easy” (2015, p. 14).

While diverse in membership, the Advisory Committee had shared expectations and agreement on the following guiding principles.

- *Delivering high-quality public education to all children, including those who are low-income, black or Latino, is not only a Wilmington problem. It is a challenge facing all of Delaware.*
- *All Wilmington schools should meet high and rising standards for student learning in Delaware and across the globe. There should be agreed-upon measures for student success in meeting those standards that apply to all schools.*
- *Parent and family engagement is critical to the effectiveness of public education, and we must establish a strong Wilmington education partnership between schools and the families they serve.*
- *All Wilmington students should have access to high-quality educators who are prepared to meet their diverse needs, and to the human and financial resources needed to support student success.*
- *Wilmington schools should be seen as community assets and must have allies to address the complex challenges of educating the city’s children. These allies include engaged families, community and business partners, early childhood educators, mental and physical health providers, institutions of higher education, and social service providers.*
- *Wilmington students should continue to be served by a combination of district, charter, and vo-tech schools. Policies and practices for*

Wilmington schools should promote collaboration, shared learning, and a mutual commitment to improvements that serve all students. (WEAC, 2015, p.15)

The Advisory Committee reviewed the work of earlier commissions addressing the challenges of City of Wilmington education (Appendix E). The Advisory Committee’s deliberations also were framed by the longer history of City of Wilmington education, and the changes in conditions since 2001, when the first of the earlier commission reports on City of Wilmington education was issued. The Advisory Committee met with state and local government officials, including the City of Wilmington delegation of the General Assembly as well as legislators from other parts of New Castle County, the chairs of the Education Committees of the Delaware Senate and House of Representatives, City of Wilmington’s mayor and city council president and several members of City of Wilmington and New Castle County Councils. Presentations have been made to the Delaware Senate and House of Representatives Education Committees and the Wilmington City Council Education Committee. The Advisory Committee also met with state and district education officials, charter school leaders and advocates, and community advocates for education and made a presentation to the State Board. In addition, educators, parents, and community members have attended Advisory Committee regular meetings. Beyond these meetings, the Advisory Committee solicited broad public input and commentary. The Advisory Committee’s interim report was made public on January 26, 2015, and comments were received from the Delaware community through the subsequent six weeks. The Advisory Committee received input from the families, citizens, and leaders of the City of Wilmington and from the districts and other institutions that would be impacted by our recommendations (see Appendix D of *Strengthening Wilmington Education: An Action Agenda*).

The analysis and action agenda of the Advisory Committee focused on four areas: (1) Creating Responsive Governance, (2) Meeting Wilmington Student Needs, (3) Funding Student Success, and (4) Implementing Change. The Advisory Committee proposed that strengthening City of Wilmington education requires that the proposed actions in all four areas be carried out in a systematic and coordinated fashion. “The effectiveness of the action agenda in each of the four areas,” the Advisory Committee proposed, “is highly dependent upon the implementation of the action agenda in the other areas” (p.17).

Portions of the analysis and action agenda in the Advisory Committee’s final report are referenced in the various portions of this plan. Indeed, the

recommendations in the final report, *Strengthening Wilmington Education: An Action Agenda*, are the baseline for the work of the Commission and a key foundation upon which this plan was developed.

Foundation Two: The Legislative Framework

During the 2015 legislative session, five pieces of legislation related directly to the Advisory Committee's recommendations. Two pieces were developed to create responsive governance. Both passed the General Assembly. Senate Bill 122 (SB 122) authorized the redistricting work and House Bill 56 placed a moratorium on charter school approval. One piece of legislation, House Bill 148 (HB 148), addressed implementing change, creating the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission, passed. Two pieces of legislation aimed at meeting City of Wilmington student needs and funding student success—House Bill 30 expanding special education funding and House Bill 117 in relation to low-income student funding—were released from the House Education Committee and assigned to Appropriations Committee. All pieces of legislation can be found in Appendix A. Both SB 122 and HB 148 are instrumental to the redistricting process.

HB 148 established the 23-member Wilmington Education Improvement Commission (the Commission) and mandates that it,

shall advise the Governor and General Assembly on the planning, recommending, and implementing of improvement to the quality and availability of education for children Pre-K through grade 12 in the City of Wilmington and for which such changes may be instructive for addressing needs of all schools within the State with high concentrations of children living in poverty, English language learners, or both.

The Commission was initially proposed by the Advisory Committee to recommend how to strengthen public education for all City of Wilmington students. The final report of WEAC, *Strengthening Wilmington Education: An Action Agenda*, was submitted to the Governor and General Assembly on March 31, 2015, and recommended the establishment of a “broadly representative, cross-sector commission, outside of the current agencies of state government” to lead the planning and implementation of the recommendations in the report. Consistent with this recommendation, HB 148 mandates the Commission “to work with and across all government agencies, educational entities, and private and nonprofit institutions to promote and support the implementation of all recommended changes from the Wilmington Educa-

tion Advisory Committee (WEAC).” The legislation further directs the Commission “to monitor the progress of implementation and recommend policies and actions to the Governor and General Assembly to facilitate progress and to promote the continuous improvement of public education.” HB 148 explicitly directs the Commission to develop a “transition, resource, and implementation plan...for the provision of necessary services to schools and students affected by the implementation of the changes recommended by WEAC” to “effectively implement school district realignment” in a manner consistent with the recommendations of the WEAC final report and to submit that report to the State Board of Education by December 31, 2015.

SB 122 amends Title 14, Chapter 10 of the Delaware Code relating to education and the reorganization and changing of school district boundaries (see Appendix A). The legislation stipulates that “the State Board of Education may change or alter the boundaries of school districts in New Castle County in a manner consistent with some or all of the redistricting recommendations made by the Wilmington Education Advisory Committee in the report issued on March 31, 2015, provided that the General Assembly passes, and the Governor signs, a Joint Resolution supporting the proposed changes.” The law further stipulates that in “its decision or order to change or alter a school district boundary,” the State Board of Education “shall adopt a transition, resource and implementation plan” that shall be developed by the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission. The Commission’s plan for presentation to and approval by the State Board is directed by the legislation to address, at a minimum, the following provisions:

- “(1) the orderly and minimally disruptive reassignment of students affected by the boundary change and the reassignment of governance responsibilities,
- (2) implications for educators, administrators, and other personnel that may lead to equitable adjustments to local collective bargaining agreements,
- (3) resources that will be required, from state, district, and local sources, to support the redistricting transition and provide for the effective ongoing education of all affected students, and for the support of schools with high concentrations of low-income students and English language learners,
- (4) student transportation,
- (5) distribution of capital assets, and
- (6) engagement of educators, staff, parents, district personnel, and community members through-out the transition” (see Appendix A).

The legislation is explicit that the plan “shall permit students to continue their attendance at the school they attended prior to the boundary change, with tuition payments by the sending district as provided in Chapter 6 of this title, until such time as the pupils complete the grade levels offered in that school.”

The legislation also states that the State Board “shall base its decision to change or alter school district boundaries on a record developed in compliance with state open meeting laws.” Further, if the State Board “does not approve the plan as submitted by the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission, it shall notify the chairperson of the Commission in writing, given reasons why the plan was not approved, and allow the Commission to resubmit the plan within 60 days of the chairperson receiving the notice of denial.” The authority of the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission and the State Board to act under the provisions of SB 122 terminates on March 31, 2016.

The Commission’s transition, resource and implementation plan addresses all provisions stipulated in SB 122. It contains additional information and analysis to inform the State Board’s decision and to promote effective implementation of school district realignment in the City of Wilmington and northern New Castle County.

Foundation Three: The Wilmington Education Improvement Commission

The Wilmington Education Advisory Committee final report recommended that a broadly representative, cross-sector commission, outside of the current agencies of state government, should lead the planning and implementation of the recommendations in this report. The Wilmington Education Improvement Commission, established by HB 148, has acted as community-based council outside of state agencies, working across all governmental units, educational entities, and private and nonprofit institutions to support the implementation of all recommended changes from the final report of the Wilmington Education Advisory Committee.

The membership of the commission is limited to 23 members from the City of Wilmington and New Castle County, most designated by position. It includes district, charter, parent, teacher, student, legislative, and community representatives. In addition, membership includes the presidents of all four school districts. Much of the work of the Commission is carried out by its five

committees that prepare recommendations for review by the Commission: (1) redistricting; (2) charter and district collaboration; (3) meeting the needs of students in poverty; (4) funding student success; and (5) parent, educator, and community engagement.

The Redistricting and Funding Student Success Committees were responsible for most of the contributions to the redistricting plan; however, all of the committees’ charges are aligned with the objectives of redistricting. These committees met multiple times each month, meeting weekly and bi-weekly in many cases. All committee and commission meetings are open to the public.

Meeting the Needs of Students in Poverty

The charge of this committee is to develop a comprehensive plan for the integration of services for low-income children and families and for schools with high concentrations of poverty; apply a developmental model from birth through college and the workforce; and revitalize and enhance the existing policy infrastructure to implement the comprehensive plan.

Charter and District Collaboration

The overall charge of this committee is to support the development of a statewide plan for the configuration of schools; promote shared capacity and collaboration among district, charter, and vo-tech schools within the state; and recommend the application of national best practices for the overall improvement of public education in Delaware.

Parent, Educator, and Community Engagement

The Parent, Educator, and Community Engagement Committee assisted with setting-up and attending Town Halls. In addition, the committee is charged with strengthening parent and family engagement in public education; supporting schools as community assets with allies from all sectors; and promoting ongoing, effective, two-way communication with parents, educators, and community residents.

Funding Student Success Committee

The Funding Student Success Committee used the WEAC recommendations as the initial basis of their work. Those funding issues fall into four categories: (1) an allocation formula, such as weighted students funding, for public school operating funds that responds to the added resource needs of schools with high percentages of low-income students, English language learners, and other students at risk, (2) a sufficient revenue base to support the

overall rising costs of the public education system, (3) an array of transition and capital resources needed to effectively implement the proposed district realignment, and (4) an allocation of funding for the additional programs, supports, and services, such as high-quality early childhood programs, required to meet the needs of students in poverty.

Redistricting Committee

The Redistricting Committee has been responsible for overseeing the development of the Commission’s transition, resource, and implementation plan for redistricting. The committee has worked directly with the leadership of the impacted districts, which are represented among its members, with reports presented from the districts at each meeting. The Redistricting Committee and staff from the Institute for Public Administration (IPA) at the University of Delaware developed the framework for the redistricting plan and the development and review of drafts of the plan.

Public Understanding and Engagement

Public engagement with parents, students, educators, and community members has been a key priority in the work for the Commission. All members of the community have been encouraged to attend Commission and committee meetings. In addition, the Commission has promoted public understanding and engagement in the following ways:

- Made presentations at the scheduled meetings of the Boards of Education of all four northern New Castle County Districts;
- Hosted town halls for parents and community members in each school district;
- Participated in presentations to numerous community organizations and groups, ranging from the Delaware State Education Association Executive Committee and Presidents, to the Latino Summit sponsored by the Delaware Hispanic Commission;
- Engaged with over 2,000 participants with the Commission’s Facebook page, Solutions for Wilmington Schools;
- Established the website www.solutionsfordelawareschools.com for the posting of all schedules and minutes of Commission and committee meetings in addition to all written materials and resources used by the Commission; and

- Created the basis for the public record for State Board action that includes opportunities for public comment electronically, in writing, or at six scheduled public hearings for which transcriptions have been made and submitted to the State Board.

The Commission’s work in the development of this transition, resource, and implementation plan for redistricting is described in each of the following sections.

Foundation Four: Profile of Demographics

**Table 5: Profile of City of Wilmington Students and Families, 2013
Wilmington Population: 71,143**

Race and Ethnicity ²³	
White	37%
Black or African American	56%
American Indian and Alaska Native	0.5%
Asian	0.5%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0%
Other	3%
Two or More Races	3%
Identify as Hispanic/Latino Ethnicity	8%

Income	
Median Household Income	38,727
Percentage of Children Ages 0 to 18 in Poverty	34%
Percent of Wilmington Students Classified as Low-Income in 2014	70%
Unemployment Rate	13.5%

Households	
Female Householder, No Husband Present	25.30%
Male Householder, No Wife Present	6.40%
Married-Couple Family	22.80%

²³ These percentages are only partially comparable to the census information on the city since the Department of Education reports Hispanic as a racial category, and the census reports it only as an ethnicity identifier.

Educational Attainment, 25 Years and Over	46,741
Less than 9th grade	5.80%
9th to 12th grade, No Diploma	12.70%
High School Graduate (includes equivalency)	33.40%
Some College, No Degree	18.80%
Associate's Degree	4.40%
Bachelor's Degree	14.60%
Graduate or Professional Degree	10.30%

Wilmington Students Enrolled in School, 3 Years and Over	17,782
Nursery School, Preschool	1,395
Kindergarten to 12th Grade (including private school enrollment)	12,445
College, Undergraduate	3,078
Graduate, Professional School	864

Public School Enrollment (2014–15 School Year)	11, 595
Number of Wilmington Students in Traditional Public Schools	8,457
Number of Wilmington Students in Charter Schools	2,475
Number of Wilmington Students in Vo-Tech Schools	643

Graduation Rate of Wilmington Students in 2014	68%
Delaware High School Dropouts from Wilmington in 2014	16%

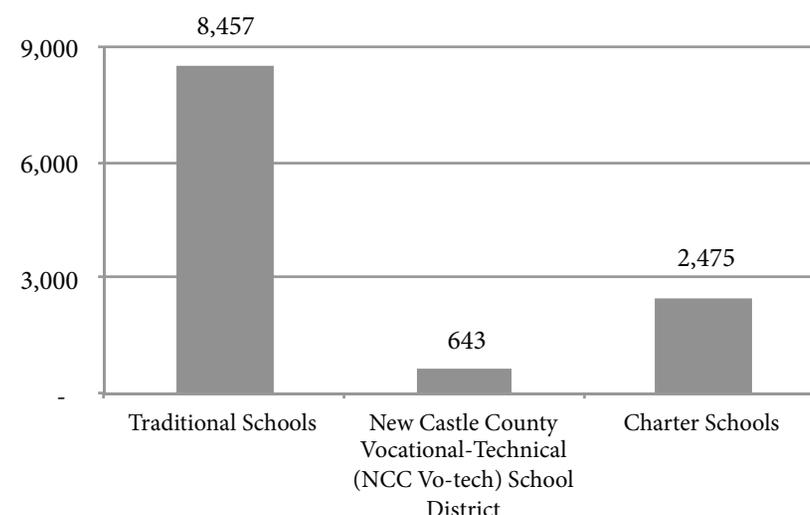
Sources: 2013 American Community Survey 5-Year Data and Delaware Department of Education Data Set, 2014-15 School Year

Table 6: Wilmington Students Enrollment, 2014–15 Profile
Wilmington Students in Public Schools, 2014–15: 11,595²⁴

- 74% African American, 18% Hispanic, 7% White
- 70% Low-Income

Students in Public Schools Located in Wilmington, 2014–15: 11,233

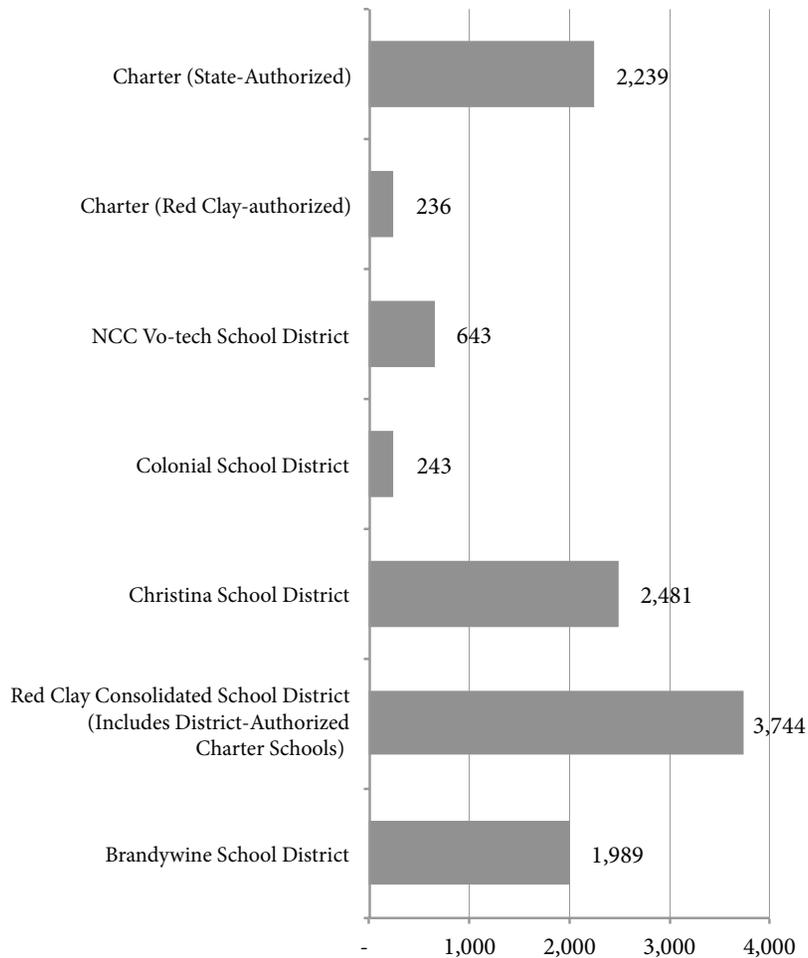
Figure 4: Wilmington Student Enrollment by Public School Type, 2014–15 School Year



Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Set, 2014-15 School Year

²⁴ Enrollment numbers are determined by the September 30 count according to Delaware Department of Education. Strengthening Wilmington Education: An Interim Report cited 10,634 as the number of Wilmington students in 2013–14. This number represented the total enrollment of schools located in the city limits and did not include Wilmington residents who may be attending schools outside the city limits. Subsequently acquired data allow for a more accurate picture of Wilmington students based on residency. Accordingly, the number of students who lived within City of Wilmington limits was 11,437 in 2013–14 and is 11,595 in 2014–15.

Figure 5: Wilmington Student Enrollment, 2014–15 School Year



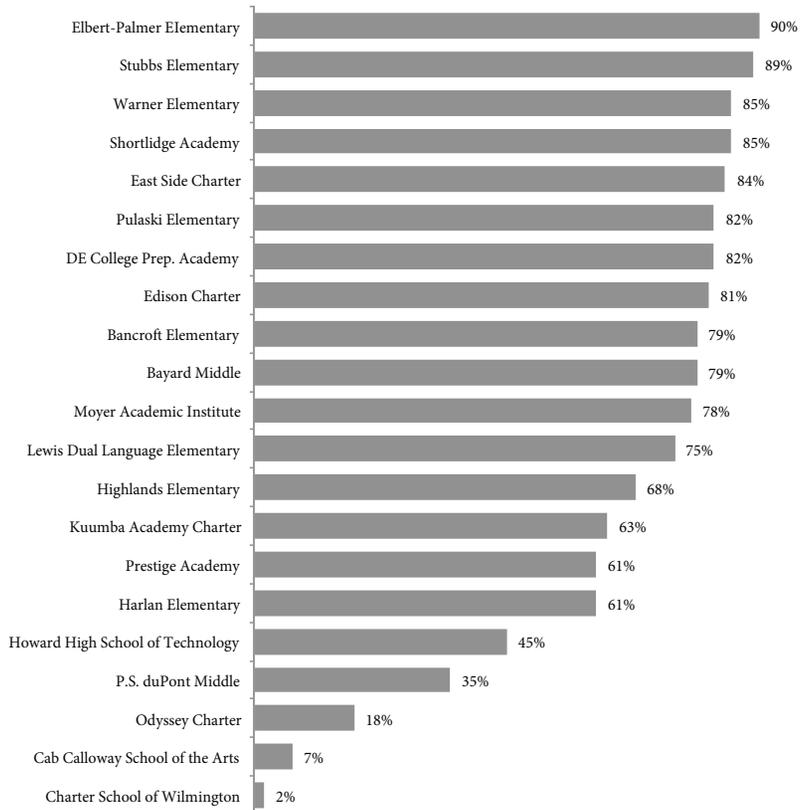
Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Set, 2014-15 School Year

Table 7: Wilmington Student Enrollment, 2014–15 School Year

Red Clay Consolidated School District*	3,744
Christina School District	2,481
Brandywine School District	1,989
NCC Vo-tech School District	643
Edison (Thomas A.) Charter School	516
EastSide Charter School	320
Kuumba Academy Charter School	302
Colonial School District	243
Family Foundations Academy	189
Reach Academy for Girls	169
Odyssey Charter School	158
Delaware College Preparatory Academy*	154
Prestige Academy	143
Moyer (Maurice J.) Academic Institute	143
Academia Antonia Alonso	130
Charter School of Wilmington*	64
First State Montessori Academy	59
Las Américas ASPIRA Academy	46
Delaware Academy of Public Safety and Security	39
Delaware Military Academy*	19
MOT Charter School	<15
Gateway Lab School	<15
Early College High School at Delaware State University (DSU)	<15
Silver Lake Elementary School (Appoquinimink School District)	<15
Middletown High School (Appoquinimink School District)	<15
Loss (Olive B.) Elementary School (Appoquinimink School District)	<15
W. Reily Brown Elementary School (Caesar Rodney School District)	<15
Dover High School (Capital School District)	<15

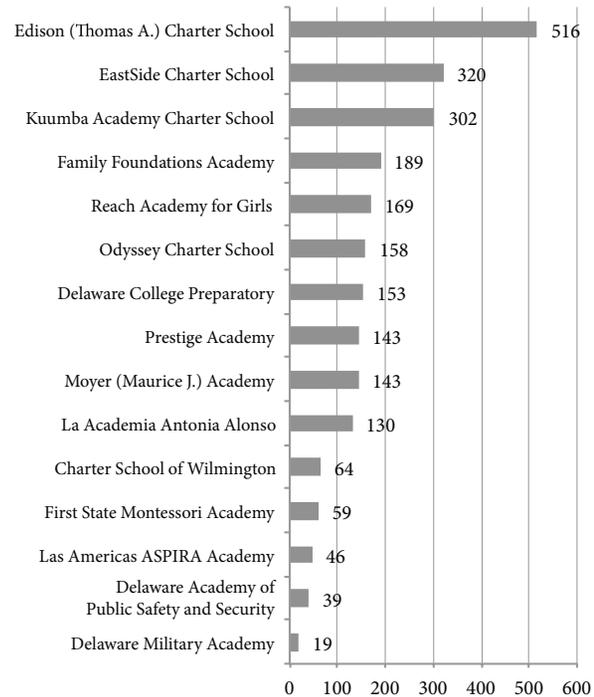
Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Set, 2014–15 School Year.
Note: * Red Clay-authorized charter schools are listed separately.

Figure 6: Percentage of Low-Income Enrollment in Wilmington Schools in 2014



Source: Delaware Department of Education. (2014). School Profiles.

Figure 7: Wilmington Student Enrollment in Charter Schools, 2014-15 School Year



Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Set, 2014-15 School Year.

Note: * Gateway Lab School, Early College High School at DSU, and MOT Charter School were not reported because fewer than 15 students are enrolled at each of these schools.

Table 8: Educational Attainment, Population 25 Years and Over, 2013

Educational Attainment	Wilmington	NCC	Delaware	U.S.
Less than a High School Diploma	18.5%	10.7%	12.3%	13.9%
High School Graduate (includes equivalency)	33.4%	29.1%	31.7%	28.1%
Some College, No Degree	18.8%	19.7%	19.9%	21.2%
Associate's Degree	4.4%	6.8%	7.3%	7.8%
Bachelor's Degree	14.6%	19.9%	17.2%	18.0%
Graduate or Professional Degree	10.3%	13.9%	11.7%	10.8%

Source: 2013 American Community Survey 5-Year Data.

Figure 8: 2013 DCAS, All Students by District (Grade Level Aggregated)

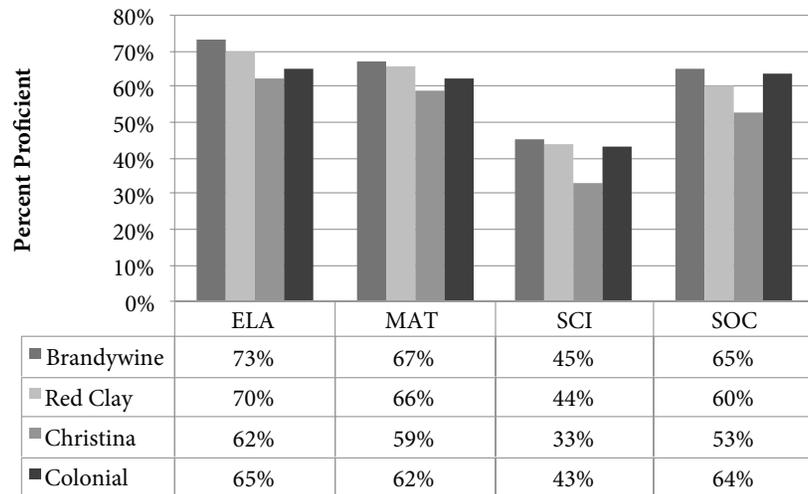


Figure 10: 2013 DCAS, City of Wilmington Students by District (Grade Level Aggregated)

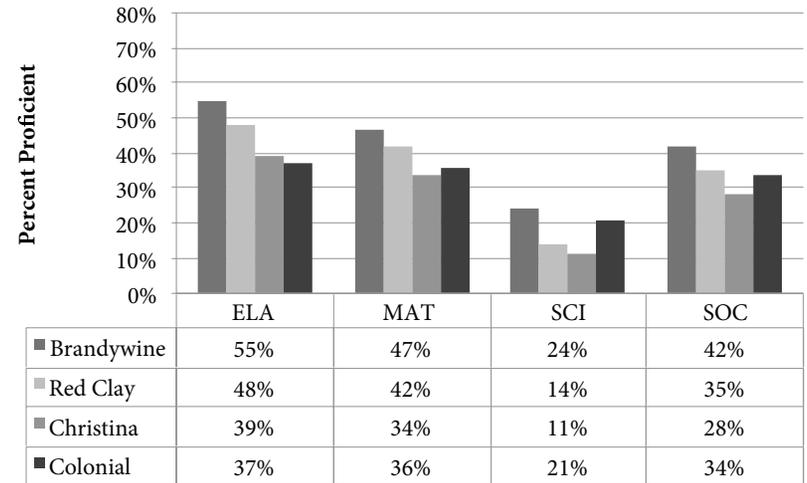


Figure 9: 2013 DCAS, All Low-Income Students by District (Grade Level Aggregated)

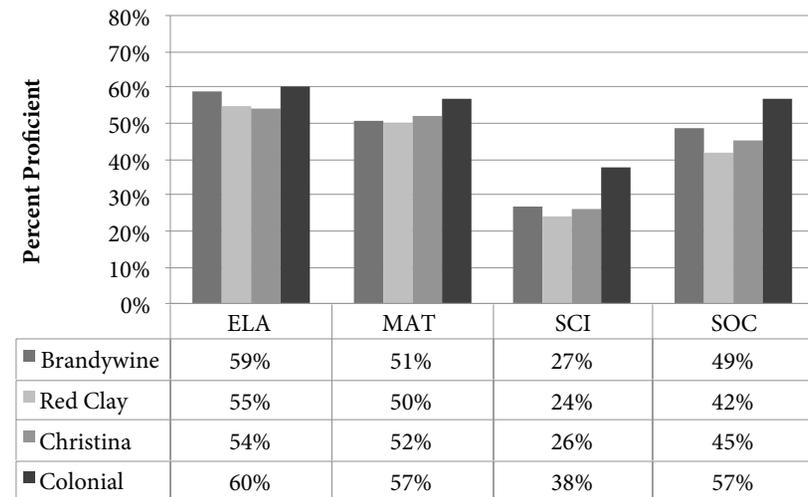


Figure 11: 2013 DCAS, Low-Income City of Wilmington Students by District (Grade Level Aggregated)

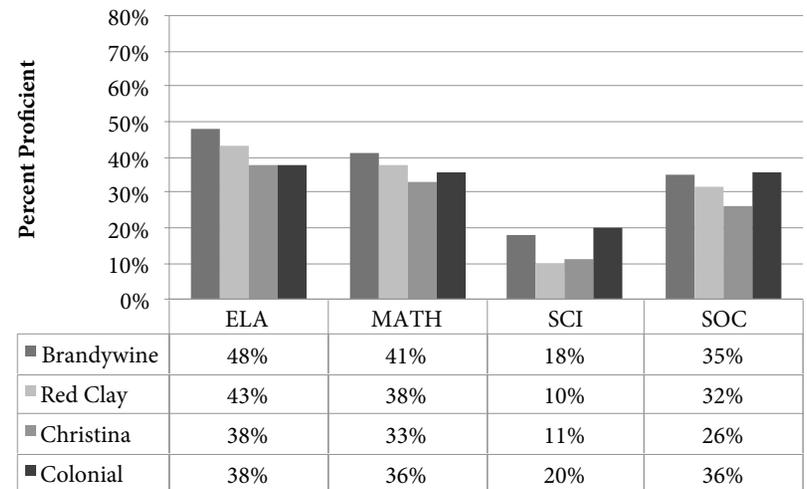


Figure 12: 2014 DCAS, All Students by District (Grade Level Aggregated)

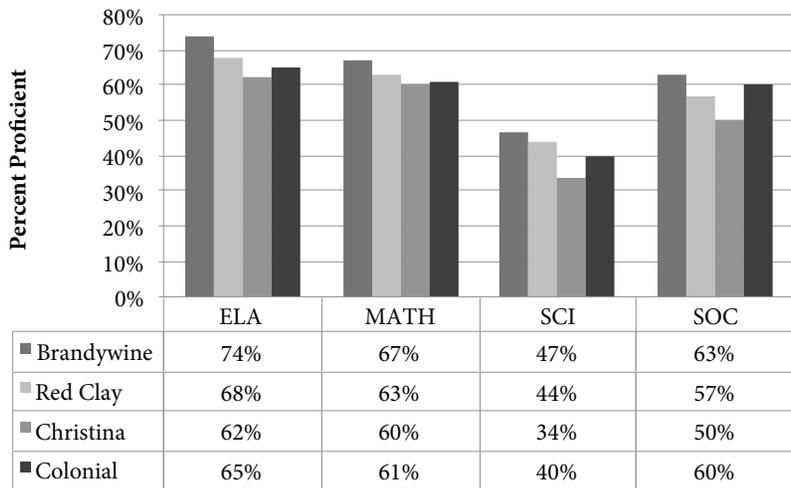


Figure 14: 2014 DCAS, Low-Income City of Wilmington Students (Grade Level Aggregated)

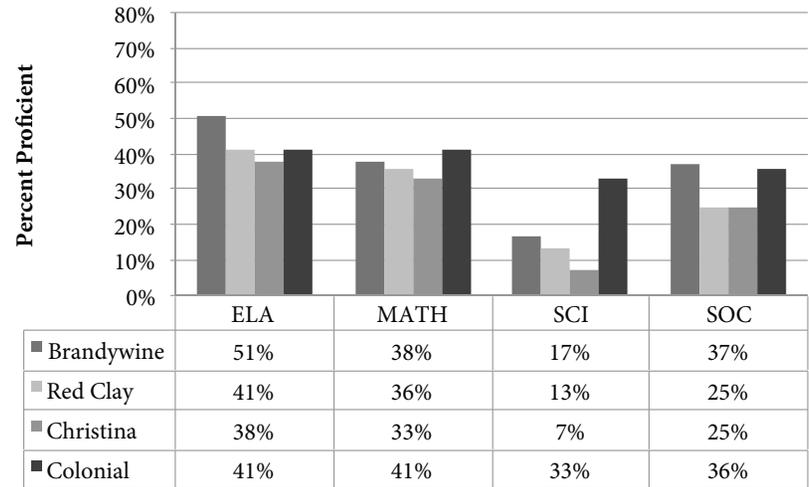
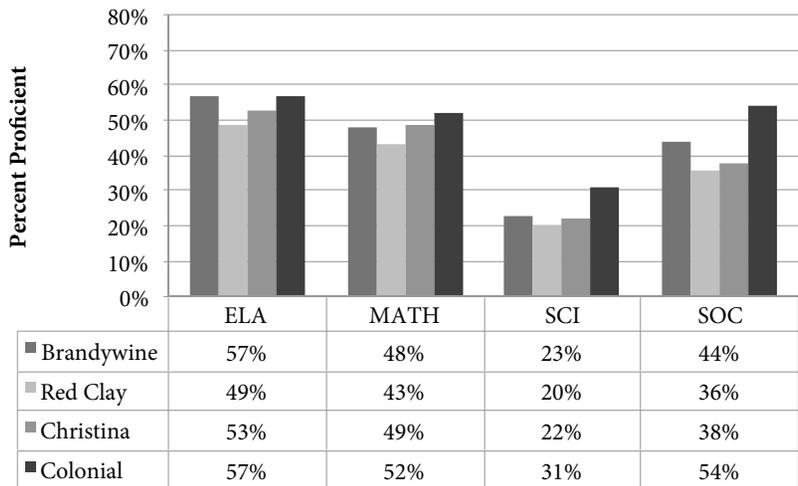


Figure 13: 2014 DCAS, Low-Income Students by District (Grade Level Aggregated)





“We believe that doing nothing would assure that the cost of education in Delaware will continue to rise—to a level we believe is unsustainable.”

METROPOLITAN WILMINGTON
URBAN LEAGUE

Part III: Redistricting Recommendations

The baseline for State Board action on redistricting is the final report of the Wilmington Education Advisory Committee, *Strengthening Wilmington Education: An Action Agenda*. The enabling legislation, Senate Bill 122, authorizes the State Board to alter or change the boundaries of school districts in New Castle County, “in a manner consistent with some or all of the redistricting recommendations made by the Wilmington Education Advisory Committee,” in that report. This section of the plan begins with a review of the analysis and redistricting recommendations contained in the Advisory Committee’s final report.

The analysis then focuses on each of those recommendations, beginning with the recommendation that the Christina School District should no longer serve City of Wilmington students and that the Red Clay Consolidated School District should take responsibility for the City of Wilmington students and schools now in the Christina School District. The basis for this recommendation and the documentation of the proposed change in boundaries is reviewed in detail. This recommendation has received significant support from both school districts. Indeed, the process for approval and implementation of the recommended redistricting changes between the Christina School District and the Red Clay Consolidated School District is moving forward in a consistent, deliberate, and supportive fashion. The collaborations, district board support, and planning frameworks are all in place for State Board approval and implementation of the recommended redistricting. Moving Christina’s students into Red Clay will consolidate more than 50 percent of Wilmington’s students into a single school district, thereby enhancing both accountability and alignment of instructional programs.

By contrast with the redistricting recommendation for Christina and Red Clay Consolidated School District, the Advisory Committee’s recommendation that the Colonial School District should no longer serve City of Wilmington students has not yet resulted in consistent support or a clear path forward. On October 13, 2015 the Colonial School Board resolved to continue to serve City of Wilmington students and preserve its current boundary in the City of Wilmington. Discussions are underway with the Commission to consider alternatives that might garner the support of both the Colonial School Board and the Commission that would serve the best interests of the students. The issues and circumstances are described in the final section of Part III.

It is anticipated that we will come to a shared position for inclusion in the final plan submitted to the State Board.

The Brandywine School District, as per the Advisory Committee’s final report, was to continue serving students living in its portion of Wilmington. The Brandywine School Board has affirmed its support for the WEAC recommendations and its commitment to continue to serve City of Wilmington students within the current boundaries.

Redistricting Analysis and Recommendations from Strengthening Wilmington Education: An Action Agenda

Strengthening Wilmington education requires more coherent and responsive governance of Wilmington public schools. Improved governance will not solve all the problems facing public education in Wilmington, but it should be the starting point. Without changing the governance of Wilmington public education, all other improvements will be made more difficult or simply not possible. This has been the conclusion of every working group focused on Wilmington education since 2001. All have proposed the need to create a system of governance that is streamlined, more responsive to the needs of Wilmington’s children and their families, and more deeply connected with the community that it serves. A range of proposals has been offered—from district consolidation to the creation of a Wilmington charter district—but none has been implemented. Indeed, the fragmentation of Wilmington public education governance has become more acute. (WEAC, 2015, p.19)

In 2001, the Wilmington Neighborhood Schools committee report recommended the consolidation of governance responsibilities for City of Wilmington public education. Subsequent commissions have echoed this recommendation. See Appendix E for an overview of past report recommendations. Despite this, the fragmentation of governance responsibilities for City of Wilmington public education actually has become more acute since 2001. As of the fall of 2015, governance responsibility for the public education of City of Wilmington students is divided among four traditional school districts, one vo-tech district, twelve charter schools in the City of Wilmington, and six charter schools outside of the city (see Table 9). These 23 units do not include the Delaware Department of Education and the State Board of Education, both of which have mandated oversight roles in public education governance. As the Advisory Committee’s final report stated,

The groups that are not included among the governing units of Wilmington public education, however, are the community it serves and the city government that represents that community. Neither has a formal role in the governance of the schools that educate its children. (WEAC, 2015, p.18)

Table 9: Public Schools Serving Wilmington Students, Fall 2015

Schools Located within City of Wilmington Limits			
District	Elementary	Middle	High
Brandywine	Harlan Elementary School	P.S. duPont Middle School	N/A
Christina	Bancroft Elementary School Elbert-Palmer Elementary School Pulaski Elementary School Stubbs Elementary School	Bayard Middle School	N/A
Colonial	N/A	N/A	N/A
Red Clay Consolidated	Delaware College Preparatory Academy** Highlands Elementary School Lewis Dual Language Elementary School Shortlidge Academy Warner Elementary School	Cab Calloway School of the Arts*	Delaware Military Academy** (not located within Wilmington) Cab Calloway School of the Arts* Charter School of Wilmington**
New Castle County Vocational Technical (NCC Vo-tech)	N/A	N/A	Howard High School of Technology
State-Authorized Charter Schools (Grade Levels Vary) within City of Wilmington Limits			
EastSide Charter School Edison Charter School First State Montessori Academy Freire Charter School		Great Oaks Charter School Kuumba Academy La Academia Antonia Alonso Prestige Academy The Delaware MET	
Additional State-Authorized Charter Schools Serving Wilmington Students			
Delaware Academy of Public Safety Delaware Design Lab High School Early College High School at Delaware State University First State Military Academy		Gateway Lab School Las Americas ASPIRA Academy MOT Charter School Odyssey Charter School	

Notes: Independent governing units are bolded. This table does not include alternative schools located in the city. Moyer Academic Institute and Reach Academy for Girls are not included, as they are proposed for closure.

*Magnet School.

** Charter schools authorized by Red Clay Consolidated School District.

Source: Delaware Department of Education. (2015) School Profiles.

The Advisory Committee pointed out that the fragmentation of governance responsibilities is no accident. It is the product of state and federal policies and practices, some four decades old, which have created or encouraged this condition (see Wilmington Education Historical Timeline on page i). *Strengthening Wilmington Education: An Action Agenda* goes on to state,

Some of these policies and practices also encourage competition and displacement among district, vo-tech, and charter schools rather than collaboration and mutual commitment to improvements for all Wilmington schools. As a result, Wilmington now has an arrangement of public education in which traditional districts, a vo-tech district, and charter schools operate as largely disconnected subsystems, funded at rising public expense but with no acceptance of shared responsibility for the education of all Wilmington students.... (WEAC, 2015, p. 21)

The Advisory Committee is clear that this situation must change:

Wilmington children can no longer afford to pay the price for this fractured, disconnected, and increasingly dysfunctional system. Wilmington teachers and other educators should not have to work in this contentious and unsupportive environment. Wilmington citizens and Delaware taxpayers should not be expected to pay the rising costs—social as well as financial—of maintaining such a system. (2015, p. 21)

To address these challenges, the Advisory Committee proposed that all public schools must be guided by a vision of responsibility for the overall effectiveness of public education, and traditional school districts operating in the City of Wilmington should have a more streamlined configuration that better addresses the needs of City of Wilmington students and more fully supports continuous improvement and community responsiveness.

Changing the current configuration of school districts in the City of Wilmington and northern New Castle County does not reverse any action by Delaware government nor counter any choice made by public referendum. The partition of the City of Wilmington among four districts with split responsibilities is a product of a 40-year-old federal court decision to achieve metropolitan school desegregation. That federal court's objective has not been met. Indeed, the original rationale for the current configuration has been overtaken by state policies, specifically the development of options to promote charters and choice (1996) and the Neighborhood Schools Act (2000).²⁵

Wilmington students were expected to benefit from this configuration, which includes one of only four discontinuous districts among the 14,000 districts in the nation.²⁶ In fact, Wilmington students have experienced—and still experience—the greatest burden from this configuration. (WEAC, 2015, p. 22)

The Advisory Committee's report is clear that the current arrangement largely precludes the capacity to effectively address the educational needs of City of Wilmington students and to systematically improve the learning and educational opportunities for these students. Today, as the report states:

Thousands of Wilmington children, most of them poor, black, or Latino, still do not have access to high-quality public education. Judged on most outcomes—test scores, truancy, graduation rates, college attendance, socio-emotional well-being, drug use, homelessness, arrests, and unemployment—these children have become data points for a system of failure. (WEAC, 2015, p. 13)

The legacy that has resulted from 40 years operating under a district configuration that was established to more effectively and equitably support the education of City of Wilmington students is that most low-income students living in the City of Wilmington are below educational proficiency in all areas. The Advisory Committee concluded that:

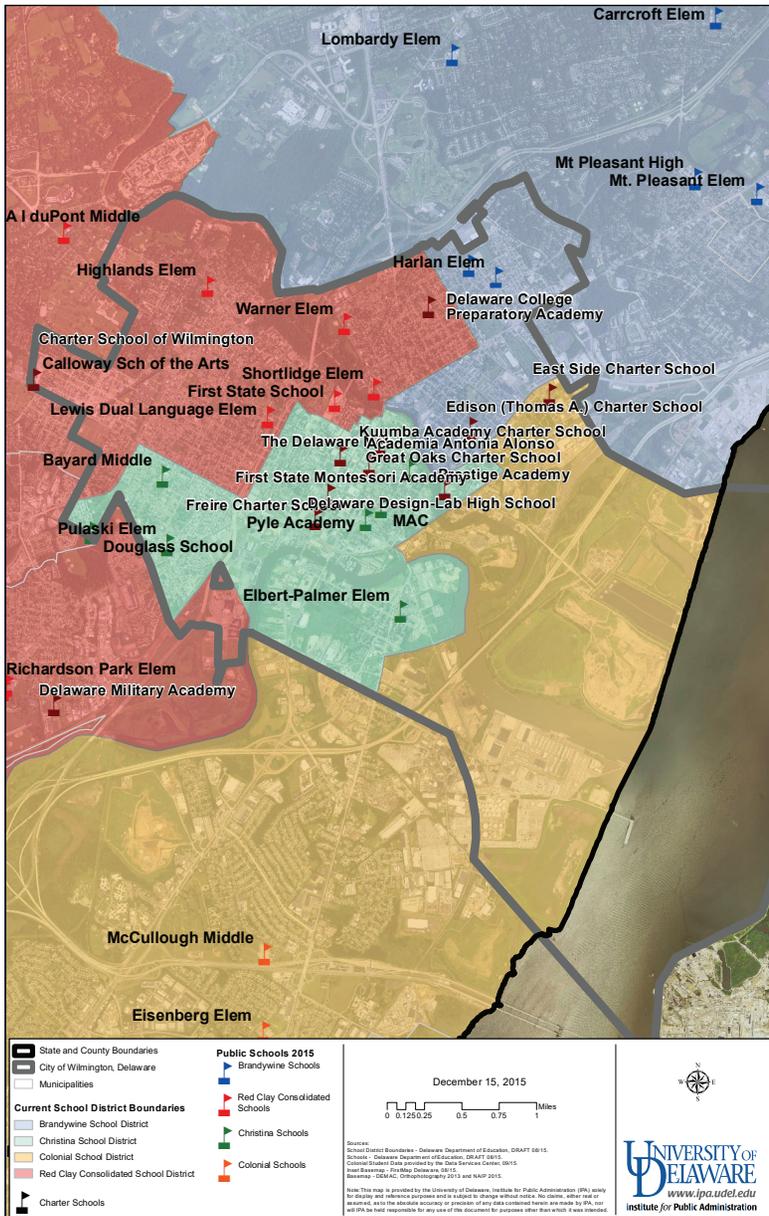
The current configuration does not effectively address the acute educational challenges faced by many Wilmington students. Indeed, the split of responsibilities makes addressing those challenges more difficult. The citizens and families of the city are not well served by a disconnected arrangement of school governance that makes their own engagement with education more cumbersome—and often beyond their practical reach. (2015, p. 22)

In evaluating options, the Advisory Committee recognized that it must consider many factors and that any change in the configurations of districts serving students in the City of Wilmington will have implications for students and families in other parts of northern New Castle County.

²⁵ Neighborhood Schools Act of 2000, 72 Del. Laws, c.287 §2 (2000). School Choice Act of 1996, 70 Del. Laws, c.180 §3 (1996). Charter School Act of 1995, 70 Del. Laws, c.179 §5 (1996).

²⁶ Other districts are Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District in California, Fulton School District in Georgia, and Keystone Oaks School District in Pennsylvania.

Figure 15: Map of Current School District Boundaries in the City with School Locations



To view the maps within this report at a larger size, visit www.solutionsfordelawareschools.com.

Further, any change must contribute to the long-term, continuous improvement of educational opportunities and learning for students in the City of Wilmington and across the county. The Advisory Committee reviewed several options, including a City of Wilmington school district, a countywide metropolitan school district (the original court-ordered action to achieve desegregation that was shortly after abandoned), and a charter school district. All of these posed serious challenges ranging from a rearrangement of all governance responsibilities across the county or across charter schools to the creation of a district that would be challenged by its isolation and fiscal unsustainability.

The Advisory Committee proposed that district reconfiguration would best meet the objective of streamlining district governance in a manner that would more effectively support the long-term and continuous educational improvement of students in the City of Wilmington and across northern New Castle County.

Because the WEAC redistricting recommendations are a baseline for the State Board's action, they are included below as they appear in the final report.

Table 10: Reconfiguring Wilmington School Districts Action Agenda from Strengthening Wilmington Education: An Action Agenda

Reconfiguring Wilmington School Districts Action Agenda from the Wilmington Education Advisory Committee's final report <i>Strengthening Wilmington Education: An Action Agenda</i>	
<p>1. <i>The Christina School District should leave the City of Wilmington and no longer serve Wilmington students. The current configuration of the Christina School District has no educational rationale other than the inertia of a forty-year-old decision that no longer serves the function for which it was originally intended.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Christina School District should concentrate on serving students in Newark and other communities in western New Castle County. In that proposed configuration, it will be more responsive to the needs of the students in those communities. Wilmington students currently served by Christina schools outside of Wilmington should continue to attend those schools until a comprehensive relocation plan can be developed and implemented. While the transition of Christina out of Wilmington should begin with the 2016–2017 school year, it should continue until all Wilmington 	

Reconfiguring Wilmington School Districts Action Agenda from the Wilmington Education Advisory Committee's final report *Strengthening Wilmington Education: An Action Agenda*

students have the opportunity to graduate from the schools in which they are enrolled.

- Transitional funding adjustments will be needed to implement this reconfiguration (see section on Funding Student Success on page 57).
2. *The Colonial School District, which has no school facilities in the City of Wilmington, should no longer serve Wilmington students. The Colonial School District currently serves about 243 Wilmington students as of the fall of 2014 (see Figure 2).²⁷ The transition of Wilmington students out of Colonial should begin with the 2016–2017 school year and continue until all Wilmington students have the opportunity to graduate from the schools in which they are enrolled.*
 - Transitional funding adjustments will be needed to implement this change (see section on Funding Student Success on page 57).
 3. *Two school districts, Red Clay Consolidated and Brandywine, should continue to serve Wilmington children. Red Clay should take responsibility for all of the Wilmington schools currently under the Christina School District and for Wilmington students currently served by the Colonial School District. This expanded role for Red Clay is desirable for several reasons.*
 - Red Clay already has a core role in the city and operates as a metropolitan school district.
 - Red Clay has a plan for addressing the challenges of some of the city's priority schools. It makes sense for all priority schools to be part of a single plan.
 - Red Clay is the only district in the state with direct experience in authorizing and working with charter schools, and that experience should enable Red Clay to be effective in collaborating with the growing number of charter schools in Wilmington. Red Clay's role in bridging traditional and charter schools is critical to the long-term coherence and stability of public education governance in Wilmington.
 - The proposed expansion of Red Clay's responsibilities carries with it an expectation that the district will play a leadership role in the

Reconfiguring Wilmington School Districts Action Agenda from the Wilmington Education Advisory Committee's final report *Strengthening Wilmington Education: An Action Agenda*

overall improvement of Wilmington public education. The key to that leadership role is achieving greater student success in schools with high concentrations of poverty. The district should affirm its commitment to that objective and should be supported in fulfilling that commitment by the state and all sectors of the Wilmington and New Castle County communities. An initial step is for the district to build upon and extend its priority schools plan through the introduction of best practices for all schools with high concentrations of poverty.

- The effective fulfillment of Red Clay's leadership role depends upon the implementation of the Advisory Committee's recommendations on funding student success (see page 60).
4. *The New Castle County Vocational-Technical School District (NCC Vo-tech) should actively collaborate with the Red Clay Consolidated and Brandywine School Districts and with the Wilmington charter schools to expand vocational education opportunities for Wilmington students. We recommend the development of joint programs among NCC Vo-tech, district high schools, Wilmington charter high schools, Delaware Technical Community College, and Delaware businesses to facilitate coordinated pathways for students from all high schools to employment opportunities and advanced technical training. The NCC Vo-tech district should take the lead in developing a comprehensive plan for this new vocational education partnership and presenting it to the governor, secretary of education, and state legislature by January 2016.*

Source: WEAC, 2015, 25-27.

²⁷ Based on Department of Education unit counts September 30, 2014. There are some other calculated totals from both the state and the school district that report fewer than 243 students from the city in Colonial School District.

Figure 16: Map of Current School District Boundaries

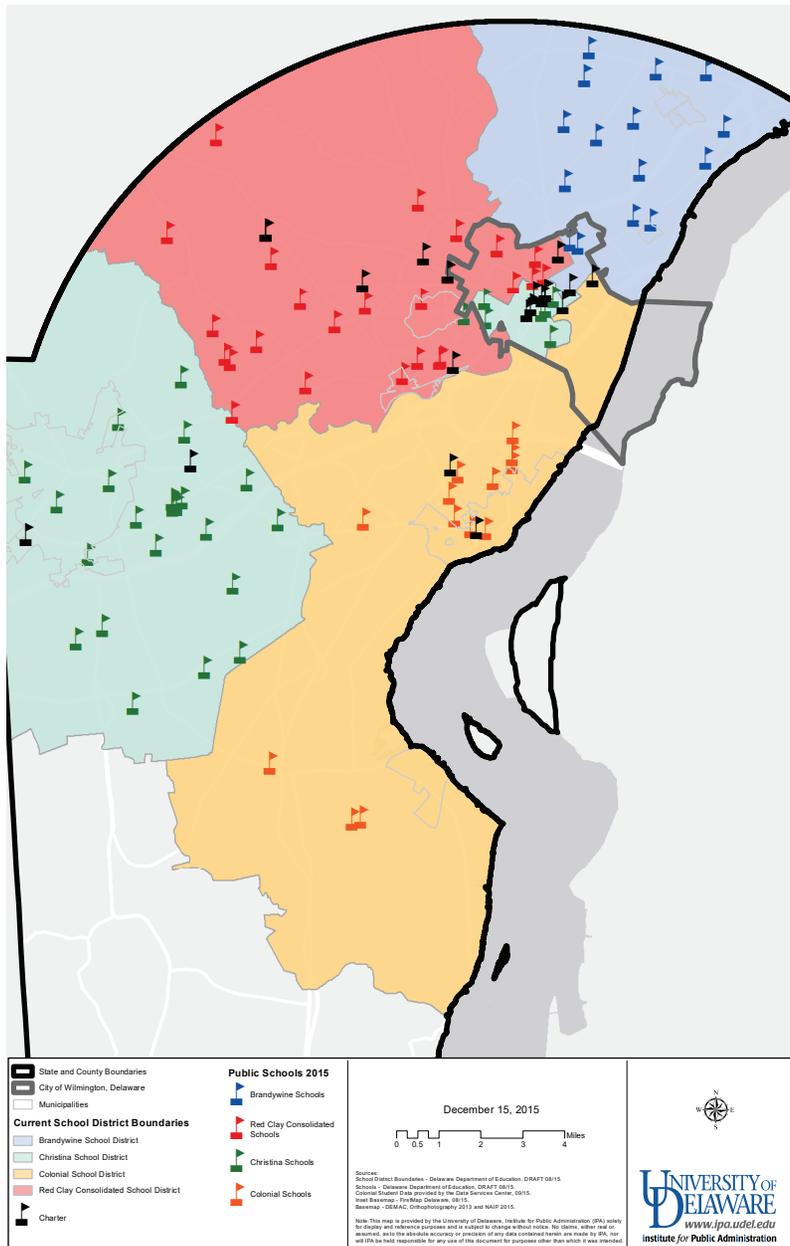
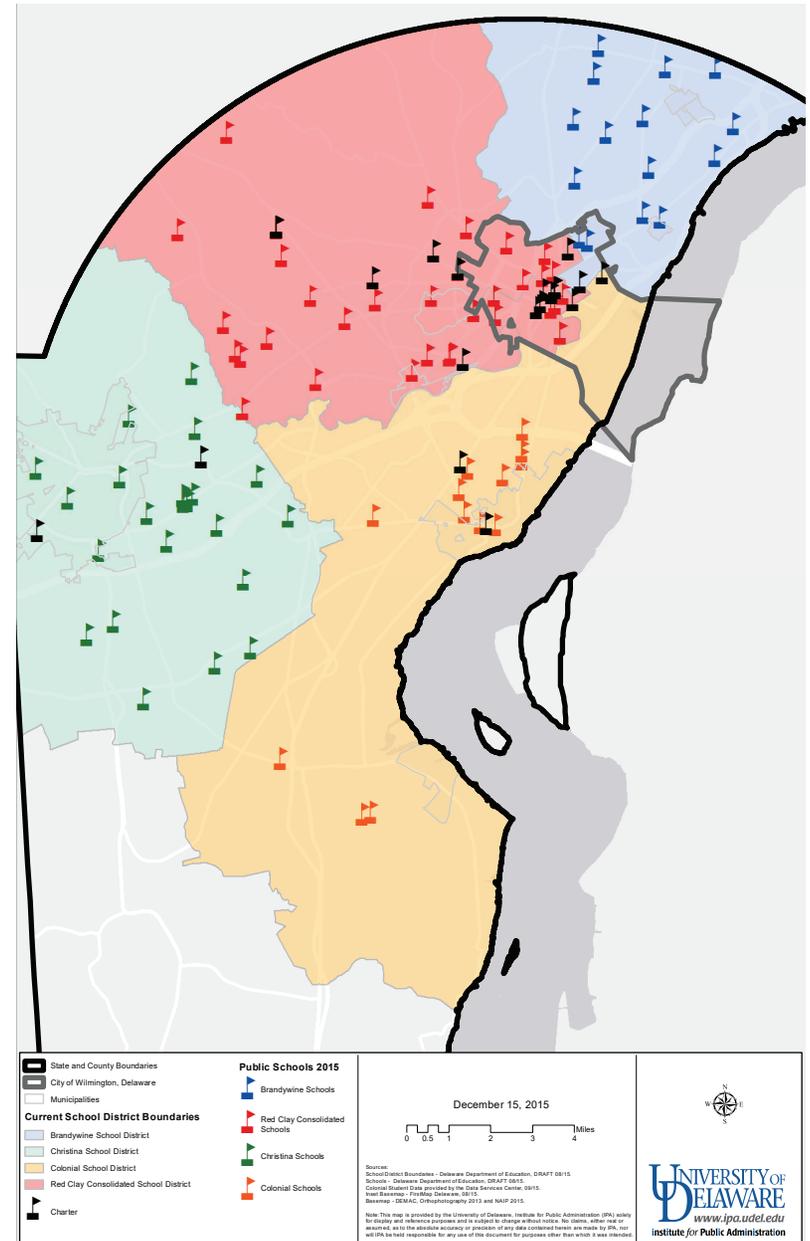


Figure 17: Map of Proposed Redistricting Model in Northern New Castle County



Redistricting for the Christina and Red Clay Consolidated School Districts

The process for approval and implementation of the recommended re-districting changes between the Christina School District and the Red Clay Consolidated School District is moving forward in a consistent, deliberate, and supportive fashion. The collaborations, district board support, and planning frameworks are all in place for State Board approval and implementation of the recommended re-districting. The Christina and Red Clay Consolidated School Districts' school boards have affirmed support through the following actions.

- On January 26, 2015, the Christina School District Board of Education voted 5–2 to support the preliminary finding of the WEAC and pledged “full support to assuring the realization of the aspirational goals of the citizens and stakeholders of Wilmington, Delaware to exercise self-determination, fiscal independence, and the exercise of selecting which LEAs are best suited to control and deliver responsive schools to its communities within the City of Wilmington.”
- On April 15, 2015, the Board of the Red Clay Consolidated School District passed a resolution by a vote of 6–0 supporting the re-districting recommendations in the WEAC final report provided that there was a clear funding path and commitment before any such recommendations are implemented, there was adequate time to implement any and all necessary changes, and that there was participation from Red Clay in the transition efforts needed to move forward.
- On October 27, 2015, the Christina School Board reviewed and approved by a vote of 5–1–1 the framework for planning developed by the Christina administrative staff in collaboration with the staff of the Red Clay Consolidated School District (Appendix B).
- On November 2, 2015, by a vote of 4–1, the Red Clay Consolidated School District Board of Education approved the interim framework for planning to be part of the Commission's plan to be submitted to the State Board. The plan and the accompanying transmittal letter are included as Appendix C.

After SB 122 was signed into law on August 4, 2015, the two district administrations began collaborating intensively on frameworks for planning the implementation of the recommended re-districting. Those initial frameworks

for planning are complete and have been posted as public documents; they will be updated as the process moves forward. These frameworks for planning are included in the plan as Appendix B for Christina School District and Appendix C for Red Clay Consolidated School District. These frameworks were developed in accord with the overall guidelines provided by IPA staff for the Commission to ensure consistency with the Commission's overall plan, with the guidelines within the enabling legislation, and with the expectations of the State Board. These plans are drawn upon and referenced in all subsequent sections of the Commission's plan.

Changing Christina and Red Clay Consolidated School District Boundaries

The Christina School District is one of a small number of school districts across the nation that is discontinuous. The western segment of the district is separated from the eastern segment by 16 to 20 miles, with parts of the Red Clay Consolidated and Colonial School Districts occupying the space between the two Christina segments. The current boundaries of the Christina School District are depicted in MAP CSD-1; the detailed narrative description of these boundaries and the current boundaries of the other three northern New Castle County districts is included in Part VIII.

Changing the Christina School District's boundaries in a manner consistent with the recommendations of Strengthening Wilmington Education: An Action Agenda and in congruence with the subsequent planning of the Commission and the Christina School Board is straightforward since the western segment of the district will not change and the eastern segment in its entirety will move in its entirety to the Red Clay Consolidated School District. This changed configuration is depicted in MAP CSD-2.

The Red Clay Consolidated School District boundaries now are contiguous with the eastern segment of the Christina School District. The current boundaries of the Red Clay Consolidated School District are depicted in MAP RC-1; the detailed narrative description of these boundaries is included in Part VIII.

Changing the Red Clay Consolidated School District boundaries in a manner consistent with the recommendation of Strengthening Wilmington Education: An Action Agenda and in congruence with the subsequent planning of the Commission and the school district expands the Red Clay Consolidated School District boundary on the southeast. This changed configuration is depicted in MAP RC-2.

Figure 18: Map CSD-1, Christina School District Boundaries with School Locations

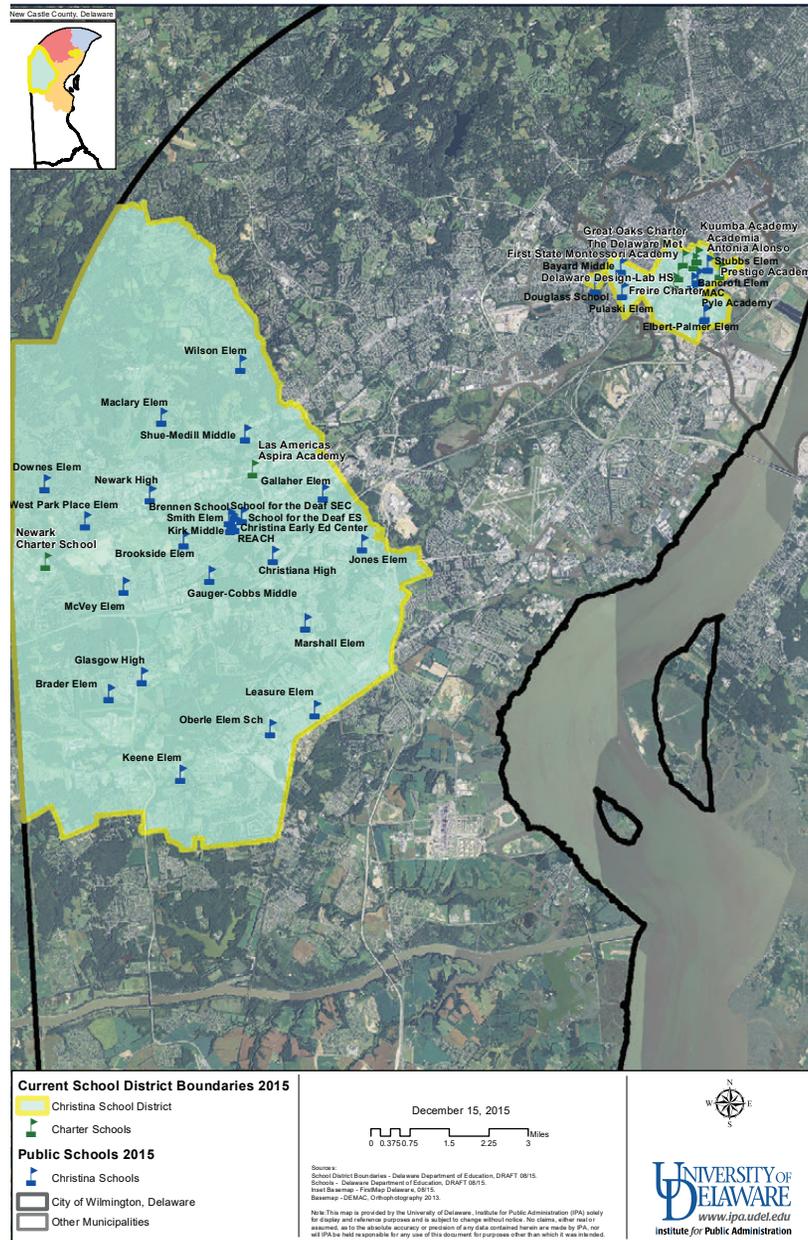


Figure 19: Map CSD-2, Christina School District Boundaries with School Locations

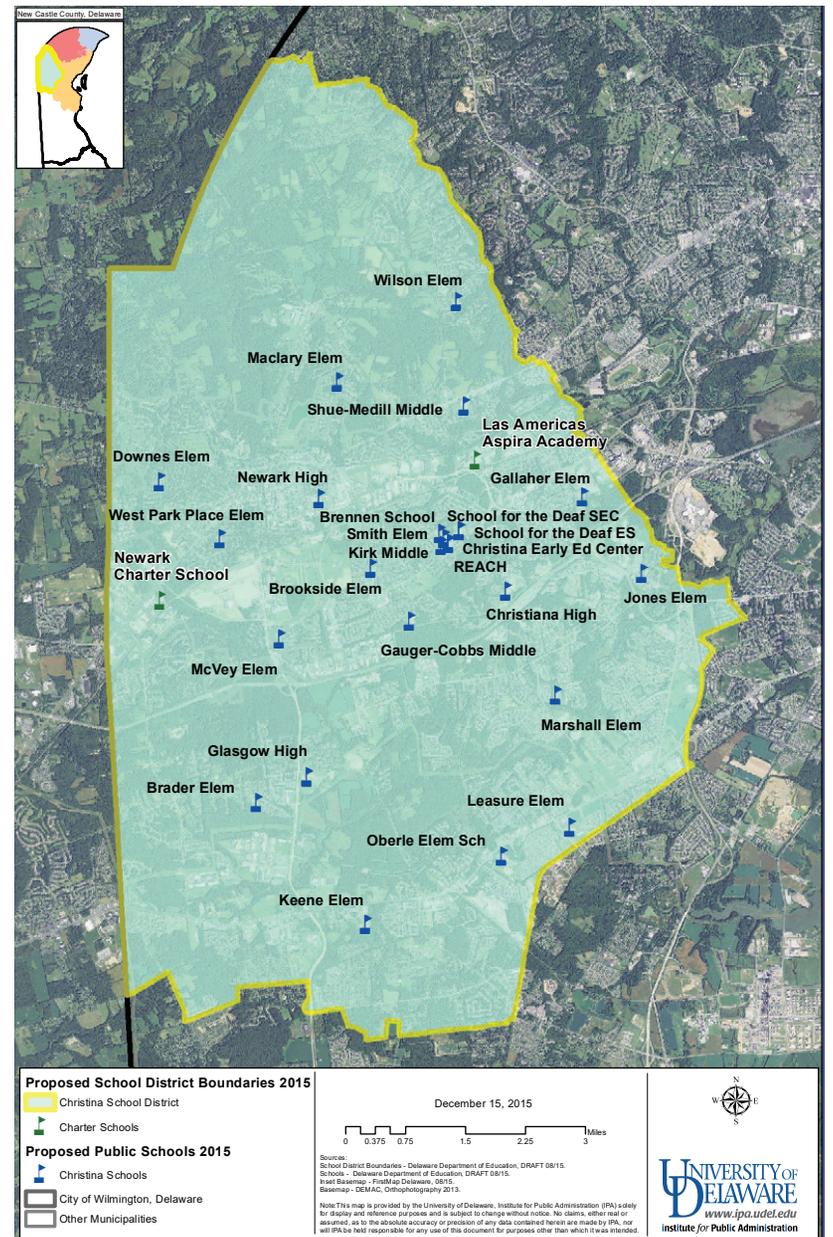


Figure 20: Map RC-1, Red Clay Consolidated School District Boundaries with School Locations

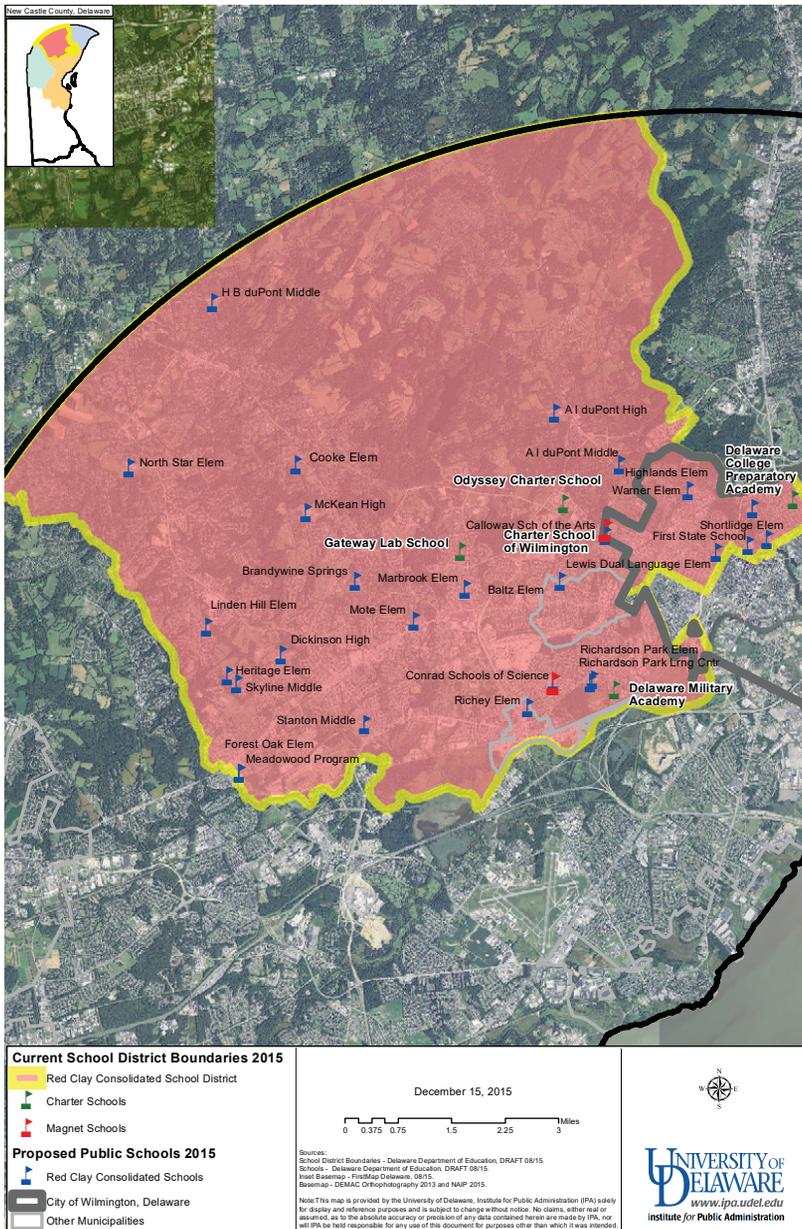
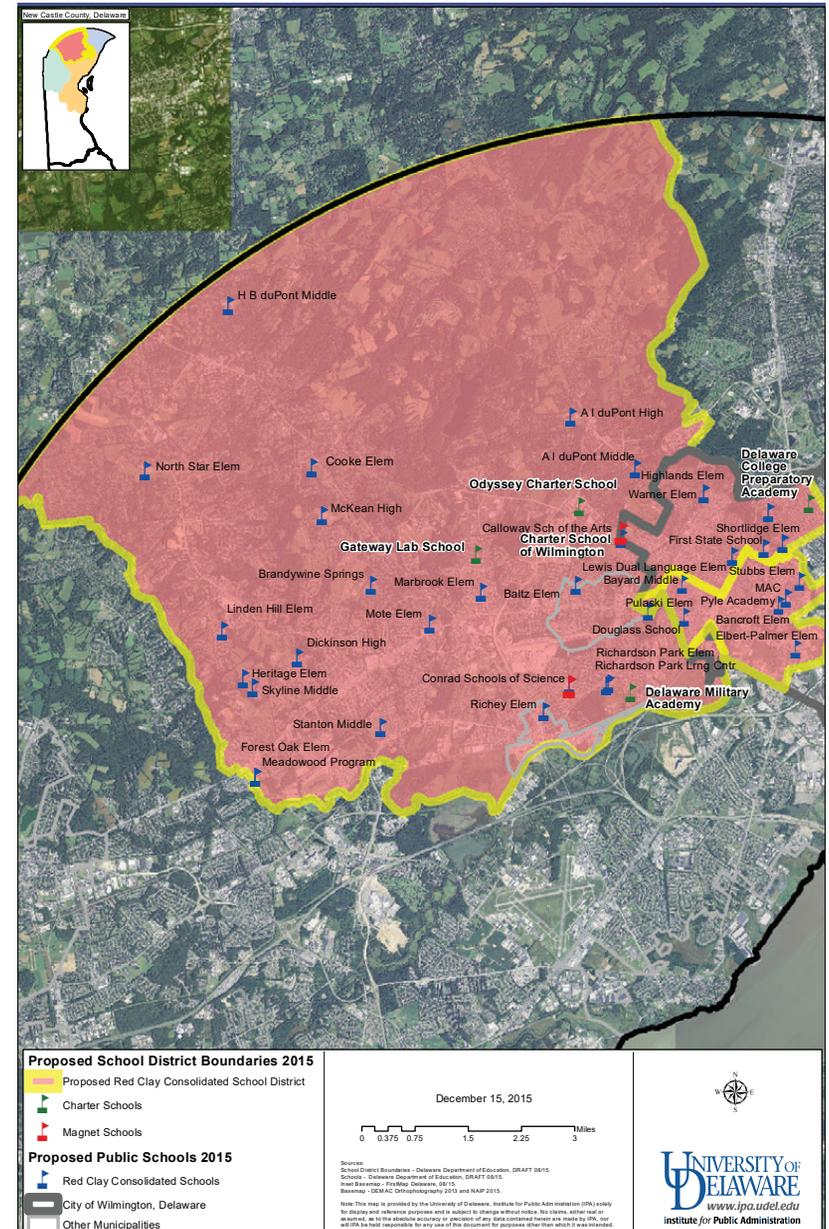


Figure 21: Map RC-2, Proposed Red Clay Consolidated School District Boundaries with School Locations

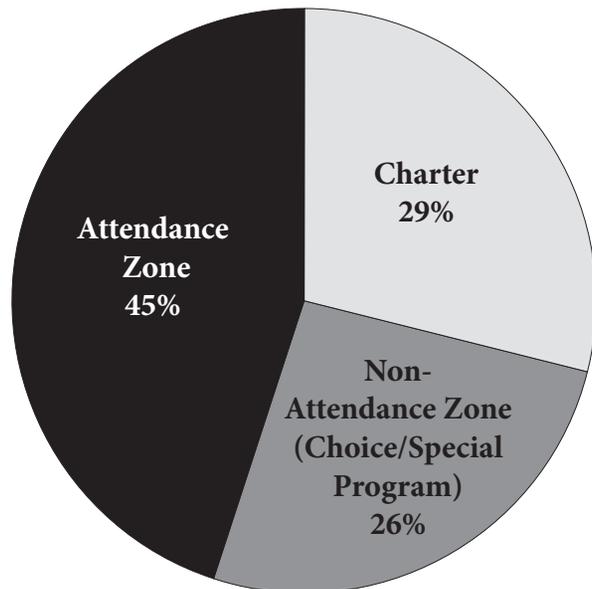


Developing the Transition, Resource, and Implementation Plan

While the change in district boundaries between the Christina and Red Clay Consolidated School Districts is not complex, the issues that must be addressed in carrying out that change are complex, involving the transfer of responsibilities for students, the assignment and reassignment of educators and other personnel, and the transfer of buildings and other assets. Addressing these issues is the purpose of this transition, resource, and implementation plan.

While the details regarding the transfer of students, personnel, and facilities are provided in subsequent sections of this plan, it is useful to frame the scope of the changes. Of the total number of City of Wilmington students currently in the Christina School District, 2040 are enrolled in their attendance zone school within that district. However, a majority of the City of Wilmington students living in the Christina School District area do not attend their attendance zone school: 1322 attend a Charter School and 1201 attend a traditional school through choice or a special program, such as the Douglass School or Sarah Pyle Academy (Red Clay Interim Framework, Appendix B, p. 5).

Figure 22: WEIC-CSD Students by School Attendance



The recommended change in boundaries also will involve a transfer of responsibilities for schools and other district facilities. As a result of plan implementation, a number of buildings will transition to Red Clay Consolidated School District. The capacities, enrollments, and staff of these buildings as provided by Christiana School District as of September 30, 2015, and included in Red Clay’s Interim Framework are shown in Table 11.

Table 11: Facility Additions to Red Clay Consolidated School District as a Result of WEIC

Building	Square Footage	Enrollment/Units	Capacity	Non-Traditional Classroom Use	Current Use
Bancroft Elementary School	131,268	338/21.48	1018	2 Reach 2 Pre-K 1 DAP 2 Montessori	PreK-5
Elbert-Palmer Elementary School	40,761	228/15.28	376	2 Pre-K	PreK-5
Pulaski Elementary School	73,017	428/29.52	566	1 Pre-K	PreK-5
Stubbs Elementary School	72,332	321/20.38	482	2 SC (therapeutic) 2 Pre-K	PreK-5
Bayard Elementary School	138,689	416/30.52	1058	1 DAP 1 Therapeutic 2 Reach 1 ESL	6-8
Douglass School	29,979				Alternative
Sarah Pyle Academy	32,356				Unique Option
Drew Educational Support Center	48,100				Admin. Space

Approximate Staff Counts

- Custodian Units: 34
- Child Nutrition Services: 31 Cafeteria Employees, 2 Managerial Employees
- Transportation: 11–20 Employees (special education bus routes)
- Teachers: 175*
- Admin: 10 Building Level
- Paras: 30*
- Secretaries: 7 (not including Drew Educational Support Center)

Source: Red Clay Interim Framework, Appendix B, p. 2.
*Aggregate number for Bancroft, Bayard, Stubbs, Pulaski, Palmer, and Sarah Pyle Academy. This count only represents the teachers and paras working in the schools in the City of Wilmington. Teachers employed at Douglass are not Christina School District employees; rather they are contracted employees from an outside vendor.

Working in close collaboration with the administrative staff of the Christina and Red Clay Consolidated School Districts, IPA staff developed the transition, resource, and implementation plan for the Redistricting Committee and Commission. IPA staff developed an outline for the plan based on the recommendations in the WEAC final report and the stipulations in SB 122, the enabling legislation. The legislation (Appendix A) specifically requires that the plan provide for:

(1) the orderly and minimally disruptive reassignment of students affected by the boundary change and the reassignment of governance responsibilities, (2) implications for educators, administrators, and other personnel that may lead to equitable adjustments to local collective bargaining agreements, (3) resources that will be required, from state, district, and local sources, to support the redistricting transition and provide for the effective ongoing education of all affected students, and for the support of schools with high concentrations of low-income students and English Language Learners, (4) student transportation, (5) distribution of capital assets, and (6) engagement of educators, staff, parents, district personnel, and community members throughout the transition.

Discussions with the districts' administrative staff identified other issues and items to be included in the plan, such as the responsibilities for special schools and programs, the administration of choice options and policies, the compatibility of technology, child nutrition services, and the alignment and sharing of curricular materials. The template for planning also was designed to correspond to expectations discussed with the State Board about the format for addressing transition items. That format includes a statement of guiding principles and central issues as well as the actions to be taken, responsibility for the actions, a timeline, and any budget impact.

The detailed frameworks for planning developed by the Christina and Red Clay Consolidated School Districts' administrations have been posted as public documents and reviewed by their respective school boards. These are working documents and will be updated as the process moves forward. These district frameworks for planning are the foundation on which the Commission's transition, resource, and implementation plan was developed. The Commission's plan is fully congruent with the district plans. These details are provided in Parts V and VI.

The Timetable for Implementation

While the Commission and the Christina and Red Clay Consolidated School Districts are in accord with the WEAC recommendations with regard to boundary changes and the transition, resource, and implementation plans to carry out those changes effectively, there is a major difference recommended in the timetable. The WEAC final report recommends that implementation begin in 2016–2017.

As a practical matter, the 2016–2017 school year has been viewed by both the Commission staff and district administrative staff as a planning year. Initially, it was expected that the actual implementation for students and attendant changes would begin at the start of fall 2017. There is now agreement that this start date is not feasible or desirable. Given the timetable for approval by the State Board and the confirmation by Joint Resolution of the Delaware General Assembly and Governor, the districts would not be able to initiate implementation planning until late summer. At that point, the districts would be pressed to begin making adjustment decisions within only a few months. This is not enough time to ensure that all the facets of the transition, resource, and implementation plan can be carried out effectively, with minimal disruption to students, families, educators, and other personnel. It also is not enough time to develop enriched learning models, confirm and obtain the resources needed at each stage (see Part V), or mobilize community supports and partnerships (see Part VI) to accompany redistricting. Further, since City of Wilmington students will be able to remain enrolled at their current schools until they graduate, the full process would not be completed for many years after approval.

To be most effective in achieving a smooth and responsive transition that serves the interests of all those affected and maximizes the opportunity to improve student learning outcomes, implementation needs to be carried out in four stages: approval, planning, transition, and full implementation. Those four stages are reflected in the timetable below that was developed in collaboration with the districts and is supported by WEIC as fundamental. The timetable lists the key milestones for each stage of the process.

Approval, Planning, Transition, and Implementation Timetable and Milestones

January 2016–June 2016 (Approval Stage)

- State Board approval
- Legislative approval
- MOUs finalize regarding collective bargaining groups
- Commitment to funding transition and change
- Beginning of programmatic change planning
- Ongoing transition planning

July 2016–June 2017 (Planning Stage)

- Identification of programmatic changes, attendance zone changes
- Identification of staffing needs
- Assessment of facilities
- Implementation of new funding (phased-in)
- Approval of major capital improvement funding

July 2017–June 2018 (Transition Stage)

- Implementation of major capital improvement (three years)
- Student assignment and choice for implementation
- Administrative staffing (November 2017)
- Non-administrative staffing (February 2018)
- Professional development for transitioning staff begins
- Transfer of assets, contracts, accounts
- Purchase of curriculum materials and other assets necessary for transition
- Implications for district governance (board nominating districts) resolved by Department of Elections

July 2018–June 2019 (Full Implementation)

- First year of implementation
- Ongoing professional development
- Ongoing major capital improvement (year two)

The Colonial School District: Redistricting Issues and Options

One might expect that the WEAC redistricting recommendation with regard to the Colonial School District would be less controversial and much easier to approve and implement than the Christina/Red Clay Consolidated School District changes. There are no Colonial schools or other facilities in the City of Wilmington subject to transfer as a result of redistricting. The number of students affected is much smaller. As of September 1, 2015, there were 178 City of Wilmington students attending Colonial schools. However, the Colonial School District has concluded that the low-income City of Wilmington students served by schools in its district are performing at a level at or above other districts based on DCAS test scores for 2013 and 2014 (see Figures 8–14). On this basis, the Colonial School District’s Board passed a resolution on October 13, 2015 to retain its City of Wilmington students and its current district boundaries. The Commission appreciates the Colonial School Board’s affirmation of its desire to continue to serve City of Wilmington students living in the district. Most importantly, we agree with the Colonial School District Board’s affirmation that what is best for students should be the key factor in any recommendation and decision about district responsibilities. In that regard, conversations are underway to discuss the issues and review options that could become the basis for agreement on a path forward supported by both the Colonial School District and the Commission to best serve the interests of the students. These conversations will continue with the objective of setting an agreed path forward in the final version of the Commission plan submitted to the State Board on December 17, 2015.

Colonial School District occupies a portion of the City of Wilmington that includes a large industrial area in the southeast portion of the city. The current boundaries of the Colonial School District are depicted in Figure 23: MAP COL-1; the detailed narrative description of these is included in Part VIII.

While the Colonial School District includes a large geographic segment of the City of Wilmington, most of that area is industrial and has no residential population. City of Wilmington students served by the Colonial School District live in a very small portion of the district’s area within the City of Wilmington, as displayed by Figure 24.

About half of all City of Wilmington students in the Colonial School District, including more than half of the elementary school students, already choose out to public schools outside the district Colonial School District’s City of Wilmington students live closer to schools in the three other districts and to public charter schools than to any school in the Colonial School District.

Indeed, the nearest school in the Colonial School District located outside of the City of Wilmington and six miles from where these students live (see Figure 25).

Figure 23: Map COL-1, Colonial School District Boundaries with School Locations

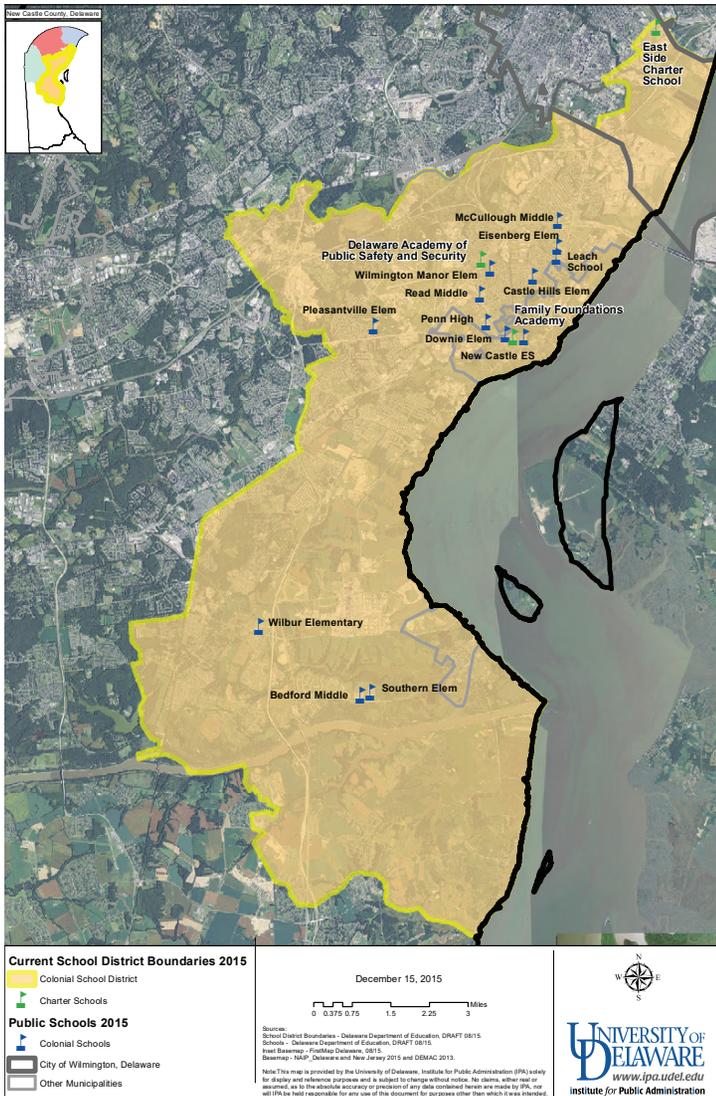


Figure 24: Map of Wilmington Students Currently Served by the Colonial School District with School Locations, Northern New Castle County, Delaware

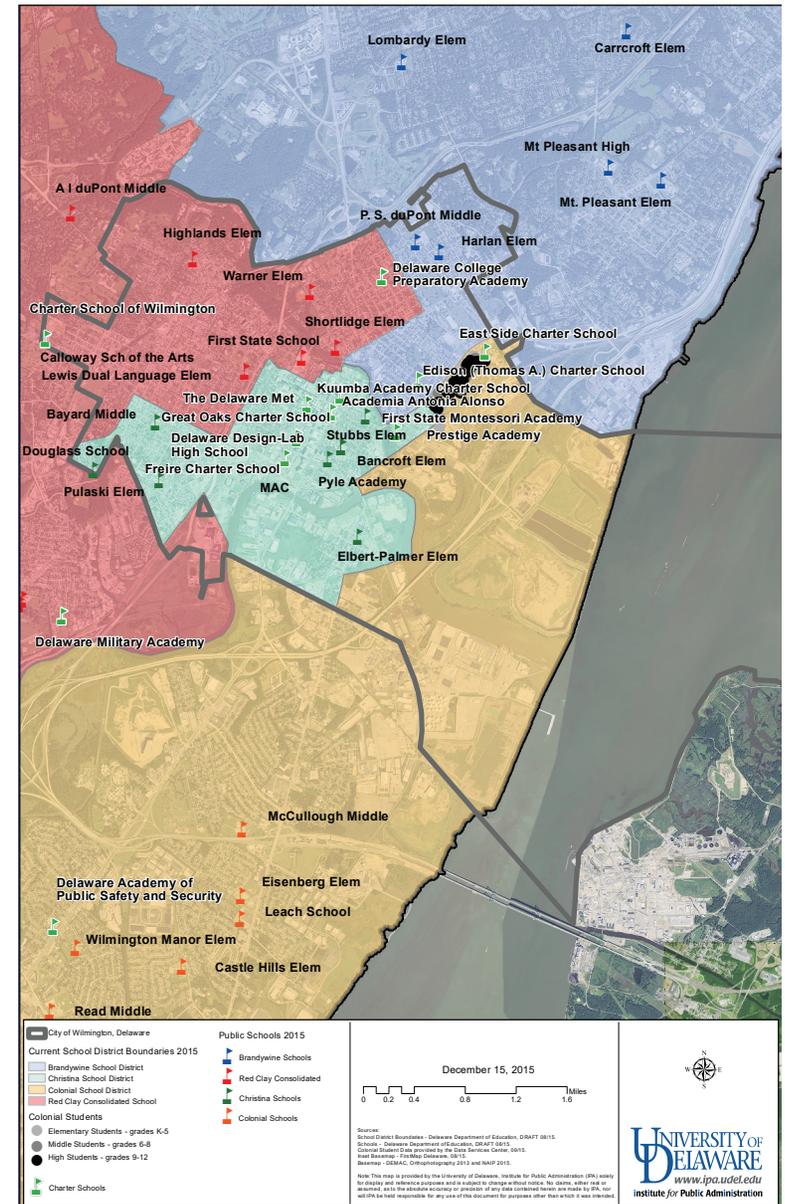
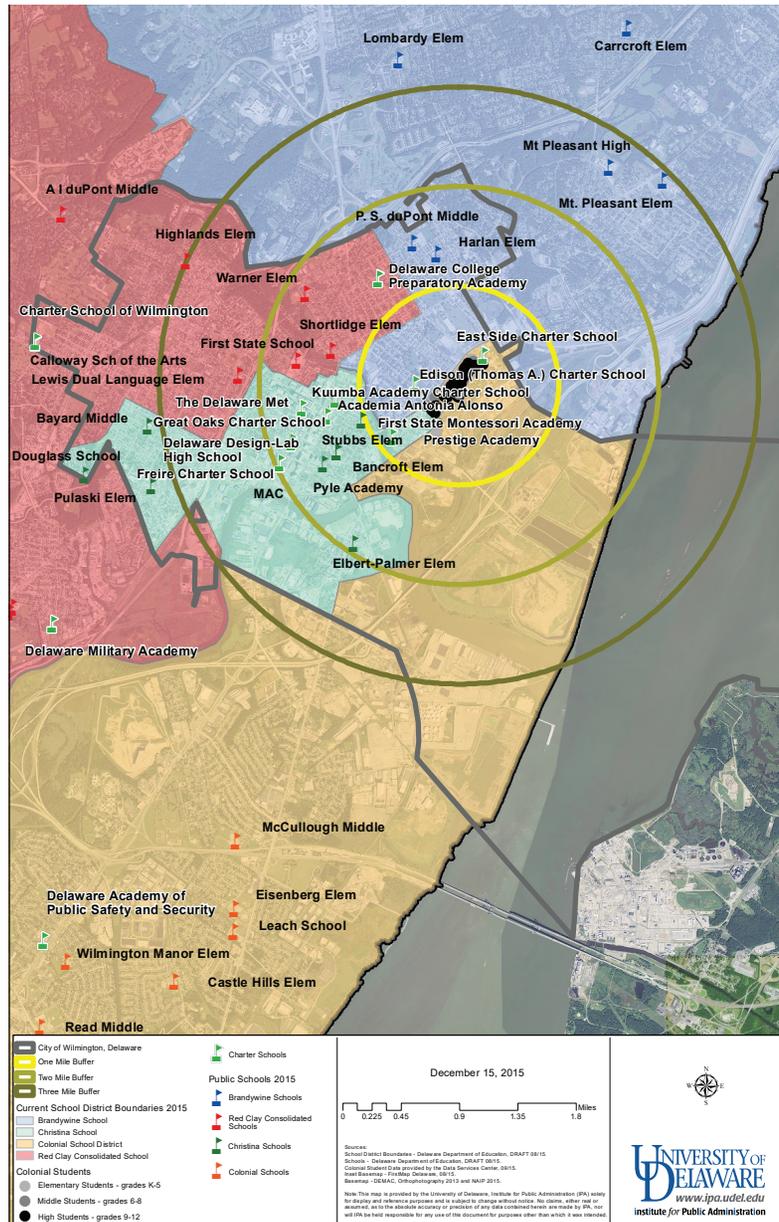


Figure 25: Map of Wilmington Students Currently Served by the Colonial School District with School Locations and Distanced



While the Colonial School District’s Board’s resolution to continue to serve City of Wilmington students reflects its concern for the educational well-being of these students, the action does not address the basis for the recommendation in the WEAC final report. If the Colonial School District continues to serve City of Wilmington students, an important opportunity to reduce the fragmented structure of public education in the city will be lost. Since 2001, four separate task forces have concluded that long-term, sustained educational achievement requires a more coherent, responsive governance system. The WEAC recommendation that the Colonial School District no longer should serve City of Wilmington students was based on the need for coherent governance and not based on the test scores of segments of City of Wilmington students. While the Colonial School District’s Board has affirmed its desire to “keep its kids,” the district actually has had a diminishing role in the education of City of Wilmington students. Indeed, the actual presence of the Colonial School District in the education of City of Wilmington students has been shrinking as students choose to attend non-district schools. As illustrated by the data in Table 12, the majority of the district’s City of Wilmington elementary school students are now attending schools out of the district, specifically schools that are much closer to where those students live. In addition, about half of Wilmington high school students and a significant number of middle school students also choose to attend schools out of the district.

Table 12: Colonial School District Students Attending Colonial Schools, Both Feeder and Non-Feeder Schools, and Non-Colonial

	Attends Colonial School	Attends Non-Colonial School	Total
Elementary School	101	154	255
Middle School	38	27	65
High School	32	34	66
Total	171	215	386

Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Set, 2015–16 School Year.

An analysis of 2013 and 2014 DCAS test scores for low-income students residing in the City of Wilmington leads to the conclusion that none of the four school districts has been effective in supporting the success of most of their low-income City of Wilmington students (see DCAS figures in Part II).

This data demonstrates that low-income City of Wilmington students have test scores below those for all four districts as a whole, and also below those for all low-income students in all four districts. With one exception, test scores in all subject areas in all districts in both years document that less than 50 percent of low-income Wilmington students are proficient. In some cases, Colonial School District test scores for Wilmington students are above those of other districts. These indicate important progress. Even so, less than 50 percent of Colonial School District low-income City of Wilmington students are proficient on all tests.

Conversations between representatives of the Commission and the leadership of the Colonial School District Board and administration are exploring options that might best serve the City of Wilmington students in the district. Prospectively, these may include options not considered earlier by either WEAC or the Colonial School District.

On Tuesday, November 10, 2015, the Colonial School District Board voted 4–2 to approve a resolution that it “will support the WEIC recommendations with the stipulations that: (1) the current Colonial School District boundaries remain unchanged, (2) adequate funding is provided and sustained, should additional services be expanded into the City of Wilmington, (3) multiple data sources will be used to address and/or resolve city governance concerns to maximize student success for all low-income residents, and (4) the Colonial School District continues to be represented on the Commission and included in all discussions of the “plan” (see Appendix H).

The resolution indicates support for the ongoing work of the Commission, including “the consolidation of the portion of the Christina School District in the City of Wilmington into the Red Clay Consolidated School District.” It also indicates a willingness to discuss the expansion of the Colonial School District’s services in Wilmington, provided that the funding is available and the district has the time and resources to develop a plan for such expanded responsibilities.

The Colonial School District Board’s action notwithstanding, the Commission believes that retaining the district’s current minimal role in the education of Wilmington students contributes to the continued fragmentation of governance. Even so, other factors must be considered. We take the willingness of the Colonial School District to consider an expanded role in the education of Wilmington students as a positive sign. It is clear that the residential area in which the Wilmington students in the Colonial School District live has already become an active zone of choice, with more than half of

those students attending schools outside the district. Given the location of these students in proximity to schools in other districts and to charter schools as well as the fact that so many families already exercise school choice, the movement of boundaries would have less impact than would be the case if most of those students were attending schools in Colonial School District. Further, the Commission does not see another district location as a desirable alternative at this time. The Christina School District is leaving the City of Wilmington. The Red Clay Consolidated School District already is expected to take on the students and schools now served by Christina School District; adding to that responsibility at this time seems unreasonable. The Brandywine School District has expressed no willingness to expand its boundaries. Moreover, while the Commission does not agree with the Colonial School District’s claims about its current effectiveness in serving these students, we also recognize that no district has yet been effective in educating most of its Wilmington students to an acceptable level of proficiency.

Given these conditions, the Commission supports the Colonial School District Board’s expressed desire to continue to serve Wilmington students, but we do so with suggestions and caveats. Most importantly, we call upon the Colonial School District to develop and pursue a plan for significantly improving the educational outcomes of the Wilmington students in its district. While we support the district’s desire to strengthen educational outcomes of all of its low-income students—and indeed all district students—we believe that the evidence is clear that Wilmington low-income students are performing at a lower level of academic proficiency than all other Colonial School District students. Our expectation is that the needs of these students must be addressed directly by the district, and not only as an extension of programs designed for other purposes.

A facet of this plan for improvement should be greater collaboration and coordination between the Colonial School District and the charter schools and other districts that now serve large numbers of its students. Charter schools already serving Wilmington elementary students from the Colonial district could serve as feeders for the district’s upper-level schools. While this already happens in some cases, a collaborative agreement between the Colonial School District and these charter schools would offer parents a clear pathway for their students, often enabling them to remain close to home for their elementary school years and then move to middle and high schools in the Colonial School District. Indeed, the opportunity exists for the Colonial School District to develop distinctive partnerships that take advantage of the existing

choice patterns and work with other districts and charters to provide families with the widest range of options for serving the needs of their children. The Commission is confident the Colonial School District can be a leader in expanding collaborations and new programs that will strengthen opportunities and support for Wilmington students. The district could expand upon existing collaborations, establish new partnerships that take advantage of existing choice patterns for its Wilmington students and, work with the Commission and other partners to provide families with information about the full range of options for meeting the needs of their children within the Colonial School District and in other nearby districts and charters. Comparable initiatives to expand collaborations and provide families with information about choice options should be undertaken by all districts and charters operating in Wilmington, and the Commission will support these efforts. We also look forward to facilitating the Colonial School District's consideration of expanding its boundaries to play a larger role in the education of Wilmington students. For example, the Colonial School District is adjacent to the Southbridge area of the City of Wilmington and has schools in proximity to students living in that area. The Commission will facilitate these considerations with all districts that may be involved.

The above options could make a significant difference in overcoming the fragmentation of responsibilities in ways that better support effective education for Wilmington students.

Finally, as described in Part IX, the Commission will present the State Board with an annual evaluation of the progress that documents the performance of all Wilmington students. Our expectation is that the Colonial School District's commitment to continue to serve its Wilmington students will be matched by evidence of continually improving student outcomes. The Commission looks forward to working with the district toward that end.

The Brandywine School District: Redistricting Issues and Options

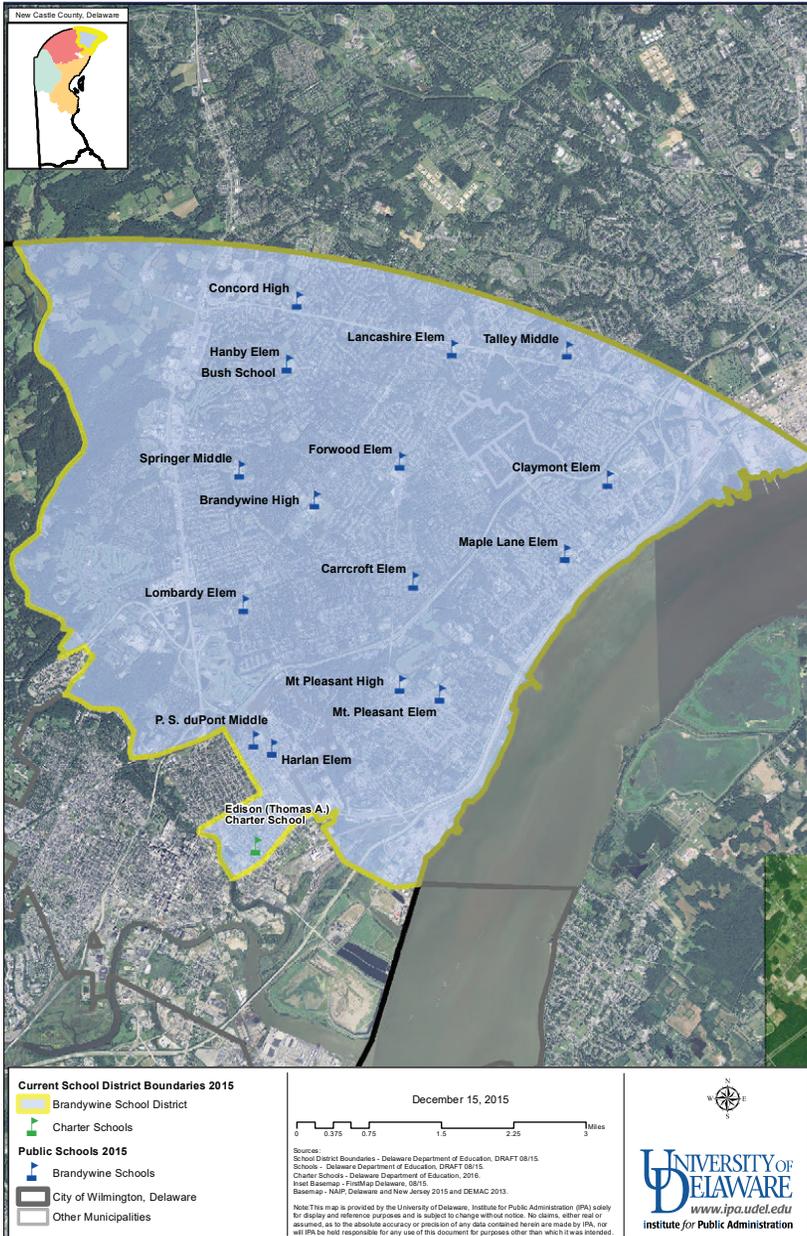
The Brandywine School District occupies the northeast section of the county with a segment in the City of Wilmington that is adjacent to all three other districts. The current boundaries of the Brandywine School District are depicted in Figure 26: MAP BR-1; the detailed narrative description of these boundaries is included in Part VIII.

The WEAC final report recommends that the Brandywine School District

continue to serve students in the City of Wilmington and does not recommend any change of that district's boundaries. At a presentation to the Brandywine School District Board on September 21, 2015, members of the Commission requested that the district consider expanding its district boundary to the south. A portion of the current Brandywine School District boundary in the City of Wilmington is adjacent to the area in which the students currently served by the Colonial School District are living (see Figure 25 above). The Brandywine School District was invited by the Commission to consider changing its boundary to serve those City of Wilmington students now in the Colonial School District. The Brandywine School Board reviewed this option at a board workshop. No formal communication has been received by the Commission from the Brandywine School Board about this option, although informal support was expressed for the Colonial School District's resolution to keep its current boundaries and students in the City of Wilmington.

On November 16, 2015, the Brandywine School Board voted 5–2 to confirm its commitment to continue to serve students in the City of Wilmington within its current boundaries.

Figure 26: Map BR-1 Brandywine School District Boundaries with School Locations





“An important component of accessing quality education includes ensuring that students have access to a comprehensive system of wraparound support services and meaningful engagement by parents and families. The WEIC Redistricting proposal provides a blueprint designed to lead to meet these needs and advance more opportunities for all Wilmington children to excel and achieve academic success.”

MICHELLE A. TAYLOR
PRESIDENT AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, UNITED WAY OF
DELAWARE

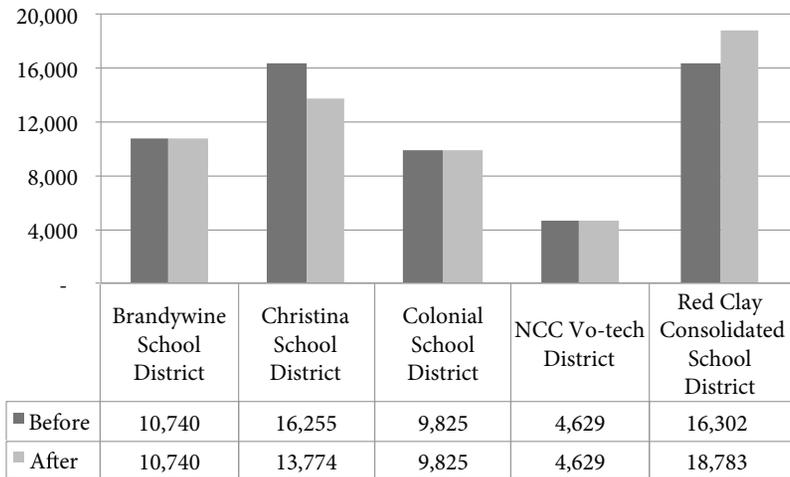
Part IV: Projected Enrollment and Demographic Impacts of Redistricting

Redistricting will impact the enrollment and demographics of the school districts involved. This section provides a profile of the anticipated initial changes in total student enrollment and the demographic composition of the districts before and after redistricting.

The increased enrollment already authorized for the City of Wilmington and New Castle County charter schools is likely to have an impact on the overall profile of City of Wilmington education as well as on the overall projected enrollment of traditional districts after reorganization. Recognizing that some portion of the increased charter enrollment will come from outside of the City of Wilmington, the impacts on the public education enrollment patterns for City of Wilmington students are nonetheless likely to be significant. This could be particularly true for enrollment at the high school level given that there may be greater options for City of Wilmington students to enroll in high schools within the city.

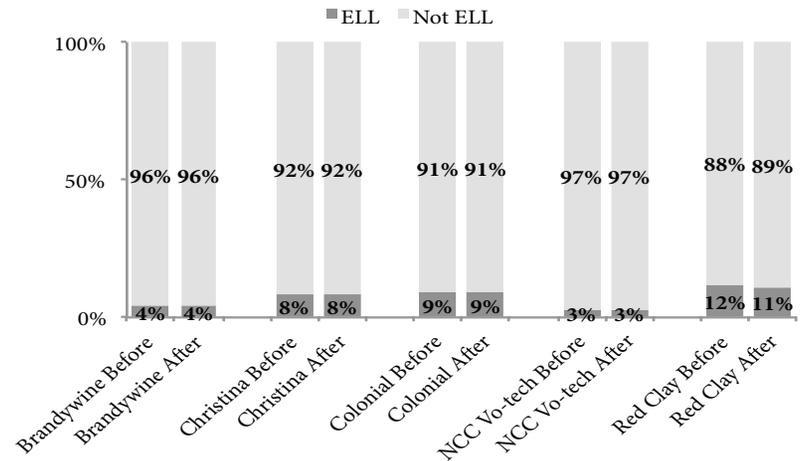
Using data from the 2014–2015 school year, the figures below provide illustrative demonstration of changes in total student enrollment and demographic composition of enrollment for factors of low-income status, English-language-learner (ELL) status, students with disabilities, and race. These comparisons are for illustrative purposes and do not represent actual projections. Base values are the September 30, 2014 count. These illustrations were produced for the *Strengthening Wilmington Education: An Action Agenda* and are based on a transition of the City of Wilmington segment of the Christina School District to the Red Clay Consolidated School District.

Figure 27: School District Enrollment, Before and After Redistricting



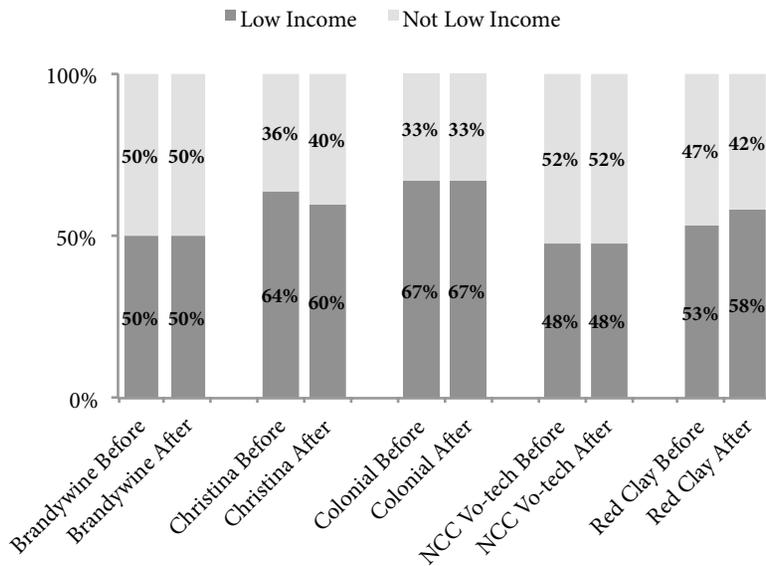
Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Set, 2014-15 School Year.
Note: Excludes Red Clay-authorized charter schools.

Figure 29: English Language Learner (ELL) Students, Before and After Redistricting



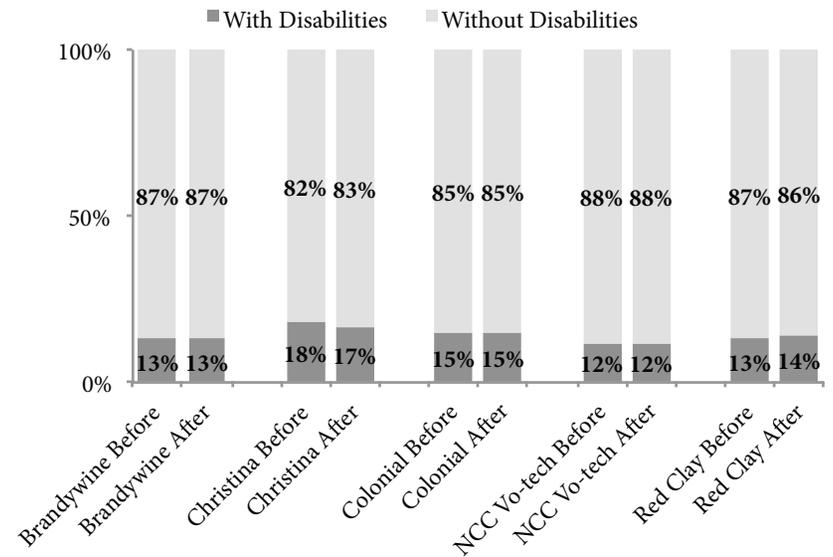
Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Set, 2014-15 School Year.
Note: Excludes Red Clay-authorized charter schools.

Figure 28: Low-Income Students, Before and After Redistricting



Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Set, 2014-15 School Year.
Note: Excludes Red Clay-authorized charter schools.

Figure 30: Students with Disabilities, Before and After Redistricting



Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Set, 2014-15 School Year.
Note: Excludes Red Clay-authorized charter schools.

Figure 31: Race Breakdown, Before and After Redistricting

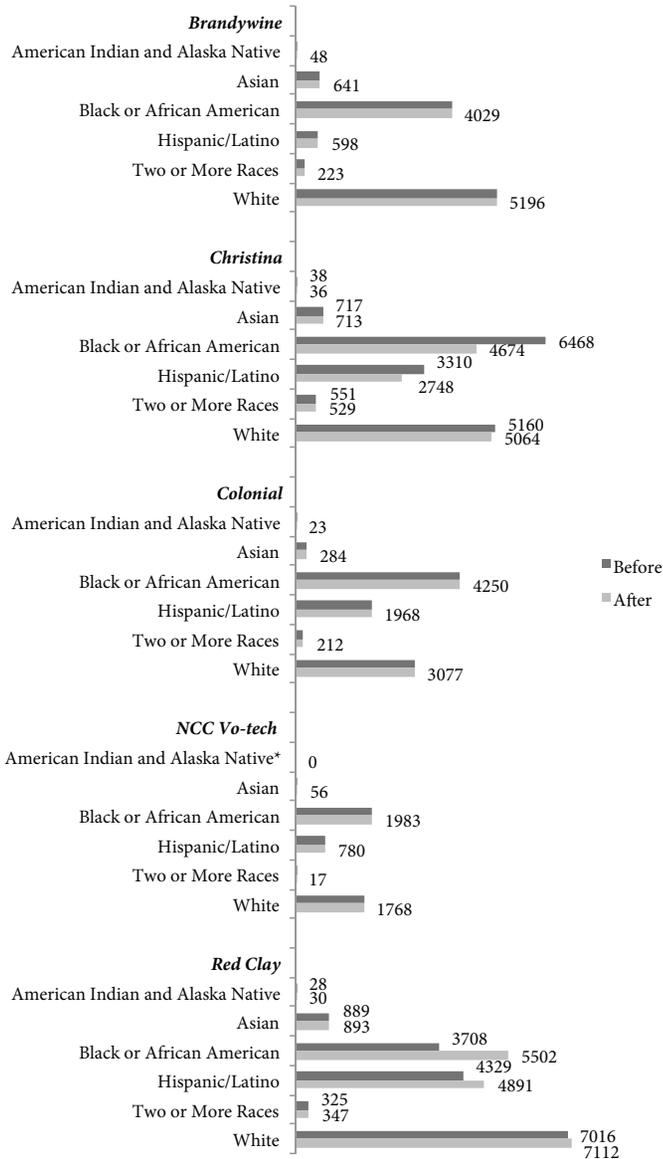


Table 5: Race Breakdown, Before and After Redistricting

	Brandywine		Christina		Colonial		NCC Vo-tech		Red Clay	
	Before	After	Before	After	Before	After	Before	After	Before	After
American Indian and Alaska Native	48	48	38	36	23	23	<15	<15	28	30
Asian	641	641	717	713	284	284	56	56	889	893
Black or African American	4,029	4,029	6,468	4,674	4,250	4,250	1,983	1,983	3,708	5,502
Hispanic/Latino	598	598	3,310	2,748	1,968	1,968	780	780	4,329	4,891
Two or More Races	223	223	551	529	212	212	17	17	325	347
White	5,196	5,196	5,160	5,064	3,077	3,077	1,768	1,768	7,016	7,112

Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Set, 2014–15 School Year.

Note: "Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander" is not included as there are fewer than 15 students who meet this category in each district.

Charter Enrollment Projections

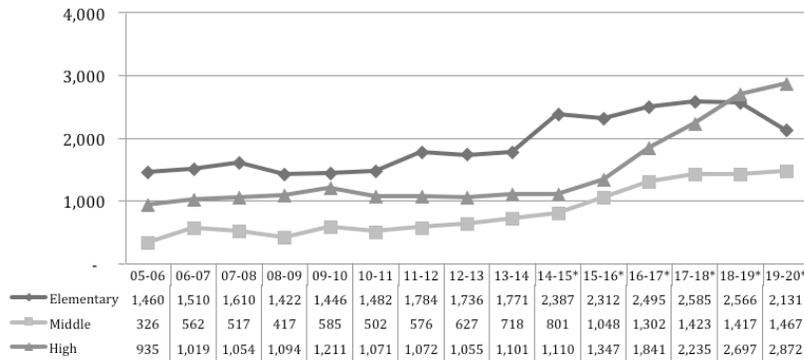
In the past decade, charter schools in the City of Wilmington and New Castle County have proliferated, with charter enrollment increasing dramatically. The figures below show actual charter enrollment through the 2014–15 school year and projected enrollment through the 2019–20 school year for charter schools in the City of Wilmington and New Castle County. The increasing charter school enrollments draw down the enrollment at traditional public schools and also have an impact on private and parochial schools, which then becomes a factor for public schools. As Figure 34 indicates, the relationship among different educational sectors (including traditional public, charter, and private) is dynamic and interconnected. Any change in enrollment in one set of schools impacts other schools, in ways that can be difficult to predict.

Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Set, 2014–15 School Year.

Note: "Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander" is not included as there are fewer than 15 students who meet this category in each district.

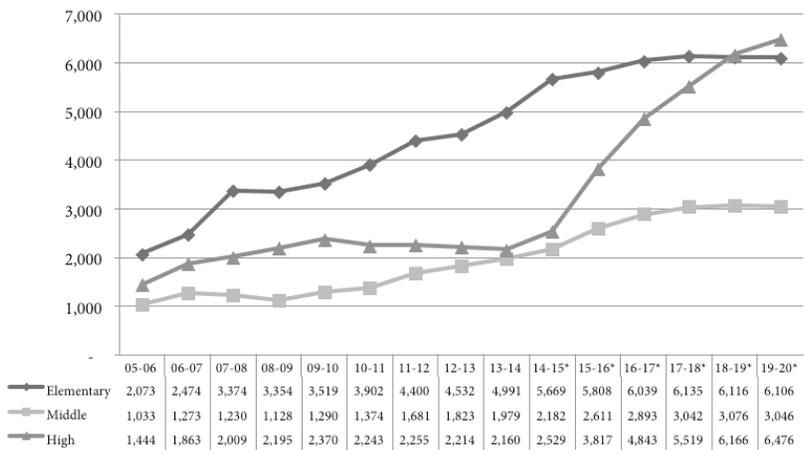
* Fewer than 15 students.

Figure 32: Projected Charter Enrollment Capacity in Wilmington by School Level



Notes: (1) Enrollment does not come exclusively from students who live in the city. (2) Analysis follows approved modifications and new charters opening in 2015. (3) Projections for new charters and modifications assume enrollment at capacity as indicated. (4) Existing schools without a modification are assumed static. (5) Does not include charter school openings under discussion or proposed past the 2015 school year. (6) *Projected Figure
Source: University of Delaware's Institute for Public Administration, 2015, based on data from the Delaware Department of Education 2015.

Figure 33: Projected Charter Enrollment Capacity in New Castle County by School Level 2005-06 to 2019-20

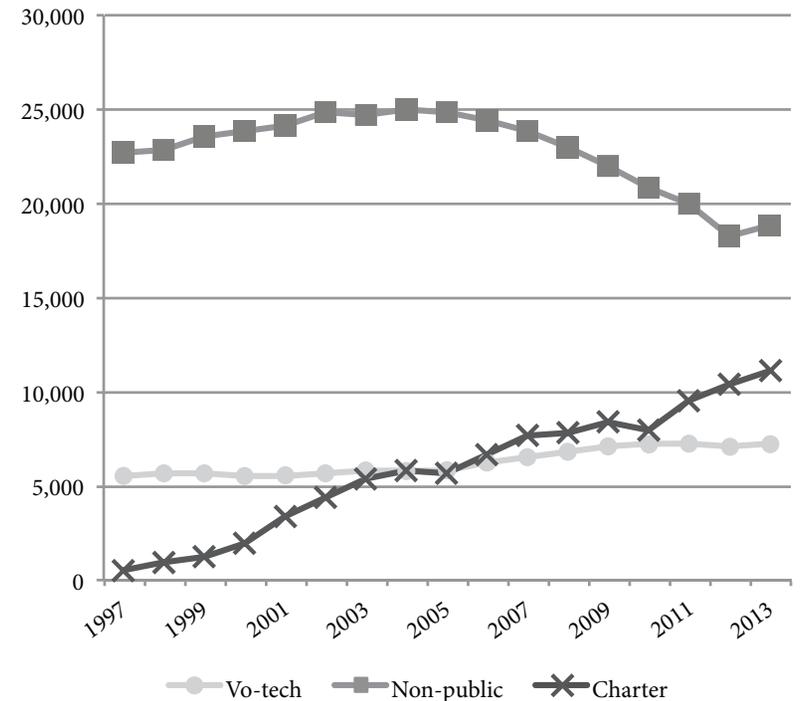


Notes: (1) Analysis follows approved modifications (2) Projections for new charters and modifications assume enrollment at capacity as indicated. (3) Existing schools without a modification are assumed static. (4) *Projected Figure
Source: University of Delaware's Institute for Public Administration, 2015, based on data from the Delaware Department of Education 2015.

Impact of Charter School Growth

Charter schools are now an important component of City of Wilmington education, and they will become even more important in the years ahead. In 2012, over 10,300 students were enrolled, representing 9 percent of Delaware's total public school enrollment. Between 1997 and 2013, Delaware charter school enrollment increased from 524 to 11,078. During that same period, enrollment increased in traditional public schools from 105,429 to 115,046, and in vo-tech schools from 5,525 to 7,245. However, enrollment in non-public schools declined from 22,753 to 18,790. The redistricting recommendations will change the enrollments and demographics for the impacted districts, but the increasing charter school enrollments will continue to impact the enrollments and demographics in traditional public schools.

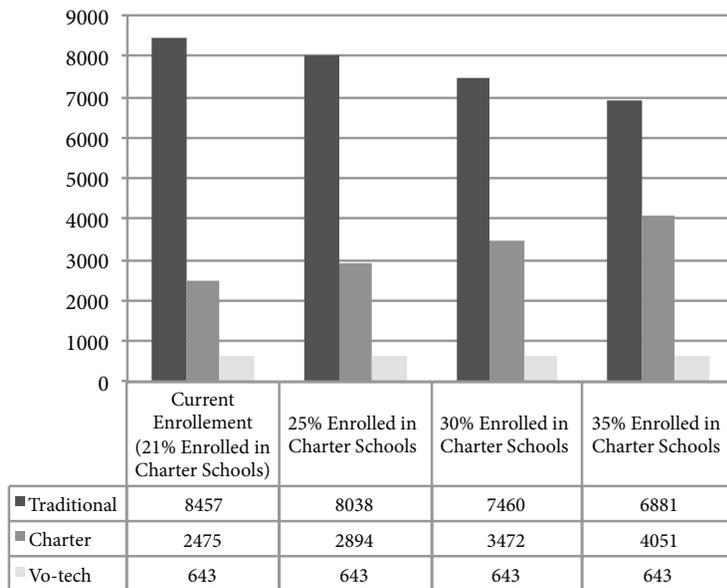
Figure 34: Charter, Vo-Tech And Non-Public Enrollment 1997-2013



Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Set, 2014-15 School Year.

Figures 35, 36, and 37 illustrate the potential shift in City of Wilmington public school students enrolling in traditional and charter schools after redistricting. The base illustration reflects the current 21 percent charter enrollment of City of Wilmington students. The additional illustrations represent three possible scenarios resulting from district changes and the approved increases in enrollment capacity of City of Wilmington charters. They are not based on projected enrollments, and they assume that the City of Wilmington section of the Colonial and Christina School Districts will transition to the Red Clay Consolidated School District. The illustrations will be modified if that recommendation changes. These illustrations assume that student population will remain constant.

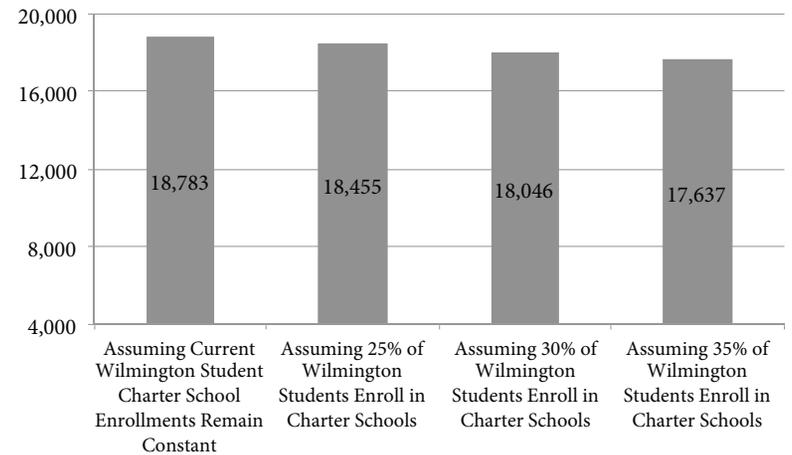
Figure 35: Illustration of the Potential Effect of Charter Enrollment Increases on Wilmington Student Enrollments



Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Set, 2014–15 School Year.

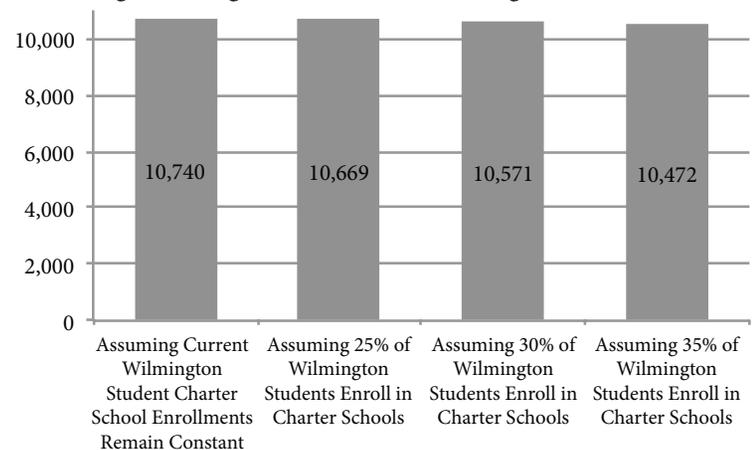
The following illustration of Red Clay Consolidated School District enrollment after redistricting assumes that the increases in charter enrollment apply to students transferring from Christina and Colonial School Districts and also to students already in the Red Clay Consolidated School District.

Figure 36: Illustration of Red Clay Enrollment under Increasing Percentages of Students in Wilmington Charters²⁸



Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Set, 2014–15 School Year.

Figure 37: Illustration of Brandywine Enrollment under Increasing Percentages of Students in Wilmington Charters²⁹



Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Set, 2014–15 School Year.

²⁸ Enrollment projections are applied to Red Clay and Brandywine as they are the districts designated to serve City of Wilmington students. It is likely that Christina and Colonial will lose students due to charter growth; however, the database for Wilmington student enrollment does not support that type of analysis.

²⁹ This only takes into account percentages of Wilmington students who might potentially enroll in charter schools. It does not include the potential for an increase in non-Wilmington Brandywine students enrolling in charter schools due to the increased capacity.



“But changing district boundaries will not in itself change student outcomes. Redistricting must be accompanied by the allocation of additional resources to support the needs of low-income students, English language learners, and other students at risk. This investment should begin in Wilmington and then extend across Delaware.”

TONY ALLEN, PH.D.
CHAIR, WILMINGTON EDUCATION IMPROVEMENT COMMISSION

DAN RICH, PH.D.
POLICY DIRECTOR, WILMINGTON EDUCATION IMPROVEMENT COMMISSION

Editorial to The News Journal | 2015

Part V: Funding Student Success, Resources for Redistricting

Improving education in the City of Wilmington requires critical changes in education funding. This has been the conclusion of four study commissions who recognized that redistricting is not enough. As highlighted in the 2001 report, “They Matter Most: Investing in Wilmington’s Children and Delaware’s Future,” students in poverty and schools with concentrated poverty face unique needs and challenges. Low-income children in high-poverty schools (schools with more than 40 percent low-income students³⁰) perform worse academically, read less, have lower attendance rates, are more likely to have serious developmental delays and untreated health problems, have higher rates of student behavior problems, and experience a lack of family involvement. Schools with lower concentrations of poverty are not immune to these challenges, but experience these challenges to a lesser extent. By no means is this a problem only in the City of Wilmington. Student poverty is a statewide challenge that is growing not only in the City of Wilmington but also in Dover and in Sussex County, where one finds the highest percentage of poverty among the three counties. Nonetheless, the City of Wilmington has the highest concentration of student poverty in Delaware.

There is broad consensus that in order to help students in poverty, English language learners (ELLs), and other students at risk, schools need smaller class sizes, expanded learning opportunities, extended school days, supplemental supports in counseling, child psychologists, dual-language teachers, and developmental support services. Schools with high concentrations of low-income students must also attract and retain quality teachers, and that requires competitive salaries, well-resourced working conditions, and appropriate professional development.³¹

Delaware allocates education resources equally, but equal resources are not the same as equitable resources. The latter recognizes that students have differing needs and provides the resources needed to address those distinct needs. The 2008 report on City of Wilmington education specifically recommended that the state should change its education funding formula and adopt

³⁰ Wilmington Neighborhood Schools Committee. (2001, January 01). They matter most: Investing in Wilmington’s children and Delaware’s future.

³¹ Wilmington Neighborhood Schools Committee. (2001, January 01). They matter most: Investing in Wilmington’s children and Delaware’s future.

a weighted student funding system designed to provide enhanced resources for low-income students and schools in which they are concentrated.³² That same proposal has been endorsed by others, most recently by the Vision Coalition Student Success 2025 plan, which highlights the need to, “increase funding system equity by factoring student needs into funding allocations” (Vision Coalition Student Success 2025 plan, p. 35). This need is also part of the legislative mandate for the new Education Funding Improvement Commission (see a brief history of Wilmington Education in Appendix E).

While Delaware’s overall funding of public education is in the top quintile of states, it is among the few states that does not provide funding to address the needs of low-income students and ELLs. Forty-six states provide additional resources for English language learners. Delaware does not. Thirty-five states provide additional resources for low-income students as a component of their funding formulas.³³ Delaware does not. This oversight disadvantages students in poverty throughout the state and disadvantages the schools in which those students are enrolled. Providing a more equitable funding system will benefit students and schools throughout Delaware and will have a particularly significant impact on the improvement of City of Wilmington education. To improve student learning in the City of Wilmington, a more coherent and responsive system of public education decision-making must be provided with the additional resources required to address the needs of low-income, ELL, and at-risk students.

Should Delaware preserve its current public education funding allocation system based on “unit counts,” or move to a new student-based foundation system that incorporates a weighted formula based on differential student needs? The Wilmington Education Advisory Committee proposed that moving to a new allocation system would provide the best opportunity to fully incorporate the needs of low-income students, particularly those in extreme poverty. Even so, they framed their recommendations within the existing allocation system in the belief that the funding needed to support City of Wilmington schools and students is urgent and should not be delayed. Work should also continue in parallel to investigate, design, approve, and transition to a new weighted student-funding system. The final decision of whether to modify and make more flexible the current unit funding system, or develop a new system, should be made on the basis of what provides the best assurances for

sustainable, efficient, and equitable funding to meet the needs of all students.

Additional policy actions, some delayed for decades, are also needed. These include (1) strengthening the revenue base to support the rising costs of public education at both the state and local levels, (2) providing the funding needed to support the transition and additional ongoing costs of a new district alignment, and (3) allocating additional funds to support high-quality early childhood education as well as programs that enable workforce and college readiness.

While Delaware already allocates significant state funding, the evidence is clear: Where supplemental resources have been provided to address the challenges facing low-income students, ELLs, and other students at risk, documented improvements in educational outcomes have followed. Consider a few examples from our own state’s recent experience. Five years ago, Governor Markell and the Delaware General Assembly undertook policy changes that have greatly increased the access of low-income children to higher-quality early learning environments. The number of high-quality programs (Star rating 3 or above) serving low-income children has increased dramatically from 5 percent when the program started to 58 percent today, with a significant portion of that increase in the City of Wilmington.³⁴ In Dover, Booker T. Washington Elementary School significantly increased student proficiency rates when it received additional funds to initiate an extended school day program in which all its teachers participated.³⁵ From 2010–11 to 2013–14, Booker T. Washington Elementary saw impressive growth among low-income students in reading and math of more than 37 points and narrowed its achievement gap from 36.8 points to 8.7 points.³⁶ Delaware high school graduation rates and college application and attendance rates increased significantly with investments in statewide initiatives to provide additional support to students, particularly low-income students. This is the pattern in Delaware and across the nation.

The investments and related funding decisions proposed to accompany redistricting will not only drive forward the benefits of the redistricting process for City of Wilmington students but will also initiate changes that will benefit students throughout Delaware. In this section of the plan, we first review the recommendations from the *Strengthening Wilmington Education: An Action*

³⁴ Delaware Stars for Early Success. (2014, June). Quarterly Report for April - June 2014. Retrieved January 22, 2015 from www.delawarestars.udel.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/Monthly-Data-Report-September-2014.pdf

³⁵ www.doverpost.com/article/20151202/NEWS/151209968

³⁶ <http://news.delaware.gov/2014/11/05/schools-make-gains-exit-turnaround-programs/>

³² The Wilmington Education Task Force Study Committee. (2008, April). Report of the Wilmington Education Task Force.

³³ Vision Coalition of Delaware (2015). Student Success 2025. <http://visioncoalitionde.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Student-Success-2025-full-report-pdf.pdf>

Agenda and then review the work of the Commission’s Committee on Funding Student Success. The Commission’s funding recommendations are largely based on the proposals of its funding committee.

Recommendations from Strengthening Wilmington Education: An Action Agenda

All previous working groups that looked at education in the City of Wilmington recommended changes in education funding to better serve students. The Wilmington Education Advisory Committee (Advisory Committee), like the groups that came before it, included education funding as one of the pillars to its report. According to the Advisory Committee, funding issues fall into four categories:

1. An allocation formula for public school operating funds that responds to the added resource needs of schools with high percentages of low-income students.
2. A sufficient revenue base to support the overall rising costs of the public education system.
3. An array of transition and capital resources needed to effectively implement the proposed district realignment.
4. An allocation of funding for the additional programs and services, such as high-quality early childhood programs, required to meet the needs of students in poverty.

Looking at these four areas, the Advisory Committee proposed the following Action Agenda, included as it appears in the final report.

Table 14: Funding Student Success Action Agenda from Strengthening Wilmington Education: An Action Agenda

Funding Student Success Action Agenda from the Wilmington Education Advisory Committee’s final report <i>Strengthening Wilmington Education: An Action Agenda</i>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>The governor and state legislature should approve a modification to the current unit count allocation formula (or move to a new weighted student allocation formula) that addresses the needs of at-risk students by incorporating allocations for schools with high concentrations of students in poverty and English language learners, and expands special education [basic] status to grades K-3. Allocations should be applied to multiple enrollment data points/periods to compensate for shifting student populations, and a transition fund should be established to manage the funding impacts of these shifts.</i> 2. <i>The revenue base supporting public education should be strengthened at both the state and local levels. Property reassessment should be implemented without further delay and undertaken on an ongoing schedule that reflects national best practices. Districts should be authorized to increase taxes by a designated percentage without referendum. Districts also should be authorized to apply an equalization surcharge tax that would be redistributed according to the equalization formula to partially redress the lag in equalization. These changes are essential to an effective equalization process.</i> 3. <i>Funding adjustments must be made to support the costs of district reorganization. The impacts of these adjustments on personnel must be addressed as part of the initial planning and decision-making process. Funding adjustments include transitional funding for districts during the years in which the affected districts’ student populations will be reshaped as a product of mandated reorganization. The staffing impacts of changes in funding should be addressed as part of an overall transition plan that proceeds with implementation in a manner that generates as little disruption as possible for educators and other staff. Beyond transition funding, a needs assessment should be conducted to evaluate whether the remaining districts in Wilmington require new middle and high schools in the city. This may be conducted as part of, or in parallel to, the statewide needs assessment mandated by Governor Markell for charter, vocational-technical, and magnet schools.</i> 4. <i>The General Assembly should approve enabling legislation for the City of Wilmington to increase revenue, subject to approval by the city council and the mayor, for the specific support of an Office of Education and Public Policy.</i>

Funding Student Success Action Agenda from the Wilmington Education Advisory Committee's final report *Strengthening Wilmington Education: An Action Agenda*

5. *The Advisory Committee endorses the increased investment needed and already anticipated to sustain and accelerate advances in early childhood learning and workforce and college access. The continued investment in early childhood learning is critical to the overall improvement of public education, particularly for low-income students. The Advisory Committee strongly supports the commitment that both the governor and the state legislature have already made to the priority of early childhood education and recognizes that acceleration of improvements in this domain can and will accelerate improvements at all subsequent stages of public education.*
6. *The IRMC comprehensive plan for low-income students, families, and schools should incorporate steps for redirecting existing state funding to support implementation. The plan should indicate how existing funding should be redirected to support after-school programs, expanded summer programs, and other high-impact supports for low-income students and their families. The governor and state legislature should call upon the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission (in the Implementing Change on page 63) to work with the IRMC to identify state funding that may be redirected to the implementation of the comprehensive plan.*

Source: WEAC, 2015, 60–61.

Stemming from this action agenda were two bills introduced in the legislature to target additional resources based on student need.

- House Bill 117: Representative Heffernan's bill, which was reported out of the House Education Committee but remained in the House Appropriations Committee at the end of session, would provide schools with one additional unit of funding for every 250 low-income students enrolled.
- House Bill 30: Representative Williams' bill was reported out of the House Education Committee but remained in the House Appropriations Committee at the end of session. It would change the level of funding supporting students in basic special education in grades Kindergarten through third grade from one unit of funding for every 16.2 pupils to one unit of funding for every 8.4 pupils.

The Funding Student Success Committee

Guiding Principles

The Commission reaffirms the position of the Wilmington Education Advisory Committee that redistricting must be accompanied by the resources needed to better serve students, and specifically the resources needed to fully address the needs of low-income students, English language learners and other students at risk.

The Commission also reaffirms the commitment that there should be no undue burden on taxpayers in the affected districts as a result of the process of redistricting.

The Wilmington Education Improvement Commission convened the Funding Student Success Committee to build upon the Advisory Committee's recommendations above and to advise the Commission on the funding needed to support and accompany the redistricting process.

The Funding Student Success Committee established the following principles to guide its work:

1. Provide cost estimates and financial recommendations of the Advisory Committee's final report, *Strengthening Wilmington Education: An Action Agenda*, based on members' representative areas of expertise.
2. Offer sustainable financial solutions to support ongoing efforts in impacted districts.
3. Ensure recommendations are equitable and do not disproportionately affect any impacted district's funding or tax base.
4. Recognize that the Advisory Committee's recommendations are not simply moving students from one district to another, but involve a complex plan and multiple coordinated resources to improve services and opportunities available for City of Wilmington and Delaware students, particularly children in poverty and English language learners.

The Funding Student Success Committee began by identifying the funding issues that need to be addressed in order to support redistricting. It found that some of these issues are immediate and resource-based, while others are structural. Ensuring the long-term sustainability of redistricting will require not just a quick fix, but a systemic approach.

For resource-based issues, such as how various funding streams will be impacted by redistricting, the Committee has provided research and analysis

in this report. For structural issues, the Committee has recommended an action plan, timetable for implementation, and stipulation of responsibility. The Committee recognized that many of its recommendations will, if implemented beyond City of Wilmington students, increase the ability of all schools, not just those affected by redistricting, to serve students and, as such, will need continued and increased input from stakeholders statewide.

Over-Arching Issues

The Funding Student Success Committee built upon the WEAC action agenda and focused on the following issues in order to fulfill its charge:

1. Enhancements to the Existing Education Finance Structure
 - a. An allocation formula for public school operating funds that responds to the added resource needs of schools to serve low-income students, English language learners, and students with disabilities
 - b. A sufficient revenue base to support the overall rising costs of the public education system
 - i. State Public Education Revenue Base
 - ii. Property Reassessment and Referendum
 - iii. Current Expense Tax Rate Implications for Supplemental Funds
 - iv. State Equalization Funding
2. Defining the Impact of District Reorganization
 - a. The impact on state, federal, and local funding streams for involved districts
 - b. An array of transition and capital resources needed to effectively plan for and implement the proposed district realignment
3. An allocation of funding for needed programs and services, such as early childhood education, behavioral and mental health supports, and wrap-around services in and out-of-school required to meet the needs of students in poverty.

Commission Recommendations

The Commission's plan for funding builds upon the work of the Funding Student Success Committee. The recommendations are those of the Com-

mission, however, and correspond to most but not all of the details of the proposals from the Funding Student Success Committee. The full range of recommendations is presented below, recognizing that the actions for allocating additional revenue will begin with the approval of redistricting but continue over a number of years as the implementation process moves forward. It is expected that the Commission, working with the Governor and General Assembly, will initiate needed legislation in each session to carry forward the funding recommendations needed for each stage of the process.

The Commission also recognizes that some of the recommended fiscal actions go beyond redistricting in their scope and impact and require consideration within a larger frame of reference. Some of that consideration is expected from the Education Funding Improvement Commission.

The funding commitments recommended for the next three fiscal years are reviewed in the final section of this part of the plan.

Enhancements to the Existing Education Finance Structure: Resources for Students

Central Issues

Resources Required to Support of Low-Income Students and English Language Learners: In order to better serve the students living in the City of Wilmington, especially those affected by redistricting, additional resources need to be targeted to schools based on the students' needs. As documented by many previous work groups including WEAC, students in poverty and English language learners have unique needs that require additional resources in excess of what typically is required. In order to best serve these students, districts should receive increased funding and the flexibility in deciding how to spend their dollars. Currently, units do not offer much flexibility other than the ability to be split in two to support two paraprofessionals in certain cases.³⁷

Resources Required to Support Students with Disabilities: Currently, all states provide some form of additional funding to districts to serve students with disabilities.³⁸ Like other states, Delaware recognized that there is a great variance in the types of services that each student with disabilities needs—and that those different services come with different price tags. Under current

³⁷ 14 Del. Code § 1716

³⁸ Education Commission of the States. (2015). A look at funding for students with disabilities. <http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/01/17/72/11772.pdf>

Delaware law, a school receives additional units for demonstrating that it is satisfactorily serving a certain threshold of students with disabilities. Student need is categorized as basic, intensive, or complex. Currently, intensive and complex special education units are funded from Pre-K through twelfth grade, but basic special education units are only funded from fourth through twelfth grade.³⁹

Resources Required due to Student Enrollment Shifts: Student enrollment is accounted for only once a year—the “September 30 unit count”—which then dictates the level of state funding that a school receives for the entire year, including how many staffing positions a school receives. However, this approach does not effectively account for student transience, which is a particular issue in the City of Wilmington. For example, if a student with special needs registers after September 30 and requires a paraprofessional, that staffing position must be funded entirely with local funds since state funding is only allocated for students who are in the school as of September 30. For example, Pennsylvania is one of several states that have multiple count days in a school year.

Action Plan/Designated Responsibilities

Resources Required to Support Low-Income Students and English Language Learners: The state should fund an initial weighted unit funding program to support all schools within the districts impacted by redistricting to target resources to students in poverty and English language learners. This initial program would be evaluated with the goal of expansion statewide to serve, equitably, all low-income students, English language learners, and other students at risk in future years. The long-term commitment must be to fully meet the needs of students at risk. The Commission will work with the Governor’s Office, members of the General Assembly, the Education Funding Improvement Commission, and others in the development of a multi-year plan for long-term, statewide funding.

The initial program would begin in the 2016–2017 school year as an enhanced baseline for school improvement before implementation statewide and continue as recurrent funding. The program would extend the existing needs-based unit system to create supplemental funding for schools with low-income students and English language learners.

The Commission recommends that schools should receive additional units

based on the percentage of low-income students and English language learners it serves. An illustration of how this can be accomplished is in Appendix D. In order to increase local flexibility and autonomy over spending, the additional “weighted units” should carry a full cash-out value where districts can choose not to receive the staffing units but instead receive the cash equivalent. Since districts may have difficulty raising the local share, they should be given the option of receiving the cash value of the state’s Division I, II, and III parts of the units even if the local share is not met. In order to ensure funds are used responsibly, districts must demonstrate that the funds will be used in accordance with a plan developed by the school to serve low-income students and English language learners and must report on the use of those funds on an annual basis. The Funding Student Success Committee, which includes the chief financial officers of the four schools districts, supports the retention of the unit allocation system but with improvements such as this addition of this funding for low-income students and English language learners.

The Commission agrees that the additional weighted units should be rolled-out to all City of Wilmington students and then statewide as rapidly as possible. This support for low-income students, English language learners, and basic special education K-3 is a first step to weighted student funding. The consideration of this alternative weighted student funding allocation system is part of the mandate of the Education Funding Improvement Commission discussed in Part VI.

Resources Required to Support Students with Disabilities: The Commission endorses House Bill 30 (see Appendix A), introduced by Representative Williams, as part of the overall set of recommendations to target funding to student needs. This bill would provide funding for basic special education units for grades K-3.

Resources Required due to Student Enrollment Shifts: The Commission supports a change to the enrollment count system that lets districts apply for supplemental funds after experiencing large student enrollment shifts after the September 30 count. The change would prevent districts from shouldering the entire employee costs for staffing needs post September 30. The Commission believes that a zero-sum approach should not be pursued because taking funding away from districts that experiences decrease in enrollment midyear harms their ability to fund contractually obligated staff positions.

³⁹ House Bill 30, 148th Delaware General Assembly. (2015). [http://legis.delaware.gov/LIS/lis148.nsf/vwLegislation/ HB+30/\\$file/legis.html?open](http://legis.delaware.gov/LIS/lis148.nsf/vwLegislation/ HB+30/$file/legis.html?open)

Enhancements to the Existing Education Finance Structure: Revenue Base

Central Issues

State Public Education Revenue Base: The current discussion of education finance must be considered within a historical context. Since 2008, there has been a net reduction of \$25.4 million in categorical funds, which are funding streams outside the unit count that schools receive from the state. The categorical funds that were reduced funded the following programs: reading resource teachers, math specialists, limited English proficiency, technology block grant, school-based discipline, tax relief allocation, academic excellence allotment, extra time, tuition reimbursement, and teacher cadre/mentoring. Additionally, districts have experienced several reductions in Division II funding, professional development, and pupil transportation. The net loss in categorical funding since 2008 means that schools lack sufficient discretionary funding to provide needed supports for students, particularly low-income students, English language learners, and other students at risk.

Property Reassessment: Equitable administration of property taxes requires that property assessments be related to the actual market value of the property. One of the negative implications of the lack of property reassessment is that districts' revenues stay fixed. As a result, districts must often go to referendum in order to cover rising operational costs that are not associated with any new programming. These issues are outlined in detail in the final report of the committee formed by House Joint Resolution 22 during the 144th General Assembly to supply recommendations for fair and equitable reassessment (see Appendix D). Finally, it should be noted that reassessment is revenue neutral to the district unless local boards take action to increase revenues.

Current Expense Tax Rate Implications for Supplemental Funds: Units are funded by a combination of state and local shares. No district is able to contribute the local funds necessary to absorb the change in units due to redistricting or the supplemental unit funding for student needs.

State Equalization Funding: The lag in property reassessment renders the state's equalization process, which was intended to compensate for inequities in the tax bases among districts, inaccurate and ineffective. The greatest burden is on the districts that should be the beneficiaries of equalization. Additionally, inequities in equalization have been compounded because the

formula was frozen in 2009 and has remained frozen due to declining state revenues. The total amount of equalization funding increases each year with the unit count (nearly \$89.5 million is allocated for equalization funding in the Fiscal Year 2016 operating budget),⁴⁰ yet the allocation is not effectively serving its purpose. These problems are outlined in detail in the fiscal year 2016 report of the Equalization Committee (see Appendix D).

Action Plan/Designated Responsibilities

State Public Education Revenue Base: Funding should be restored to its fiscal year 2008 levels and should be provided in the Education Sustainment appropriation to allow districts flexibility to best meet their students' needs. This discretion is necessary in order to most effectively target resources to students in need. Categorical funding should be restored by the General Assembly within a single appropriation and districts/schools will have the flexibility to spend the funds as they see fit within the categories that were cut including: reading resource teachers, math specialists, limited English proficiency, technology block grant, school-based discipline, tax relief allocation, academic excellence allotment, extra time, tuition reimbursement, and teacher cadre/mentoring.

Property Reassessment: The Commission endorses the recommendations in the WEAC final report on the need for property reassessment and endorses the recommendations of the committee formed by House Joint Resolution 22 during the 144th General Assembly to supply recommendations for fair and equitable reassessment (see Appendix D). After months of study and analysis, this 2008 committee put forward a framework for reassessing properties on a rolling basis, where responsibility is shared by the state and counties. However, the framework should be modified slightly to add protections for districts. In addition to a ceiling cap on the aggregate revenue collected as a result of the initial reassessment, there should be a floor to protect districts that might experience downturns in property value. In other words, in order to protect their fiscal stability, no district could lose more than a certain percentage after the initial reassessment. Property reassessment should be mandated legislatively and supported in the state budget. Implementation will require partnership of the state and counties. The reassessment timeline outlined in this report should be modified to begin at the date of adoption, rather than at the date when the 2008 report was written.

⁴⁰ House Bill 225, 148th Delaware General Assembly. (2015). <http://budget.delaware.gov/fy2016/index.shtml>

Current Expense Tax Rate Implications for Supplemental Funds: Until property reassessment occurs, districts impacted by redistricting must be authorized by the General Assembly to enact tax rate adjustments to meet current operating expenses as voted by their school boards. Taxpayers should be reassured that this recommendation is NOT intended to allow school boards to set tax rates without limits; annual tax adjustments should not exceed an established inflation threshold. One possible threshold is Consumer Price Index (CPI). This funding mechanism would provide districts much-needed stability in the local revenue base. This mechanism should sunset after the recommendations for rolling reassessments are implemented.

State Equalization Funding: The Commission endorses the recommendations of the fiscal year 2016 report of the Equalization Committee (see Appendix D). The recommendations also call for reassessment but also provide measures to begin to address disparities in the short term. Responsibility for adopting these recommendations lies with the General Assembly.

Defining the Fiscal Impact of District Reorganization: Local, State, and Federal Resources

Central Issues

Fiscal Impact: Education in Delaware is funded through a combination of local, state, and federal sources. On average, Delaware per-pupil funding by revenue source is about 60 percent state, 30 percent local, and 10 percent federal.⁴¹ An analysis of the fiscal impact of redistricting must look at all three sources on both expenditures and revenues. The Commission recognizes that the revenues generated for Red Clay Consolidated School District from the process of changing district boundaries will not cover the expenditures required to serve the increased number of students. This is due, in large part, to the tax structure of the four districts currently serving Wilmington students that dates back to desegregation.

- **The “New Castle County Tax Pool”:** At the local level, general operations are primarily funded through real estate taxes. The tax rates for Red Clay Consolidated, Christina, Colonial, and Brandywine School Districts are made up of two components. The first component is referred to as the “New Castle County Tax Pool,” or the “tax pool,” which

is fixed and was established through Delaware Code when the New Castle County School District was divided into the four districts. All four districts contribute property tax funds to the pool, which are then redistributed based on earned units at a rate of 46.8 cents per \$100 of assessed value according to Delaware Code, Title XIV, §1925(b). The allocation of funds was based on a formula for tax revenue to be split equally among the students served by the new districts. Currently, funds collected through the tax pool are distributed by the Delaware Department of Education, utilizing a formula that is based on Total Division I Units less Special School Units. The formula is antiquated, and the tax pool no longer allocates funds equitably in accordance with the original intent. The formula for allocation has not been adjusted to account for students attending charter schools or the choice process. Equally important, the formula has not been adjusted to account for needs-based special education funding and inclusion models that have significantly decreased the use of special schools. The allocation factors for the tax pool are currently frozen. While inequities are recognized, allocation factors continue to be frozen because adjusting them correctly would create an immediate budget problem for districts or, to prevent that, it would require additional funding to create a hold harmless. The second component of the local tax rate is established by each district individually through the referendum process. All in all, under the current tax pool system some districts receive more and some receive less than they would without the pool.⁴²

The Commission is adamant that Red Clay Consolidated School District must have the resources to cover local obligations to effectively address the needs of the additional students served as a result of redistricting. The additional property assessment revenues from Christina School District would not be sufficient to cover the total costs associated with the local portion of new units, charter and choice payments, and tuition payments for special programs. The estimated funding gap is around \$6 million.

Additionally, certain state and federal funding formulas, such as Equalization at the state level and federal Title I funding, may be affected statewide by the shift of students, but the precise impacts cannot be determined at this time.

⁴² Delaware Code, Title XIV, §1925(b): The tax rate for current operating expenses shall be the rate of taxes levied for current operating expenses in the district being divided in the fiscal year in which the State Board of Education adopts the plan dividing the district.

⁴¹ Census of Governments Public Education Finance Report, Fiscal Year 2012 (2015).

Action Plan/Designated Responsibilities

Impact on Local Funds: The Funding Student Success committee discussed the following.

- Red Clay pays: On the one hand, Red Clay Consolidated School District could go to referendum to raise additional local funds, but this would create an undue burden for Red Clay taxpayers and there is no guarantee that a referendum would pass.
- Shift funding from Christina to Red Clay: On the one hand, one can assume that the reduction of students being served by Christina School District would result in a decrease in expenditures. On the other hand, it is unfair to ask Christina School District taxpayers to send money to another district for students no longer served by their district.
- Statewide property tax: Under this possible solution, all property taxes would be sent to the state, which would then determine allocations based on the number of students. While this would solve the local funding gap associated with redistricting, it might not be politically feasible.
- County-wide property tax: Under this possible solution, all property taxes would be sent to the county, which would then determine allocations based on the number of students. While this would solve the local funding gap associated with redistricting, it might not be politically feasible.
- Disaggregate and restructure the existing tax pool: The existing tax pool could be restructured in order to set distinct rates for each of the districts, but this may not solve the structural issues associated with the pool.
- Distinct Equalization rate for Wilmington: The needed funds could be allocated through the Equalization formula, the advantage being that this funding structure already exists and could be amended to create a separate weight for Wilmington. On the other hand, the Equalization process is not incredibly effective or equitable, as previously described. Additionally, this may not be politically desirable statewide.
- State covers the gap between revenues and expenditures: The advantage of this potential solution is that it avoids many of the complica-

tions of determining new tax rates. The disadvantage is that this would be a one-time solution rather than a sustainable fix. Additionally, this is an issue of local funding, not state funding and the Commission is already recommending that the state increase its levels of support through the weighted unit pilot.

The Funding Student Success committee was also presented these additional options in public comment:

- Reduced percent match for students in excess of the state average low socioeconomic status percentage, which would require additional state appropriations.
- Allow a portion of the required match to new state funding to be provided by Title I and Title III funds, which would require some additional state funding to maintain adequate funding based on needs.

Recognizing that all solutions have trade-offs, the Commission reaffirms its commitment that there should be no unfair burden on the taxpayers in the Red Clay Consolidated School District as a result of redistricting. The Commission's funding committee has identified alternatives for addressing the challenges posed for local revenues but has not reached consensus. The Commission believes that while some adjustments will take place in the existing allocations across districts as a result of redistricting, the state should cover the gap between revenues and expenditures until a longer-term solution is implemented. The Commission and its funding committee will continue to consider longer-term, sustainable solutions to this and related local revenue issues.

Defining the Fiscal Impact of District Reorganization: Transition Resources

Central Issues

Transition Fund: Strengthening City of Wilmington education is a key strategic investment for the entire state; redistricting is the next step to this objective. Resources are required to support planning, the transition, and the effective ongoing education of all students affected by redistricting. Once again, an overall guiding principle is that there should be no unfair burden on Red Clay Consolidated School District taxpayers for assuming a larger role in City of Wilmington education.

Facilities, Capital Funding, and Asset Management: Funding issues fall into two categories.

1. General renovations to existing buildings for existing purposes: Funding is required for short-term minor capital projects to ensure that the school facilities inherited by Red Clay Consolidated School District are equitable to the schools they currently operate and are able to accommodate the programs and purposes for which the district intends to use them. While all schools operated by Christina and Red Clay Consolidated School Districts are fit to serve students, school facilities are in various phases of capital improvement. Reconciling differences between the two phases or implementing changes to school facilities should not place any undue burden on taxpayers in the Red Clay Consolidated School District.
2. Significant conversions/changes in purpose to existing buildings or creation of new buildings: Major capital projects may be deemed necessary for the long-term creation of new schools or converting existing schools as determined in the 2016–2017 planning stage of the redistricting process.

Action Plan/Designated Responsibilities

Transition Fund: The Governor and General Assembly should create a Wilmington Schools Transition Fund that will support development and initial implementation of a strategic education plan to integrate City of Wilmington students into the Red Clay Consolidated School District and support any needed planning and adjustments in all districts impacted. The funding will be used to complete a full-scale facilities assessment of the schools being acquired by the Red Clay Consolidated School District, develop new programming and grade configurations, design transportation feeder patterns, and develop action plans to ensure that redistricting takes place in a manner that is minimally disruptive to students, parents, and educators. Once costs are identified, funding requests for subsequent years would detail specific needs including acquisition of materials, technology, teacher training, potential leveling up of salaries, and transportation costs.

Fiscal year 2017 funding also would support the identification and planning for implementation of national best practices and new models for supporting low-income students, English language learners, and other students at risk.

Resources for High-Quality Early Childhood Programs and College and Career Readiness

The Commission supports WEAC's recommendations for sustaining needed investments in early childhood learning and college access, as well as urging the Interagency Resource Management Committee to develop a statewide comprehensive plan for serving low-income students, families, and schools throughout the state from birth through college and career. The further development of proposals related to these recommendations is a key focus of attention of the Commission's Committee on Meeting the Needs of Students in Poverty.

Of particular note, as the federal early learning challenge grant lapses, the funding gap needs to be filled in order to sustain the recent improvements in the quality of early childhood education programs available to low-income students. Without sustained funding, support for low-income students to retain access to quality improvement programs will be eroded and the state will regress in its ability to provide high-quality care, particularly to the students who need it most. The Commission recommends that the early learning funding be sustaining and views this funding as complementary to its recommendation to provide K-12 weighted units to adequately support students in poverty and English language learners. Sustained funding will support:

- Tiered reimbursement (higher subsidies for early learning providers that meet higher standards and serve low-income children);
- Technical assistance to centers to support quality improvement;
- Support for the workforce, including CORE (Compensation, Retention and Education Awards) salary awards for teachers that earn higher degrees and stay in high-need centers and scholarships such as TEACH (Teacher Education and Compensation Helps) to help them earn degrees;
- Early childhood mental health consultants that support parents and providers in meeting the emotional needs to students; and
- Coordination of Readiness teams—21 teams across the state, including half a dozen in the city, that bring together early learning providers, parents, community centers, health care providers, elementary schools, and others to identify community needs and work collaboratively to address them; teams have supported higher levels of partici-

pation in the Stars quality rating system, shared professional development across early learning providers and elementary schools, parent engagement and outreach, and K registration support for families.

WEIC State Funding for Redistricting Fiscal Year 2017 through Fiscal Year 2019

Pending approval during the next legislative session, the funding requirements to support redistricting must be implemented at each stage of the process, beginning with fiscal year 2017.

- Fiscal Year 2017 Planning Stage
- Fiscal Year 2018 Transition Stage
- Fiscal Year 2019 Implementation Stage

Budget Allocations Needed by Fiscal Year and Stage

Fiscal Year 2017: Planning Stage

1. Establish weighted unit funding to address the needs of low-income students, English language learners, and basic special education units for grades K-3. This recurrent funding should begin with support for low-income students, English language learners, and basic special education units for grades K-3 in Red Clay Consolidated School District and the current Christina School District schools in the City of Wilmington—the schools impacted by redistricting—thereby providing the necessary and sufficient funding to proceed with redistricting. This recurrent funding should be expanded to include all City of Wilmington students and then statewide as rapidly as possible. A Wilmington Redistricting Transition Fund should be established with non-recurrent funds to support the planning and development of new models and proposals on facilities.
2. Epilogue language or legislation should designate the expansion of the low-income/ELL/special education unit over three years as described in the two fiscal years below, leading to eventual full statewide coverage.
3. Invest to sustain and accelerate improvements in early childhood education.

4. The Commission endorses House Bill 30 (see Appendix A) to target funding for basic special education units for grades K-3.

Fiscal Year 2018: Transition Stage

1. Recurrent funding of the low-income/ELL/special education unit is expanded to all Christina School District schools and continued for all Red Clay Consolidated School District schools.
2. Additional non-recurrent funds will be needed in the Wilmington Redistricting Transition Fund to support continued planning and development of new educational and program models as well as facilities configurations.
3. Capital funding for the reconfiguration of the Red Clay Consolidated and Christina School District schools located in the City of Wilmington and possible planning funds for a new Wilmington high school.
4. Initiate property tax reassessment process.
5. Authorization for impacted districts to make limited tax rate adjustments effective for fiscal year 2019 to meet operating expenses.

Fiscal Year 2019: Implementation Stage

1. Recurrent funding of the low-income/ELL/special education unit expands beyond the Red Clay Consolidated School District and Christina School District schools to include Brandywine School District, Colonial School District, and all charter schools in the City of Wilmington and continues for all Red Clay Consolidated School District and Christina School District schools. Recurrent funding should expand to all schools statewide as rapidly as possible.
2. Capital funding for new Wilmington high school or repurposed school configurations, to be determined during planning phase in fiscal year 2017.
3. Contingency funding for the adjustments needed in the New Castle County tax pool.
4. Impacted districts to make limited tax rate adjustments to meet operating expenses.

Longer-term recommendations focus on strengthening the revenue base

supporting public education at both the state and local levels, including property reassessment, and adjustments in the public education allocation system to fully address the needs of low-income students, English language learners and other students at risk.



“Instead of worrying about what happens if they don’t get the resources, education, and support that they deserve—a narrative that too many accept as a reason to do nothing at all—we choose to be active in supporting our students to become great citizens and thereby make our city and state stronger.”

THE HONORABLE
CHANDLEE JOHNSON KUHN, ESQ.
FORMER CHIEF JUDGE, THE FAMILY COURT

JACQUELINE JENKINS, ED.D.
EDUCATIONAL POLICY ADVISOR, WILMINGTON MAYOR’S OFFICE

MICHELLE A. TAYLOR
PRESIDENT AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, UNITED WAY OF
DELAWARE
Editorial to The News Journal | 2015

Part VI: Mobilizing Cross-Sector Resources and Support

Supporting schools with high concentrations of students in poverty, English language learners (ELLs), and students at risk requires resources beyond direct education funding. Students in poverty and schools with high concentrations of poverty face unique challenges that require a mobilization of resources from all sectors at all levels of education. As Strengthening Wilmington Education: An Action Agenda proposes, addressing the challenges faced by students in poverty,

...requires a developmental approach that focuses on the alignment of needed supports and services starting in early childhood and extending through entry into a career or higher education. Alignment of supports and services requires a strong partnership between the community and its schools. All sectors of the community should be mobilized. (2015, p. 50)

Part VI begins with a review of the Wilmington Education Advisory Committee’s analysis and recommendations on meeting the needs of students in poverty. The Commission has accepted these recommendations as a baseline for its work not only in redistricting, but in all other aspects of its mission. The Commission will build upon that baseline through all of its operations, beginning with redistricting and extending until it sunsets in 2021. It should be reaffirmed that in this domain the Commission’s legislated mandate is statewide; the Commission is to advise the Governor and General Assembly on addressing the needs of all Delaware schools with high concentrations of low-income students and English language learners. The Commission’s plan for redistricting represents the beginning of the Commission’s efforts to fulfill that larger responsibility.

The Commission is committed to the alignment of supports and services through a strong partnership between the community and its schools. All sectors of the community should be mobilized including community-based partners, such as the Metropolitan Wilmington Urban League, FAME, Inc., One Village Alliance, Education Voices, Inc., Delaware libraries, the Latin American Community Center, the Delaware Hispanic Commission, the Vision Coalition of Delaware, the Interdenominational Ministers Action Council, and many others engaged directly with improvement of education. In addition,

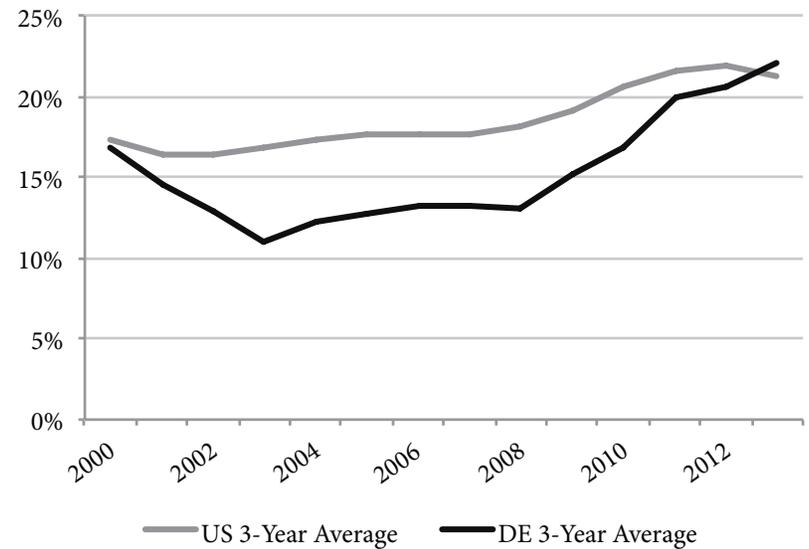
community institutions that provide significant opportunities and supports for students and families must be mobilized, including the YMCA, the Boys & Girls Clubs of Delaware, providers of after-school and outside-of-school services for children and families as well as cultural and sports institutions. After reviewing the analysis and recommendations endorsed by the Commission, we focus on the alignment and mutual reinforcement of the Commission’s plan with other key initiatives already underway, only a few of which are highlighted here: Delaware’s early childhood strategic plan; Student Success 2025; the Education Funding Improvement Commission; Wilmington Education Strategy Think Tank (WESTT); the Statewide Review of Education Opportunities; and the Access to Justice Commission. The final section of Part VI describes additional initiatives in development that are specifically focused on supporting the Commission’s plan by providing support for achieving improved educational outcomes for City of Wilmington students.

Alignment of supports and services requires a strong partnership between the community and its schools. All sectors of the community should be mobilized.

Meeting the Needs of Students in Poverty

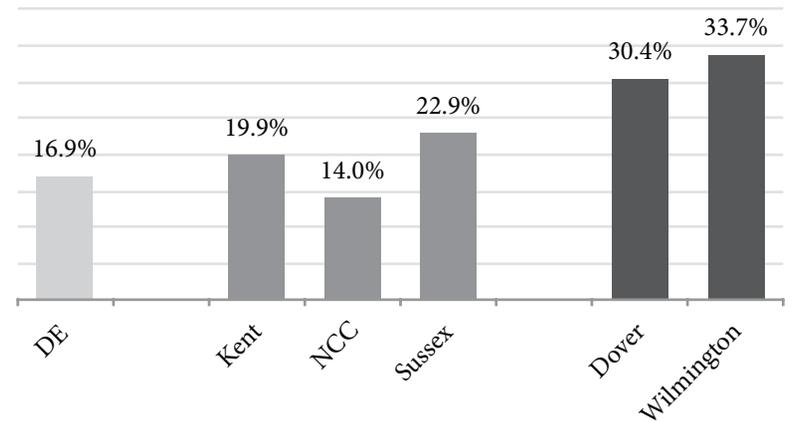
Since 2001, when the first report on strengthening Wilmington education was issued, the condition of poverty among Delaware children in general—and the City of Wilmington children in particular—has become more acute and far more widespread. The percentage of Delaware children in poverty has gone from a low of about 10 percent in 2003 to about 23 percent in 2013 (see Figure 38). This increase in child poverty is occurring statewide. Some areas in southern Delaware are experiencing soaring numbers of children and families in poverty. However, the highest concentration of children and families in poverty is in the City of Wilmington, with over a third of school-age children in poverty (see Figure 39). Considered in the context of child poverty throughout New Castle County (see Figure 40), the high concentrations in the City of Wilmington are even more apparent (WEAC, 2015, p. 45).

Figure 38: State of Delaware Children in Poverty, 2000–2013



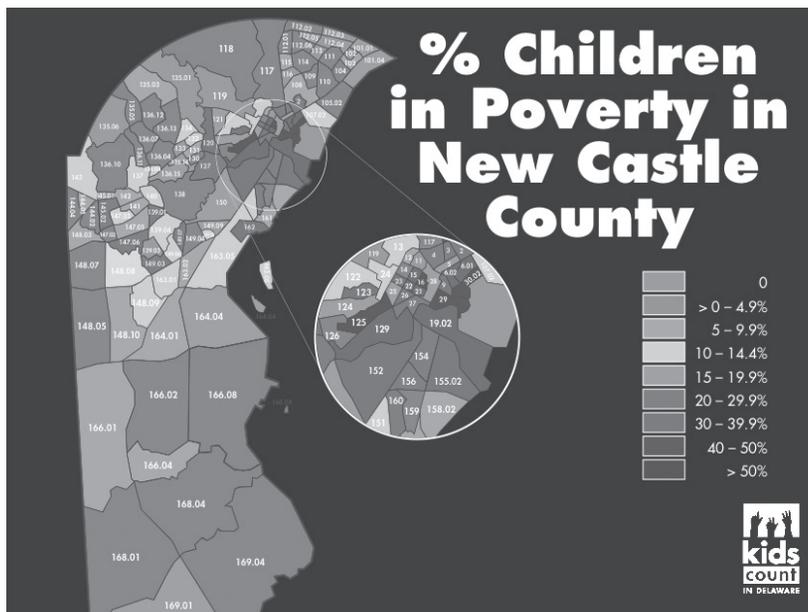
Source: Center for Applied Demography and Survey Research, University of Delaware, 2015.

Figure 39: Delaware Child Poverty by County and Place, Five-Year Average, 2008–2012



Note: The official poverty rate is calculated by the U.S. Census Bureau based on income thresholds and family structure and size in the 2008–2012 American Community Survey. Source: Center for Applied Demography and Survey Research, University of Delaware, 2014.

Figure 40: Map Showing the Percentage of Children Ages 0–18 in Poverty by Census Tract in New Castle County, Five-Year Average, 2008–2012



Note: The official poverty rate is calculated by the U.S. Census Bureau based on income thresholds and family structure and size in the 2008–2012 American Community Survey. Source: KIDS COUNT in Delaware, University of Delaware, 2014.

The Advisory Committee notes that City of Wilmington children in poverty,

...often face particularly harsh circumstances because their environment imposes burdens upon them that extend far beyond the limits of their families' incomes. Some of these burdens are the conditions of violence and instability experienced at home and in their neighborhoods. Other factors include institutionalized racism and classism, high unemployment rates, lack of 'livable wage' work, lack of sufficient safe and affordable housing, food insecurity, pervasive stereotypes about children of color who live in poverty, and the underfunding of educational and social supports designed to address these traumas. (2015, p. 49)

Further, the traumas these students experience in their daily lives are carried with them to school, and most schools are not equipped to help these students. To address these challenges, a cross-sector alliance is needed that can mobilize and integrate the efficient delivery of services at each stage of

child development and in the transition from one stage to another.

The range of services needed includes access to high-quality early childhood education; expanded school time and attention—including enhanced in-school services, such as school psychologists and social workers; availability of after-school programs; expanded school-to-work partnership programs; and more concerted efforts to reach and engage families in student learning and connect them to available services and supports. (WEAC, 2015, p. 51)

The Advisory Committee recommended and the Commission endorses the following action agenda.

1. The Governor and General Assembly should mandate the Interagency Resource Management Committee (IRMC) to develop and implement a comprehensive plan for state and local services, including partnerships with private and nonprofit institutions, which will create a community of support for low-income children and their families. The Commission will work with the IRMC in ensuring that the plan adequately addresses the needs of schools in which large percentages of low-income children enroll.
2. Recent improvements in early childhood programs should be accelerated. The Early Childhood Council, Office of Early Learning, and Wilmington Early Care and Education Council, with support of the Commission's Committee on Meeting the Needs of Students in Poverty, should re-develop an early childhood community plan for the City of Wilmington that would provide access to high-quality early childhood programs and services for all children. This initiative should align with the state's already-approved early childhood strategic plan.⁴³
3. The state should increase supports in schools through increased numbers of psychologists, social workers, and other professionals with knowledge of working with students who experience trauma and other social or emotional challenges. Delaware should rely on models of best practices in other states to develop a program designed to meet our state's distinctive needs. The Commission's Committee on Meeting the Needs of Students in poverty will facilitate this effort.
4. The Governor should redirect the Delaware P-20 Council, represent-

⁴³ Sustaining Early Success: Delaware's Strategic Plan for a Comprehensive Early Childhood System, Dover, DE: Delaware Early Childhood Council, 2013, p.2.

ing Pre-K through higher education, to recommend improvements in the alignment of resources and programs to support student learning and development from birth through access to college and careers. This should include a review of resources and programs from public, private, and nonprofit institutions. The Commission will work with the Delaware P-20 Council to develop these recommendations and carry them forward.

5. The Governor should call upon the council of higher education presidents to create a coordinated and aligned partnership program to help strengthen City of Wilmington education from early childhood through college access. The Commission will facilitate this effort.
6. In collaboration with the State and New Castle County Chambers of Commerce and the Delaware Business Roundtable, the Governor should launch a business sponsorship program focused on City of Wilmington schools with high percentages of low-income students. Business sponsors should work as partners with each school, helping to generate the human, material, and fiscal resources needed to support student success.
7. The Wilmington city government should play a leadership role in strengthening parent engagement in student learning, beginning in early childhood and extending through college and career choice. The Commission's Committee on Parent, Educator, and Community Engagement should support this effort.

The Wilmington Education Improvement Commission (referred to as WEIC in this section of the plan) committees also expanded the previous recommendations to include:

- The state should increase supports for opportunities for extended in-school and out-of-school services and supports and reduced student-teacher ratios.
- The state should increase supports for English language learners and students in poverty to allow, professional development, supports, and materials needed to align with best practices.

Alignment of the Commission's Plan with Other Education Initiatives

There are many elements of the redistricting transition, resource, and implementation plan that align with and are reinforced by other current education-reform-related efforts. This alignment helps to build capacity to address the challenges faced by low-income students, English language learners, and students at risk. Members of the Commission and its committees are partners in these initiatives, thereby helping to ensure coordination of efforts. This convergence of initiatives reflects broad recognition and agreement on actions needed to address the challenges facing children in poverty and the schools in which those children are enrolled. There are many initiatives underway and only a few of them are described briefly below with emphasis on the dimensions that dovetail with the Commission's plan.

Early Childhood Education Strategic Plan and Strategies

Accelerating the improvement of early childhood education for low-income children is a key priority of the Commission's plan as reflected in its support for increased funding, as described in Part V. As *Strengthening Wilmington Education: An Action Agenda* (2015) summarizes, the achievement gap between poor and more prosperous children is created even before those children arrive at school, and "if student learning falls behind in those early years, it is very difficult and sometimes impossible to compensate later" (WEAC, p. 50). All earlier commissions to improve City of Wilmington education have identified investments and improvements in early childhood education as critical. This is an area in which Delaware has made significant progress in the past few years. "Five years ago, Governor Markell and the Delaware General Assembly undertook policy changes that have greatly increased the access of low-income children to higher-quality early learning environments" (WEAC, 2015, p. 50). As a result, the percentage of low-income children with access to high-quality programs has increased from 5 percent to 58 percent, and many of these are City of Wilmington children (OEL, 2015). Since 2011, 28,000+ children have received developmental screenings and 6,000+ children and families were linked to follow-up services.

The Early Childhood Council (ECC) and Office of Early Learning (OEL) both have approved plans that focus on assistance to low-income children. The ECC plan *Sustaining Early Success Delaware Strategic Plan for a Comprehensive Early Childhood System* and OEL's Early Learning Challenge Grant both support and align with each other. Leaders of the ECC and OEL are

members of the Commission’s Committee on Meeting the Needs of Students in Poverty. The Commission strongly supports investments to sustain the improvement of early childhood education and is committed to working with the ECC and OEL in accelerating those improvements. This investment is particularly critical for low-income children and other children at risk who will be impacted by redistricting.

The Commission, working with the ECC, OEL, and Wilmington Early Care and Education Council should develop an early childhood community plan for the City of Wilmington that would provide access to high-quality early childhood programs and services for all children. This initiative should align with the state’s already-approved early childhood strategic plan.⁴⁴ As proposed in the *Strengthening Wilmington Education: An Action Agenda*, a key step will be the development of a citywide partnership that includes all providers (family- and center-based), Early Head Start, Head Start, school districts, and higher education. This initiative should be supported actively by the Governor’s Commission on Early Education and the Economy, with the shared goal of working with providers to establish easily accessible and affordable high-quality services (including needed screenings and interventions to identify and address developmental needs) for all City of Wilmington children. This initiative should be coordinated with the existing Early Childhood Readiness Teams and include a formal partnership among early childhood providers and districts and charters serving the City of Wilmington to facilitate the effective transition of children from early childhood to K-12 education.

Students Success 2025

The Vision Coalition of Delaware is a public-private partnership composed of a broad range of Delawareans who work together to improve Delaware public education. In September 2015, the Vision Coalition launched Student Success 2025, a ten-year plan with the goal of preparing every Delaware student for a lifetime of success. Student Success 2025 was developed in collaboration with 4,000 Delawareans, which includes some voices now involved with the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission. Continuous and sincere public engagement is central to the work of both the Vision Coalition and the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission. Members of the Vision Coalition serve on the Commission and its committees. The objectives of both organizations are aligned.

Student Success 2025 is centered around the North Star, which shows what students need to know, be, and do to live a lifetime of success (see Figure 41). It purports that students will need core academic knowledge to provide a foundation for learning, yet they will also need skills and attributes that go beyond academics. The plan describes the exciting innovations occurring in Delaware classrooms and how the education system will need to change in order to ensure that student learning keeps pace with the modern times. The Wilmington Education Improvement Commission, on the other hand, has been purposeful in its decision to look broadly at structural and institutional improvements needed in the education system and not weigh in on what classrooms and instruction should look like.

Figure 41: North Star Graphic



⁴⁴ Sustaining Early Success: Delaware’s Strategic Plan for a Comprehensive Early Childhood System, Dover, DE: Delaware Early Childhood Council, 2013, p. 2.

With the North Star as a beacon for its vision to improve public schools for every Delaware student, the Vision Coalition put forward recommendations in six core areas: Early Learning; Personalized Learning; Postsecondary Success; Educator Support and Development; Fair and Efficient Funding; and System Governance, Alignment, and Performance. The recommendations of the Wilmington Education Advisory Committee are highlighted as promising work underway within the area of System Governance, Alignment, and Performance. Many themes and recommendations from Student Success 2025 are reflected in the work of the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission, including but not limited to:

- Recognizing that our education system, including the way our schools are funded, must respond to the unique needs of students;
- Increasing collaboration among districts; between districts and charters; between early learning, K-12, and higher education; between community organizations and the schools, etc.; and
- Integrating and aligning services to our state's students to create a seamless academic experience for students from birth through career and college readiness.

The recommendations of the Student Success 2025 plan for aligning governance, performance, and student success and for developing a fair and efficient funding system are particularly important to the Commission's Plan for redistricting. The following Student Success 2025 recommendations align strongly with the Commission's recommendations:

- Develop a state strategy for supporting and managing the Delaware school system's portfolio of schools. Assess the creation of new schools (e.g., public charters and magnets) against the overall value they add. Actively encourage expansion and sharing of school models and strategies that have potential to improve overall student performance.
- Support collaboration among early learning organizations, the K-12 system, higher education, and the workforce. Develop policies and strategies that increase alignment and take an integrated approach to improving system performance. Increase funding allocated to programs focused on statewide collaboration among schools and districts, as well as with early learning providers and higher education organizations, to enable system-wide improvement.

- Encourage charter and district school boards statewide to find more ways to share services and create more efficiencies.
- Increase funding system equity by factoring student needs into funding allocations, and update the system so that funding follows each student, enabling them to take courses from a variety of approved providers (e.g., other district and charter schools, distance learning, and higher education organizations).
- Conduct property reassessments on a consistent, rolling basis to enable a more sustainable, sufficient revenue and accurate equalization process.
- Create incentives at the local and state levels to increase efficiency, particularly for sharing of services such as technology or professional development across districts and public charter schools. Publicly share district and school budgets as well as key district-school financial performance metrics in formats that are accessible to the public.

The Student Success 2025 plan identifies goals for student outcomes that should apply to students across Delaware, including Wilmington students (see Appendix E).

Education Funding Improvement Commission

The Education Funding Improvement Commission established by Senate Joint Resolution Number 4 of the 148th Delaware General Assembly is charged, "to conduct a comprehensive review of Delaware's public education funding system and make recommendations to modernize and strengthen the system" (2015, p. 2). They will conduct a review of the public education system and make recommendations to modernize and strengthen the system. The Education Funding Improvement Commission is tasked with submitting a report to the Governor and General Assembly by March 31, 2016. Several members of the WEIC and its committees also serve on the Education Funding Improvement Commission.

The legislation corresponds with and expands upon the elements of the WEIC plan on funding student success and the Advisory Committee's recommendations for funding student success:

- *The governor and state legislature should approve a modification to the current unit count allocation formula (or move to a new weighted student allocation formula) that addresses the needs of at-risk students*

by incorporating allocations for schools with high concentrations of students in poverty and English language learners, and expands special education status to grades K-3. Allocations should be applied to multiple enrollment data points/periods to compensate for shifting student populations, and a transition fund should be established to manage the funding impacts of these shifts.

- *The revenue base supporting public education should be strengthened at both the state and local levels. Property reassessment should be implemented without further delay and undertaken on an ongoing schedule that reflects national best practices. Districts should be authorized to increase taxes by a designated percentage without referendum. Districts also should be authorized to apply an equalization surcharge tax that would be redistributed according to the equalization formula to partially redress the lag in equalization. These changes are essential to an effective equalization process.* (2015, p. 60)

The alignment of the Education Funding Improvement Commission and the Advisory Committee's funding recommendations are further emphasized in the legislation itself. The legislation states that there needs to be a modernization of the funding system that is reflective of the needs of children today, including those in poverty and with special needs. The legislation also states, "Delaware is 1 of only 4 states in the nation that does not provide additional funding for English language learners, and 1 of only 15 states that does not provide additional funding for students in poverty" (2015, p. 1). This aligns with WEIC.

Wilmington Education Strategy Think Tank (WESTT)

In early 2013, several Wilmington civic and political leaders gathered together to discuss how best to make progress improving the persistent challenge of adequately and equitably educating Wilmington students, particularly African American and Latino children living in poverty who face ongoing struggles in attaining high-quality education. Collectively, the group members represent more than a century of experience on the frontlines of efforts to achieve parity for city students, a great deal of grassroots community perspective and credibility, and policy-making influence. The group quickly determined its focused priorities: (1) that the City of Wilmington needs a stronger voice and oversight role over the education of its students, with a formal office to do so; (2) districts serving Wilmington students ought to be consolidated to encourage the redevelopment of this long-diminished authority, and (3)

schools serving Wilmington students need fair and adequate resourcing for schools serving Wilmington students, such as a weighted funding formula that particularly acknowledges the differing needs of students living in poverty. As they pursued these goals for Wilmington, the group expanded its membership to represent a greater variety of stakeholders and named themselves the Wilmington Education Strategy Think Tank, or WESTT.

WESTT supported the initial recommendations of WEAC (as reflected in its public comment published in the WEAC report) and initial efforts of WEIC as they are reflective of its aforementioned goals, but has pursued them through its parallel, independent efforts while encouraging continued alignment. Establishing collaboration among the Office of the Mayor of the City of Wilmington, the Wilmington City Council, New Castle County government, the United Way of Delaware, and the American Civil Liberties Union of Delaware, WESTT retained national experts to analyze current inequities in Delaware's school funding structure. The findings of this study were presented to principals, superintendents, and the Delaware State Education Association, whose input informed WESTT's recommendations on school funding reform released in November 2015. This publication has been, and will continue to be, presented to its collaborators and concerned Wilmington leaders and legislators for action (see Appendix E).

WESTT drafted initial concepts for a Wilmington Educational Alliance and Office of Education and Public Policy and continues to take the lead in refining them. The group will continue to pursue these and other ideas, mobilizing community-connected and divergent voices to develop a strong and sustainable role for Wilmington leadership to better engage in the educational well-being of its citizens. This aligns with the Commission's goal to support increased parent, educator, and community engagement as well as giving roots to its desire to see alignment and collaboration among private/nonprofit and state actors.

Statewide Review of Education Opportunities and Strategic Plan

The Statewide Review of Education Opportunities (SREO) is a result of the Advisory Committee's action item that the state shall complete "a statewide needs assessment and produced a strategic plan for the development of charters that includes a proposed optimal mix of district, charter, and vo-tech schools in Wilmington and New Castle County" (2015, p. 37).

In response to the Advisory Committee's interim report, Governor Markell announced on March 19, 2015, that he was directing the Delaware State

Board of Education (State Board) and the Delaware Department of Education (DOE) to conduct a comprehensive needs assessment and strategic planning process for the future of Delaware public schools, including charter, vo-tech, and magnet schools. He confirmed that the process would review current opportunities available to students, analyze trends, and quantify areas of unmet need for Delaware families. The assessment would evaluate the educational needs of Delaware students and the schools required to meet those needs. Once the needs assessment is completed, the Governor directed the State Board and DOE to develop a plan that will include all schools and focus on charter and other special need schools to supplement traditional public schools.

The SREO aims to answer two questions: (1) What are the specialized educational opportunities in the state's public schools and is the known demand for such specialized educational opportunities being met by the demand? (2) Is the state meeting the known demand and the projected demand for the specialized educational areas?

The SREO will provide data and information necessary for the development of a statewide strategic plan for the composition of public schools. This strategic plan will help clarify the arrangements of schools, special programs, and programs within schools that will best serve student in the City of Wilmington and New Castle County.

The SREO should be one of the foundations for the state to act on the Advisory Committee's recommendation for a strategic plan for the configuration of schools in Delaware. The plan should include the state's desired number and mix of charter, district, and vo-tech schools statewide. The plan should have an immediate focus in the City of Wilmington and New Castle County where charter growth has been most extensive. The state plan should be based on a systematic evaluation of the educational needs of Delaware students, with an immediate focus on City of Wilmington students. The plan should comply with National Association of Charter School Authorizers guidelines for best practices and align with the desired overall configuration of the public education system, including fiscal considerations, as defined by the Governor and General Assembly.

The initial SREO report will be available at or near the time the Commission submits its redistricting plan to the State Board. The Commission intends to review the SREO report and to work collaboratively with DOE as it embarks on the development of a statewide plan. That plan is an important step in further strengthening the governance of public education as well

as optimizing the mix of schools and programs that may best meet student needs. The state's strategic plan will have particular importance for the City of Wilmington and New Castle County by providing a framework for evaluating educational needs and promoting an appropriate mix of schools and programs to serve all students.

Access to Justice Commission

One of the mandates of the WEIC is to identify root causes of educational inequalities in Delaware schools, particularly among those serving student populations with high concentrations of poverty. Similarly, one of the responsibilities of the Access to Justice Commission formed by the Delaware Supreme Court is to examine ways to address disparities in the criminal justice system by identifying the root causes of inequality and crime. These root causes include lack of equal economic, educational, or other opportunities. Recommendations will focus on how improvements in these areas might diminish crime. Because the same root causes underlie disparities observed in both the education and criminal justice systems, the Access to Justice Commission and WEIC are partnering to share research and develop comprehensive strategies that address structural inequalities.

By coordinating efforts, the two commissions can work more efficiently. By coordinating staff resources, they can work toward the common objective of identifying public policy ideas that improve educational and economic opportunity; make schools a stabilizing pillar of local communities; reduce incentives for youth criminal involvement; and bolster Delaware's appeal as an attractive place to locate businesses.

The subcommittee of the Access to Justice Commission charged with addressing the root causes of disparities in the criminal justice system will coordinate its work with WEIC, focusing in particular on institutional inequalities that prompt engagement in criminal behavior. These areas include educational, social, and economic factors that have been the focus of research conducted by University of Delaware faculty and staff. The subcommittee members will provide expert testimony and a compilation of existing research to be made available for use by the Access to Justice Commission.

These resources will be woven together into a policy paper highlighting aspects of the research that best inform the goals of the Access to Justice Commission. The paper will focus on areas that can be targeted with practical measures to reduce disparities in the criminal justice system. Relevant topic areas include drugs, health, violence, poverty, education, and the experien-

tial effects of involvement with the judicial system in both civil and criminal matters. This work highlights research conducted by University of Delaware affiliated centers and faculty, with particular focus paid to the recent findings of the Wilmington Education Advisory Committee.

The Wilmington Education Advisory Committee's final report, *Strengthening Wilmington Education: An Action Agenda* revealed several persistent problems likely to adversely affect life opportunities of students residing in the City of Wilmington: a significant and persistent achievement gap on state-mandated standardized tests in Math and English Language Arts at all grade levels; lower graduation rates (68 percent for City of Wilmington students, compared to 84 percent statewide) and associated higher drop-out rates. In addition to the many adverse experiences by students, many students migrate between schools. Reducing fragmentation of education governance is a first step toward improving access to quality education for City of Wilmington students and part of a larger intervention strategy that will include increased, targeted funding for at-risk students; improved collaboration between traditional and charter schools; and enhanced engagement with parents and the community.

These findings support a larger narrative of institutional inequality that also helps explain disparities in the criminal justice system. Lack of educational opportunity, high drop-out rates, and diminished job prospects have been linked to involvement with crime; addressing these root factors will be a crucial step in meeting the goals of both commissions. By working together toward common objectives, WEIC and the Access to Justice Commission can better develop plans to equalize opportunity for all Delawareans.

Mobilizing Greater Cross-Sector Engagement and Support

In addition to having cross-sector support, there must be planned and coherent support to help mobilize the work. Many agencies, groups, and individuals need to work together to help the students who need it most. This will mobilize the Advisory Committee's recommendation to,

...take better advantage of organizations and institutions already in place such as the Office of Early Learning, Early Childhood Council, and Wilmington Early Care and Education Council, which include a wide range of community institutions serving children such as Nemours, United Way of Delaware, Children & Families First, and the Commission on Early Education and the Economy. Other organizations

are critical to the transitions from early childhood to K-12 education and entry to the workforce or higher education. These organizations include the Delaware P-20 Council, state council of higher education presidents, State and New Castle County Chambers of Commerce, and the Delaware Business Roundtable. We should build on the goal of the Early Childhood Strategic Plan to mobilize community partnerships and public commitment, including family engagement throughout the whole education system. (2015, p. 15)

Effective Coordination of State Programs and Services that Serve Low-Income Children and Families, English Language Learners, and Other Students At Risk

Strengthening Wilmington Education: An Action Agenda had multiple recommendations for meeting the needs of students in poverty. The Meeting the Needs of Students in Poverty Committee will be addressing these recommendations and rolling out their plan in parallel to the implementation of redistricting. This work will engage collaborations with key state agencies and councils, including the Interagency Resource Management Committee (IRMC) responsible for the integration of services for children and families across state agencies, the Delaware P-20 Council responsible for the alignment of educational programs and student support services from early childhood through college and career readiness, and the council on higher education to mobilize coordinated support from all higher education institutions. These collaborations will be instrumental for the development and implementation of the Advisory Committee's recommendation for a comprehensive plan for state and local services, including partnerships with private and nonprofit institutions, which will create a community of support for low-income children and their families.

In parallel, the Commission will work with the Delaware P-20 Council, representing Pre-K through higher education, to improve the alignment of resources and programs to support student learning and development from birth through access to college and careers. This should include a review of resources and programs from public, private, and nonprofit institutions. There should be a logical progression of learning for students from early childhood to post-secondary education and workforce readiness aimed at reducing the need for remediation at each transition. Improved alignment will benefit all children in Delaware. It will be of particular importance to low-income children who often lack sufficient support for their learning progress. Improved

alignment also will strengthen cost-effectiveness in the overall delivery of educational programs and services.

The Commission also will work with Delaware institutions of higher education—public and private—that offer teacher or administrator education programs to develop collaborative models of comprehensive professional development and ongoing training aimed at assisting early childhood education programs and City of Wilmington schools with high percentages of low-income or minority students. One step, consistent with Delaware’s early childhood strategic plan, is for institutions of higher education to work more directly with the Early Childhood Council to better align early childhood and elementary education programs. The Commission also will work with the State and New Castle County Chambers of Commerce and the Delaware Business Roundtable to launch a business sponsorship program focused on City of Wilmington schools with high percentages of low-income students. Business sponsors should work as partners with each school, helping to generate the human, material, and fiscal resources needed to support student success. This type of sponsorship already is present in some schools and it should be available, formalized, and enhanced for all City of Wilmington schools. Once developed, the business sponsorship program should be expanded statewide for all schools with high percentages of low-income students.

Community Coordination Initiative: United Way

An important part of this plan, and one that is particularly relevant to the United Way of Delaware, is the Committee’s objective to address the needs of all Delaware schools with high concentrations of children living in poverty and English language learners. As this area of focus is consistent with the United Way of Delaware’s commitment to quality educational opportunity for all, beginning with early learning and continuing through college and career readiness, the United Way has agreed to accept a lead role in coordinating the efforts of the nonprofit community and other community agencies to effectuate the goals of *Strengthening Wilmington Education: An Action Agenda*.

Wilmington Office of Education and Public Policy

WEAC’s report indicated its endorsement of the formation of a Wilmington Office of Education and Public Policy, as called for by civic leaders. While this entity has yet to be created or provided for, its establishment could align significantly with the goals of the Commission. Early concepts for the office, as provided to WEAC by WESTT, demonstrate a likely public-private agen-

cy that would focus solely on supporting access for Wilmington students to quality educational opportunities, through advocacy and engagement work at all levels and across all sectors. It is proposed that such an agency be overseen by a diverse set of stakeholders and operated with a commitment to facilitating the proliferation of best practices, equity, and safeguarding the well-being of Wilmington’s students. The office could play a critical role in supporting a smooth transition in the event of redistricting, and provide sustained emphasis and coordination on many of the Commission’s featured facets of high-quality education (such as charter-district collaboration, meeting the needs of students in poverty, and parent, educator, and community engagement) well beyond the 2021 sunset point of the Commission.

University of Delaware Partnership for Public Education

In November 2015, the University of Delaware (UD) announced the Partnership for Public Education. It is the University’s commitment to actively support the improvement of K-12 public education, especially for low-income students, English language learners, and other students at risk by building on existing collaborations among UD faculty, professionals, and students and the educators in Delaware—from early childhood through career and college readiness. The initial focus of the UD Partnership for Public Education will be a partnership with schools impacted by redistricting in the City of Wilmington and New Castle County. The programs developed through the UD Partnership will be coordinated with the work of the Commission. Members of the Commission and its support staff from the University will hold leadership roles in the partnership.

The UD Partnership for Public Education will mobilize programs in four key areas that draw upon the University’s strengths: research and evaluation, professional development, school improvement strategies and models, and engagement and advocacy. Research and evaluation capacity at the University can support partner decision-making about programs and policies designed to improve outcomes for students at risk of school failure. These include the design of research-based programs and interventions, continuous improvement and implementation research, and impact analysis. Professional development can include field-based and service-learning opportunities (e.g., internships, clinical placements) for students in all disciplines and development of University-based as well as site-based professional development opportunities for educators and staff in partnership schools. The UD Partnership for Public Education also will identify strategies and models for school improve-

ment based on national best practices that may be adopted through collaborative efforts of the University and local education agencies to strengthen the access and quality of Delaware public education. The UD Partnership for Public Education can also support greater engagement and advocacy among families, communities, policymakers, and other stakeholders by holding forums for open dialogue and serving on statewide committees and task forces.

Charter and District Collaboration and Mutual Program Support

Charter schools are now an important component of City of Wilmington education, and they will become even more important in the years ahead. In 2012, Delaware ranked third among states in the percentage of public school students enrolled in charters. Delaware's heaviest and most rapidly growing concentration of charters is in the City of Wilmington (see Figures 33–34). Students living within three public school districts generate nearly two-thirds of total state charter enrollment. Based on 2012 data from the DOE, charter enrollments account for 13.1 percent of students in Christina School District, 8.9 percent in Colonial School District, and 8.5 percent in Red Clay Consolidated School District.⁴⁵ With additional City of Wilmington charter schools already authorized, these percentages will continue to grow.

Charter schools offer options for City of Wilmington families; they also pose challenges for the governance of City of Wilmington public education. The increasing number of charter schools in the City of Wilmington has generated additional governing units that operate largely independent of one another and are often disconnected from the traditional districts. Indeed, City of Wilmington charter schools have developed as a separate public education system, occupying the same geographic space as the traditional school districts, but often operating disconnected from those districts. Traditional and charter schools most often compete rather than collaborate.

Achieving greater collaboration among charter schools and among charter and district schools is a key component of more coherent and responsive governance of City of Wilmington public education and one of central importance to the City of Wilmington and New Castle County students and families. This is a focus of the Commission's Charter and District Collaboration Committee that is evaluating national best practices and their applicability to Delaware. This committee will develop and promote strategies to increase collaboration among charter schools and among charters and district schools.

It is notable that the Red Clay Consolidated School District is the only Delaware district to authorize charter schools and the only district with direct experience in working with charter schools on an ongoing basis.

Given that most City of Wilmington charters operate outside of school districts, the Advisory Committee's final report proposed that an institutional arrangement needs to be established through which coordination of efficient and effective services and sustained collaboration on best practices is supported and delivered. WEAC proposed a Wilmington Charter Consortium to promote the effective coordination of charter operations and the use of best practices and to facilitate collaboration among charters and districts. The Commission's Charter and District Collaboration Committee will consider this and other options.

Parent, Educator, and Community Engagement

None of the work being done can be completed without engagement from parents, educators, and the community. WEIC's Parent, Educator, and Community Engagement committee will work with stakeholders to develop a plan to coordinate this work.

Effective public education in the City of Wilmington requires the active engagement of the community it serves and the city government that represents it. The reconfiguring of districts and creation of the Wilmington Charter Consortium should be accompanied by a new and meaningful partnership with the City of Wilmington community. Responsive governance requires the ongoing participation of the community and city government in both district and charter school decisions impacting the education of the City of Wilmington's children.

Strengthening Wilmington Education: An Action Agenda endorsed the City of Wilmington government's plans to enhance its capacity to become more systematically engaged in public education. A step in this direction is the creation of an Office of Education and Public Policy within the city government with the mandate and the resources needed to represent the interests of its community in the process of strengthening City of Wilmington education. The Advisory Committee recommended that the office should play a leadership role for broad-based community involvement in public education. The office should forge strong partnerships with the reconfigured schools, districts, and the Wilmington Charter Consortium.

As currently conceived by city leaders, the office would support parent and family engagement in school activity and decision-making, work

⁴⁵ Percentage attending charters who reside within the district.

on behalf of students' rights to safe educational environments, support a diverse and highly qualified staff of Wilmington educators, and generate greater understanding and commitment to meeting the needs of Wilmington students. (WEAC, 2015, p. 42)

The Commission's Committee on Parent, Educator, and Community Engagement is developing strategies to enhance the ongoing engagement of parents and families in support of the schools in which their students are enrolled. While parent and family engagement is recognized broadly as of critical importance to student success, the actual mobilization of efforts is generally fragmented. This committee will evaluate national best practices for engagement of parents, families, and community members and evaluate models and strategies that apply to the City of Wilmington and prospectively to all of Delaware.



“Before us now lies an unprecedented opportunity to make our public schools launching pads for generations of successful lives.”

S. ELIZABETH LOCKMAN

VICE-CHAIR, WILMINGTON EDUCATION IMPROVEMENT COMMISSION

KENNETH RIVERA

VICE-CHAIR, WILMINGTON EDUCATION IMPROVEMENT COMMISSION

Editorial to The News Journal | 2015

Part VII: Red Clay Consolidated and Christina School Districts Transition, Resource, and Implementation Plan

Introduction

The change in district boundaries between the Christina and Red Clay Consolidated School Districts must be carried out in accord with guiding principles that ensure a smooth transition, with minimal disruptions for students, parents, educators, and other personnel. It also must strengthen the capacity of both districts to support the continuous improvement in student learning. The multi-year transition requires strong collaboration between the districts, and it deserves to receive continuing support and encouragement from the Commission, the State Board of Education, the Department of Education, and from institutional partners across all sectors, some of which are identified in Part VI.

The process of collaboration and support has already begun. The administrations of both school districts have been actively working together in the development of a detailed interim framework for implementation for each district to carry out the redistricting recommendations of the Commission, and to do so in ways that most effectively support the interests of their students and promote improvements in student learning. Those frameworks were developed using a template provided by the Commission to ensure that both district plans addressed the requirements for the transition, resource, and implementation plan defined by the enabling legislation and did so in a coordinated fashion. For each component of the transition and implementation plans, the districts were asked to identify guiding principles and central issues and to describe the actions required to address those issues, including the designation of responsibilities for carrying out those actions. The Commission has used the same template in this part of the plan.

Throughout the past several months the collaboration between the districts has been continuous, intense, collegial, and highly productive. This collaboration, in itself, deserves recognition as an example of the positive, mutual engagement that should typify the ongoing work of all districts—and all charter schools.

The interim framework for implementation for the Christina School District was completed in mid-October. On October 27, 2015, by a vote of 5–1–1,

the Christina School District Board of Education approved the interim framework for planning to be part of the Commission's plan to be submitted to the State Board of Education. That plan and the accompanying transmittal letter are included as Appendix B.

The interim framework for the Red Clay Consolidated School District also was completed in mid-October. On November 2, 2015, by a vote of 4–1, the Red Clay Board of Education approved the interim framework for planning to be part of the Commission's plan to be submitted to the State Board of Education. That plan and the accompanying transmittal letter are included as Appendix C.

The plans of the two districts were used to draft the Commission's redistricting plan, specifically the overall framework for transition and implementation. The frameworks for planning of the two districts and the framework presented in this part of the Commission's plan should be considered together as coordinate documents.

The plans are interim documents. They must and will be modified and enhanced in detail as the multi-year process of transition and implementation proceeds. Pending approval of redistricting, the 2016–2017 school year will be a period of focused planning and development that not only provides the foundation for needed decisions and actions over subsequent years but also will generate new models of educational programs and opportunities to support student success. The exploration of models of national best practice that may be adopted for that purpose already is underway. The development of new school and program configurations and the related enrollment and feeder patterns will be developed during the 2016–2017 years. This will then enable students and parents to recognize the new options and choices that will be available and to consider those along with continued enrollment in their current schools. Similarly, the new configurations will provide a framework in which educators and other personnel may effectively consider their own options and preferences and when their choices may best be exercised. The strong collaboration between the two districts and also with the Commission's Redistricting Committee and IPA staff has typified the initial stage of planning. It must and will continue through all subsequent stages. Further, this collaboration will engage all others who need to be part of the decisions and actions to be carried out. This includes students, parents, educators, and other personnel impacted by redistricting, and it also includes those institutions that represent the interests of those impacted and who may be instrumental in supporting the success of transition. The Commission is committed

to playing a facilitative role in this process at all stages. The Commission also is committed to reporting regularly to the State Board at each stage.

The interim plans of the two districts and the Commission's plan are aligned and congruent on virtually all dimensions, but they are not identical. While the key items and issues—from ensuring minimal disruption to students to the transfer of facilities—and the guiding principles for addressing those issues are largely the same for both districts. The issues posed, the proposed changes, and the decisions and actions needed to address those issues often are not the same. For the most part, this is to be expected as a product of the differing impact on the two districts as a result of the movement of students and schools. The key is that the plans of the two districts and the transition plan recommended by the Commission are overwhelmingly congruent and reinforcing. Equally important, the expectations about the matters to be addressed and resolved as the process moves forward are similarly congruent and reinforcing. The Commission's role as facilitator of the process should be to sustain that condition and to ensure that all those impacted by redistricting are actively engaged in the process of shaping the transition.

SB 122 stipulates several requirements for the commission's transition, resource, and implementation plan. The plan must provide for:

- The orderly and minimally disruptive reassignment of students affected by the boundary change and the reassignment of governance responsibilities;
- Implications for educators, administrators, and other personnel that may lead to equitable adjustments to local collective bargaining agreements;
- Resources that will be required, from state, district, and local sources, to support the redistricting transition and provide for the effective ongoing education of all affected students, and for the support of schools with high concentrations of low-income students and English language learners;
- Student transportation;
- Distribution of capital assets; and
- Engagement of educators, staff, parents, district personnel, and community members throughout the transition.

The resources required have been addressed in Parts V and VI of this plan.

The other items are addressed below and also in the two district interim planning frameworks. In addition, through the work of the school districts, several important issues have been identified beyond those stipulated in the legislation. These include the following, each of which is addressed in this part of the Commission's plan and in the two district interim planning frameworks:

- Special schools and programs;
- Choice options and policies;
- Technology;
- Child nutrition services; and
- Curricular materials.

We encourage the members of the State Board of Education and others to read the Commission's plan and the interim planning frameworks from the two districts as complementary and reinforcing documents. This is important because each district retains the responsibility and authority for the decisions and actions related to key items of transition and implementation. The Commission has sought to supplement but not supplant that responsibility and authority. As a result, the Commission's approach to each item has been more general and focused on the overall effectiveness of the transition and implementation process. We have relied heavily on the district interim planning documents but do not repeat all the details of the district's plans, which are included in full in Appendices B and C.

Orderly and Minimally Disruptive Reassignment of Students

Guiding Principles

- In all aspects of the redistricting process, the highest priority will be the best interests of the students impacted.
- All students have the right to remain in the schools and programs in which they are enrolled at the time of redistricting and to remain enrolled through completion of their programs of study at those schools.
- All impacted students and their families should have priority choice for options outside of their current schools and also have direct assistance in identifying and selecting schools and programs that may best support their learning.

- All City of Wilmington schools, now and after redistricting, should meet high and rising standards for student learning in Delaware and across the globe. There should be agreed-upon measures for student success in meeting those standards that apply to all schools and that are mutually supported by all those engaged in the redistricting process.
- The orderly, minimally disruptive, and most successful reassignment of students must be a shared responsibility of students, parents, educators, administrators, and many others in the school districts and in the wider community.
- City of Wilmington schools should be seen as community assets and must have allies to address the complex challenges of educating the city's children.

Central Issues

The principle of "Orderly and Minimally Disruptive Reassignment of Students" can be seen throughout this transition, resource, and implementation plan and each district's framework for planning. This includes transportation for students, particularly for those students who choose to stay in their current schools, the staffing transitions, and the facility transfers. Students that are in existing "non-traditional" programs are of primary consideration. Analysis of unique programs being offered in Christina School District buildings is an important step in providing smooth transitions for students. Red Clay Consolidated School District and the Christina School District have identified a "default" plan for the movement of those programs, but in some cases recognize an opportunity for ongoing collaboration to best meet student needs. The items under consideration include community partnerships, early education, long-term lease agreements, Douglass Alternative Education, Sarah Pyle Academy, Delaware Autism Program, Language Immersion Program at Pulaski, Montessori Choice program at Bancroft, Christina Therapeutic Classrooms, and special education and IEP transition.

The following issues have been identified and agreed upon, and can be found on pages 8–10 of the Red Clay Consolidated School District Interim Framework for Planning:

- It is expected that Red Clay Consolidated School District would transition and continue the identified community partnerships.

- The Christina Early Education initiative is consistent with Red Clay Consolidated School District's current plans and it is expected that the district would continue these if funding is available.
- It is expected that Red Clay Consolidated School District would continue to support the long-term lease agreements contingent upon funding.
- Red Clay Consolidated School District would serve students with a need for alternative education in existing district programs; Christina School District may want to continue using the Douglass Alternative Education building until an alternate location is identified.
- Red Clay Consolidated School District would plan to serve its students in need of credit recovery in existing district programs. Christina School District may want to continue the Sarah Pyle Academy program in the existing building or move to an alternate location. Christina School District has also expressed an interest in converting this program to a "consortium model" with seats available to all districts in northern Delaware. Red Clay Consolidated School District will continue to review these options with Christina School District.
- The default for the Delaware Autism Program, because it is a statewide program run by Christina School District, would be for Christina to move those classrooms to buildings that will remain in Christina. Red Clay Consolidated School District will discuss options with Christina School District to determine the best way to meet the needs of students in those classrooms during the transition.
- By default, Pulaski will become a Red Clay Consolidated School District traditional school. Christina School District may consider replicating the Language Immersion Program in a different school. Red Clay Consolidated School District will review this program and determine how it integrates with the Lewis Dual Language program. Christina School District may choose to create a language immersion program at another Christina School District school.
- Red Clay Consolidated School District will review the Montessori program currently offered at Bancroft and determine whether it would be continued there.
- Red Clay Consolidated School District will review Christina's Ther-

apeutic Classroom programs and determine how best to meet the needs of these students.

- A process for IEP review and transition will be developed so that students and parents are clear on services and expectations. Funding through the tuition tax rate will be analyzed for impacts to districts.

Christina School District has also identified primary considerations for serving all students living in poverty. More details can be found on pages 7–8 of Christina School District's Framework for Planning, but the considerations include:

- Community Schools Model and wrap-around services;
- Reduced class sizes;
- Equitable school climate focus and culturally responsive classroom environments;
- Equitable and impactful funding formula;
- Focus on enrichment;
- Renewed focus from local political leadership;
- Behavioral and emotional support;
- Expanded Pre-K opportunities, including full-day preschool for all four-year-olds;
- Programming to address the digital divide; and
- Continuation in developing and supporting Culturally Responsive Positive School Climate.

Students have the right to remain in their existing programs through the completion of those programs. The default will be that the students stay in their current programs, but choice options will also be available to those students. The choices must be made clear to the students affected by redistricting. An increase in the number of Red Clay Consolidated School District students may impact the demand for choice in the district. The Red Clay Consolidated School District framework for planning includes detailed information on the impact of choice on the district.

Action Plan/Designated Responsibilities

Christina and Red Clay Consolidated School Districts have identified sev-

eral action items and which district is responsible for completion. More details can be found in the Christina Framework for Planning and the Red Clay Interim Framework for Planning in Appendices B and C.

The items that are the responsibility of the Commission:

- Evaluate Pre-K opportunities in all schools and create a plan for consideration of consolidation.

The items that are the collaborative responsibility of Christina and Red Clay Consolidated School Districts:

- Maintain agreements in place with community partners and utilize community partners to ease transitions for students and families;
- Coordinate with IEP reviews and processes for students receiving special education services;
- Review long-term lease agreements and use of facility agreements in Christina School District schools in coordination with building plans to be proposed by Red Clay Consolidated School District;
- Consider the options for Sarah Pyle Academy, Delaware Autism Program, and Therapeutic classrooms and specialized support; and
- Develop a choice model for students who do not choose to stay in their current programs.

The items that are the sole responsibility of the Red Clay Consolidated School District:

- Consideration of the impact of an increase in students on the school choice process in Red Clay Consolidated School District.

The items that are the sole responsibility of the Christina School District:

- Consideration for Douglass Alternative, Montessori, and Language Immersion.
- Analyze the capacity of the Christina School District to effectively support holistic and enriching programs at the high school level.

Equitable Adjustments for Educators, Administrators, and Other Personnel

SB 122, the enabling legislation for redistricting stipulates that the redistricting plan must address the implications for educators, administrators, and

other personnel that may lead to equitable adjustments in collective bargaining arrangements. A corresponding expectation is that the implementation of redistricting shall take place with as little disruption as possible to all those who will be impacted, including educators and other personnel. The multi-year process of implementation makes it possible for the Christina and Red Clay Consolidated School District to anticipate the adjustments that will be necessary to allow for equitable and minimally disruptive personnel decisions. The goal should be for the districts to address the vast majority of adjustments before the actual transfer of schools and the initial change in student enrollment in fall 2018. Further, since the change in student enrollment will occur over a number of years, the adjustments for educators, administrators, and other personnel will continue until the process is complete. These factors are the baseline from which the Commission's guiding principles are derived and on which the Commission's action plans are formulated.

The Christina and Red Clay Consolidated School District frameworks for planning included as appendices to this plan present the initial district proposals for addressing reassignment and other adjustments for personnel impacted by redistricting; the Christina School District framework is in Appendix B and the Red Clay Consolidated School District framework is in Appendix C. The Commission expects that, as the process of implementation proceeds, these frameworks must be further developed and pursued in a collaborative manner not only between the districts but also with those who represent the interests of the educators and other personnel impacted. Both districts have confirmed their intentions to do so.

The Commission recognizes that the process of adjustment and prospective reassignment for educators and other personnel must balance the legitimate rights and priorities of the district administrations as well as the educators and other personnel. We have not approached the issue of balance as a matter of choosing sides. Rather, our objective is to ensure that the process results in **positive outcomes for the students** who are served and for those dedicated and qualified educators and staff who serve them. Our intention is that the process will be supported and affirmed as fair, equitable, and effective by all parties.

The guiding principles and proposed actions below are intended to supplement the proposals from the districts and suggest pathways for effective collaborations in achieving equitable and effective outcomes that minimize disruptions.

Guiding Principles

- All staff should be treated fairly and equitably throughout the process.
- Current jobs within both school districts may change as a result of the development of new configurations and program initiatives to better serve the needs of students.
- No qualified employee should be left without employment options because of redistricting.
- All decisions must be made in a manner that is in accord with existing collective bargaining agreements and with any future collective bargaining agreements during the period of transition and implementation.
- All decisions must be fair and equitable as judged by consistency with the prevailing and mutually accepted policies and practices of the school districts as well as collective bargaining agreements.
- To the greatest extent possible, decisions on appointments or reappointments of educators, administrators, and other personnel impacted by redistricting must be taken in a manner that offers options and the opportunity for choice to individuals at the earliest practical time and at appropriate intervals throughout the transition and implementation process. Early options, choices, and planning, can greatly facilitate equitable adjustments for educators, administrators, and other personnel.
- The redistricting process does not suspend any facets of the prevailing and mutually accepted processes and practices for evaluation and assignment of personnel consistent with collective bargaining agreements.
- Red Clay Consolidated School District, Christina School District, Red Clay Education Association (RCEA), Christina Education Association (CEA), Delaware State Education Association (DSEA), and American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) share responsibility to work collaboratively to ensure a transition that puts students first and also recognizes outstanding personnel and their experience and seniority. The Commission is responsible for facilitating this collaboration.

- Staff in the Christina School District schools in the City of Wilmington must be able to maintain focus on serving student needs and avoid paralysis from fear for their continued employment.

Central Issues

- The primary issues are the processes that Red Clay Consolidated School District will use to staff buildings and programs affected by redistricting, the recognition of seniority of transferred staff, the financial impact to the employees and Red Clay Consolidated School District, and the training of new staff in order to ensure consistent delivery of Red Clay Consolidated School District curricula to students.
- Christina School District also will need to develop a process for staff adjustments as a result of prospective changes in the configuration of its remaining buildings and programs and the need to offer current staff serving Wilmington students and schools options for employment throughout the district.
- Because both districts share the goal of ensuring fair and equitable treatment of staff throughout the implementation of redistricting, the process used by the two districts needs to be aligned and mutually reinforcing such that efforts are coordinated and so that qualified educators and other personnel have the maximum possible opportunities for the consideration of options and the exercise of choice consistent with district obligations.

Action Plan/Designated Responsibilities

- Red Clay Consolidated School District, Christina School District, DSEA, CEA, RCEA, and AFSCME should work collaboratively to establish a multi-year process and joint plan for the staffing needs for the Christina schools that will be transferred to Red Clay and for other employment options in both districts for qualified educators and other personnel.
- The process and joint plan must recognize that the staffing needs of the Red Clay Consolidated School District may depend upon a new configuration of schools and new programs. The Red Clay Consolidated School District plan should be completed by the spring of the 2016–2017 school year.

- The process and joint plan must recognize that the staffing needs of the Christina district may depend upon changes in the configuration of schools and new programs as a result of the changes in enrollment due to redistricting. The Christina plan should be completed by the spring of the 2016–2017 school year.
- Options for employment for educators and other personnel should be identified as early as possible after the development of the districts' planned configuration of schools and programs, and no later than the spring of 2017. Impacted Christina School District educators and other personnel should be given the opportunity to indicate their desire to transition to Red Clay Consolidated School District or to remain in the Christina School District. As the process moves forward, the key to equitable, effective, and mutually beneficial outcomes is providing current employees with early choice and with additional options from which to choose. Both districts should seek to accommodate the choice of personnel through planning and interim adjustment well before the change in district boundaries formally takes effect. While employees should be given the maximum opportunity to exercise choice, districts must retain the right to choose the personnel they believe are best able to meet the needs of students.
- By the end of 2016, the districts and representatives of personnel should agree upon a process for addressing cases of all qualified employees that could not be resolved through early choice and planning and subsequent adjustments through the multi-year process of implementation.
- Memorandums of understanding between the districts and the representatives of employees about the overall planning, choice, and decision process should be completed by the end of 2016.
- Both districts should provide professional development opportunities and related support services to employees to enhance their capabilities to assume new responsibilities associated with changes in positions and expectations.

Student Transportation

Guiding Principles

- During transition, districts shall collaborate to ensure seamless transportation possibly requiring modification of rules regarding operating buses outside of district boundaries.
- Students who choose to remain in their existing schools shall have no negative impact in bus transportation; choice transportation for these students must be guaranteed through the transition period.
- Statewide transportation software shall be utilized to ensure smooth transition of routes and upgrade costs shall be shared equitably.
- An analysis of the contractor/district owner mix in the districts involved is necessary and may lead to efficiencies in contract awarding.
- To ensure a smooth transition, the district running a program will provide the transportation. For example, if a student is attending Glasgow, Christina School District will continue to provide transportation. If a student attends a Red Clay Consolidated School District high school, the district will provide the transportation. If Christina continues a program housed in the city (e.g., Douglas) the district would provide transportation to those students.
- Agreement that Christina School District will only be transferring contractor routes.

Central Issues

Some of the central issues surrounding student transportation as defined by the teams in both Red Clay Consolidated and Christina School Districts include the capacity of bus contractors to handle the additional buses needed for the three-tier to two-tier transition schedule, the local cost estimation of additional routes, and coordination of bus contracts between the two districts. More details on bus routes can be found in the Red Clay Framework for Planning in Appendix C.

Christina School District must arrange for all non-special education transportation in the city to be covered by contractors, which minimizes the transition of employees. There are currently 14 special education buses. The districts have identified the necessary considerations in their plans.

Action Plan/Designated Responsibilities

The following action items were identified to be the responsibility of the Red Clay Consolidated School District:

- Identify Red Clay Consolidated School District cost of transporting additional students;
- Determine how Red Clay Consolidated School District will meet transportation needs;
- Address homeless transportation needs;
- Identify cost of additional equipment;
- Determine sources of additional equipment;
- Address storage of additional buses; and
- Identify start and end time for the acquired facilities.

Facilities and Distribution of Capital Assets (Including Technology, Child Nutrition Services, and Curricular Materials)

Guiding Principles

- An analysis of deferred maintenance items for buildings being transferred is critical to ensuring that there is not an inequitable cost placed on any district involved in the project.
- Districts shall collaborate to transfer, extend, or modify long-term contracts with an emphasis on providing continuity of service to stakeholders.
- Equipment provided to students shall remain available to benefit those students regardless of their new district.

Central Issues

Christina and Red Clay Consolidated School Districts have identified facilities, technology, child nutrition services, and curricular materials as the central issues surrounding facilities and distribution of capital assets. The facilities will be analyzed and categorized for the following needs: immediate needs, long-term facility needs, energy efficiency, and programmatic costs.

The costs for each building have been identified and can be found in Part V as well as in each district's framework for planning, in Appendices B and C.

There are several issues facing the Christina School District alone, which includes the relocation of the Christina Central Offices located at the Drew Educational Support Services Center, high school configuration, security equipment, needs assessment, furniture, other equipment, and capacity at suburban elementary schools.

The technology needs include the transfer of student records, disparate district-wide software assets, eRate funding, phone system migration, technology support, 1:1 technology impact, and the data service center. For more details on the specific technology needs see page 18 of Christina School District's Framework for Planning and page 19 of Red Clay Consolidated School District's Interim Framework for Planning.

The child nutrition services issues include the transfer of equipment currently in use in the kitchens, the impact of demographics on district-wide funds, and the transfer of operating balance associated with transferred kitchens.

Action Plan/Designated Responsibilities

Red Clay Consolidated and Christina School Districts in Collaboration

- Develop timeline for turnovers including utilities, security systems, facility use agreements, liability insurance, maintenance agreements;
- Plan for transition of eRate (with DTI);
- Identify equipment that will transition or stay with Christina School District;
- Migrate of hardware and software;
- Migrate of student data (with DOE);
- Account for Data Service Center finance impact;
- Complete inventory of equipment in kitchens and identify if any will remain property of Christina School District;
- Address the impact of transition on CEP to Christina School District and Red Clay Consolidated School District;
- Migrate student data to Red Clay Consolidated School District CNS apps;

- Curriculum teams will identify differences in curriculum materials by subject and grade; and
- Red Clay Consolidated School District Curriculum and Christina School District Human Resources will identify professional development training needs for new Red Clay Consolidated School District staff.

Red Clay Consolidated School District Responsibilities

- Conduct a facilities assessment and plan for construction;
- Identify capital improvement needs related to new programming and facility use;
- Install “immediate” needs;
- Identify cost (if any) to match classroom environments to current Red Clay Consolidated School District classrooms;
- Identify cost of tech support for additional facilities, teachers, and students;
- Provide training on any transitioning systems;
- Identify any CNS systems that must be installed and configured to integrate with Red Clay Consolidated School District; and
- Curriculum team must identify costs associated with procurement of consistent curricular materials, plan and deliver a summer institute to provide necessary professional development for new staff, and transfer of curricular materials that will remain.

Christina School District Responsibilities

- Develop plan for the relocation of Christina Central Offices;
- Develop plan for high school configuration and programs as students living in the City of Wilmington age out;
- Review proposals for addressing instructional concerns in schools with high concentrations of low-income students and plan for expansions, if required; and
- Identify hardware and software inventory.

WEIC Responsibilities

- Develop legal plan for deed work and property transfers; and
- Create a funding plan for construction.

Modification of Governance Responsibilities

Guiding Principles

- The districts impacted by redistricting shall have appropriate representation on their respective school district boards of education.
- Representation will be modified based on the changes of district boundaries and the distribution of resident enrollments.
- Guidance on modifications in governance representation on the school district boards of education will come from the Department of Elections.

Central Issues

The area of Christina School District being proposed to move to Red Clay Consolidated School District encompasses a distinct nominating district. The Department of Elections will need to look at the number of residents in all Red Clay nominating districts and the Christina School District in question and determine how the boundaries should be modified to ensure appropriate representation for all Red Clay residents.

Action Plan/Designated Responsibilities

- Contact the Department of Elections to propose new boundaries based on the number of residents in the Red Clay Consolidated and Christina School Districts.

Engagement of Educators, Staff, Parents, District Personnel, and Community Members throughout the Transition

Guiding Principles

- Engagement of stakeholders is critical to the success of a transition and student success.

- Engagement must be two-way communication.
- Engagement requires regular communication with unions, civic associations, and staff.

Central Issues

It is important that steps are taken to inform stakeholders of the district transition plans through both traditional and non-traditional media in the City of Wilmington. It is important that the districts work together to communicate with current City of Wilmington residents in the Christina School District. This engagement cannot rely on electronic means but must also meet stakeholders “where they are.”

Action Plan/Designated Responsibilities

- Use meetings that are geared toward their audiences: educators and staff at schools, parents and the community at community centers, and meetings geared towards a larger community gatherings at schools.
- Use letters, post cards, and emails to reach out to families and the community about the transition.
- Reach out via traditional and non-traditional media as identified by each district.

Choice Options and Policies

School choice is an important dimension of public education throughout Delaware but especially in New Castle County and particularly in the City of Wilmington. Compared to the rest of the state, there are many more school choices available in northern New Castle County. The public education choice options in Wilmington include the state’s heaviest concentration of charter schools, combined with traditional district options, magnet schools, and a vo-tech district. School choice will continue to operate under current policies after redistricting.

The impact of school choice on redistricting is significant. More than half of students, (approximately 2,500 of a total of about 4,500) living in the Wilmington portion of the Christina School District now exercise choice to attend a school outside of the district; about 1,300 attend charter schools and about 1,200 attend a traditional district school (including 68 who choice to a Red Clay Consolidated School District school) or special purpose district school.

It is expected that these choice options would continue after redistricting and the Red Clay Consolidated School District would then become responsible for the transfer of payments for students who choice out of the district’s new zone within the City of Wilmington (see Appendix C for details).

School choice is a key facet of public education impacting all districts and charter schools in Wilmington. As noted earlier, for example, the majority of Wilmington students living in the Colonial School District exercise choice to non-Colonial School District schools. The growth of charter enrollments has also meant transitions and mobility across charter, magnet, and traditional school options. The already-approved growth in Wilmington charter enrollment over the next five years means that this process of student movement across segments of the public education system will continue in parallel with the implementation of redistricting.

Beyond direct enrollment and fiscal impacts, there are important implications of the exercise of choice for the overall improvement of public education in Wilmington. These implications go beyond the Christina and Red Clay Consolidated School Districts and include all public education options operating in the City of Wilmington. Indeed, more effective fulfillment of the purposes of school choice could represent a significant step forward in transforming the fragmentation of governance into a positive feature that more effectively aligns the variety of school (and program) options with the diversity of student needs. For this reason, the remainder of this section deals with the larger issues of school choice in Wilmington and how it may be pursued in ways that strengthen overall public education.

School choice and charter schools were introduced to the Delaware landscape through legislation in 1995, with the intention “to increase access to educational opportunity for all children throughout the state regardless of where they may live. It is therefore the intent of the General Assembly that this chapter be construed broadly to maximize parental choice in obtaining access to educational opportunities for their children”⁴⁶ and “to improve student learning; encourage the use of different and innovative or proven school environments and teaching and learning methods; provide parents and students with measures of improved school and student performance and greater opportunities in choosing public schools within and outside their school districts; and to provide for a well-educated community.”⁴⁷

The opportunities for choice are greatest for Wilmington students and

⁴⁶ Delaware State Code Title 14, Chapter 4, §401

⁴⁷ Delaware State Code Title 14, Chapter 5, §501

families because of the proximity of a wide range of school options. However, the actual access to these opportunities is also constrained for many low-income, African American and Latino students and those with disabilities. One factor relates to limits on access to some high-performing schools, whether district, magnet, charter, or vocational-technical. A recent complaint filed by the American Civil Liberties Union of Delaware highlights the discrepancy in enrollment of such student populations in high-performing schools.⁴⁸ More generally, many low-income, African American and Latino students and those with disabilities have limited information about choice options and are typically less engaged in the distribution of such information.

Redistricting should be accompanied by enhanced choice options for students and families in all parts of the City of Wilmington. Achieving this, however, requires addressing a number of central issues of particular significance to the equitable exercise of choice.

Central Issues

Transportation: Universal choice provides students the opportunity to apply to any school, but if admitted, transportation options to many schools are limited. Students are expected to be transported to the nearest district bus stop, in most cases. This creates a disincentive for certain communities to explore and exercise the full scope of school choice, effectively limiting choice for certain populations, but not others. Charter schools tend to offer transportation service to broader geographic areas as they choose and can afford.

Information: Parents, particularly those in disadvantaged communities, lack access to information—not just information about available options, but also about the integrity of those options in terms of resources and practices available in schools. Information provided generally focuses on school demographics, assessment, and disciplinary outcomes. This may paint a skewed portrait of school climate and fails to encourage thorough research of school options through a truly educational lens.

Choice Enrollment Process: This process has been streamlined in recent years through a common choice application portal to make school options more accessible. Many students enjoy the growing variety of options and engage successfully in the process of accessing them. Some community members have expressed, however, that this process has remained highly selective and not always transparent. This has led to conflicting views that traditionally

underserved student populations may be at risk of being further underserved, regardless of their special interests.

Support Services: Schools of all kinds struggle to consistently provide the support services necessary to successfully educate the full range of public school student needs. A number of factors may contribute (funding, outcomes measurement) to an environment in which all schools are not prepared to serve all students. This has led to much debate between those who believe this is an appropriate arrangement of educational resources and those who believe this limits choice for high-needs students and compounds stress on district school resources, where such students may be concentrated.

Action Plan/Designated Responsibilities

Through collaboration that helps parents and students recognize and exercise choice options that best match their needs, Wilmington districts and charter schools have an opportunity to address these points of contention in order to address these points of view in order to make the promise of school choice available to all and likely improve the public education landscape. The Commission is committed to supporting districts and charter schools in their efforts to do so.

Some considerations might include:

Enhanced School Options: Districts, prioritizing those serving high-needs students at the lower grade levels, should analyze existing schools for opportunities to implement needed and desired programmatic models and specializations to better meet the needs and demands of their communities as reflected through the current performance gaps and utilization of choice.

Transportation Reform: Districts should analyze their ability to better realize the potential of choice by analyzing and reforming their approaches to student transportation service collaboratively. Districts should seek more efficient and universal models of transportation that would enable more students to take advantage of the full range of school options available to them and to prioritize the needs of students for whom district-provided transportation is a necessity. The Commission recognizes that the majority of transportation funding and policy is dictated at the state level and shall work with stakeholders, districts and DOE to review funding and policies related to transportation.

School Resource Reporting and Outreach: To aid parents in the existing choice process, better information must be provided. This requires the

48 ACLU v. State of Delaware and Red Clay Consolidated School District, 2014, www.aclu.org/legal-document/aclu-challenges-delawares-segregated-charter-schools-complaint?redirect=racial-justice/aclu-challenges-delawares-segregated-charter-schools-complaint

adoption of an improved system to organize available information, such as an Opportunity Dashboard, which reflects resources and programming inputs on the school level as well as outcomes and other conditions. This also requires stronger coordination and support for district, school, and community-based efforts, such as Parent Information Centers, to reach traditionally difficult-to-reach families where they live. The Commission is committed to supporting this outcome.

Choice Equity Standards: Districts and charters should create opportunities to hold their schools to high standards of equitable service for all students. Districts and charters that do not already have such standards should develop them and adopt a process to allow transparency. This would be intended to ensure that all schools are receiving the supports they need to serve all students equitably.

Partnerships: The Commission's overall action agenda for improving student outcomes requires greater collaboration among all parts of Wilmington public education. This should lead to new partnerships among districts, among charters, and between districts and charters. Some of this is already underway. More of it is needed. The Commission believes that redistricting is an occasion to identify and support these new partnerships not only for the districts directly impacted but for all districts and charters operating in the City of Wilmington.



“[M]ore is not merrier—nor is it coherent or effective in delivering results.... No one is accountable for the overall improvement of public education in Wilmington, and the children of Wilmington suffer, particularly low-income students and English language learners.”

JOSEPH PIKA, PH.D.
FORMER PRESIDENT, DELAWARE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

HENRY HARPER, PH.D.
FORMER SUPERINTENDENT, APPOQUINIMINK SCHOOL DISTRICT
Editorial to The News Journal | 2015

Part VIII: Defining and District Boundaries: Current and Proposed Changes

Introduction

Part VIII of the implementation plan defines the current district boundaries for the Brandywine, Christina, Colonial, and Red Clay Consolidated School Districts and the proposed changes that stem from the recommended redistricting in Part III of this plan for confirmation from the Delaware State Board of Education. The first section explains the history of the Delaware school district boundaries. Section two describes the process for determining the current school district boundaries. The next section provides maps and written descriptions of the current school district boundaries for the affected districts. The last section provides maps and changes to the written descriptions of the current school district boundaries.

History of the Delaware School District Boundaries

There have been many changes in Delaware’s school district configurations. Beginning in 1974, Delaware’s educational community consisted of 23 school districts:

- Appoquinimink
- Alfred I. duPont
- Laurel
- Indian River
- Caesar Rodney
- Alexis I. duPont
- Cape Henlopen
- Marshallton-McKean
- De La Warr
- Claymont
- Delmar
- Mount Pleasant
- Stanton
- Conrad
- New Castle-Gunning Bedford
- Newark
- Milford
- Wilmington
- Seaford
- Lake Forest
- Smyrna
- Capital
- Woodbridge

In 1976 and 1978, the Court ordered the desegregation of the original school districts in New Castle County. The Court mandated that the ten suburban school districts and the Wilmington School District be reorganized into four areas operating under a single superintendent. The plan was known as the “9–3 Plan.” The only district in New Castle County not affected by the court order was Appoquinimink. School districts in Kent and Sussex Counties remained unchanged. In 1978, Delaware’s educational community consisted of 13 school districts:

- Appoquinimink
- Laurel
- Caesar Rodney
- Cape Henlopen
- Delmar
- Indian River
- Capital
- Milford
- Seaford
- Smyrna
- Woodbridge
- New Castle County
- Lake Forest

In 1981, Delaware’s educational community consisted of 16 school districts. As a result of legislation passed by the General Assembly, which authorized the Delaware State Board of Education to ensure compliance with the 1978 order, four of these districts in New Castle County were new districts:

- Appoquinimink
- Laurel
- Caesar Rodney
- Colonial: former De La Warr and New Castle-Gunning Bedford districts with sections of the Stanton and Wilmington districts
- Cape Henlopen
- Delmar
- Lake Forest
- Brandywine: Alfred I. duPont, Claymont, and Mount Pleasant districts with a section of the Wilmington district
- Milford
- Seaford
- Smyrna
- Red Clay Consolidated: Alexis I. duPont, Conrad, and Marshallton-McKean districts with sections of the Stanton and Wilmington districts
- Woodbridge
- Indian River
- Capital
- Christina: former Newark district

From the 1960s to 1990, Delaware operated a shared-time vocational school program. The shared-time program offered students the opportunity to acquire technical job skills in addition to the academic core curriculum. Students attended high school in their primary school districts for part of the day, and then attend a vocational-technical schools for the remainder of the day.

In 1990, a decision by the State Board of Education and the General Assembly turned the shared-time vocational technical schools into full-time academic high school programs. Students were offered the opportunity to attend a vocational-technical high school for the entire day, learning both academic and technical skills. This decision brought about the establishment of Delaware’s three vocational-technical (county-based) school districts (New Castle County Vo-Tech, POLYTECH, and Sussex Technical). At this point in time there were 19 school districts in Delaware.

As of the fall of 2015, there are 19 school districts and 27 charter schools serving students in Delaware. The following two sections describe the current school district boundaries in four districts in New Castle County potentially affected by the redistricting process assigned by SB 122: Christina, Red Clay Consolidated, Colonial, and Brandywine School Districts.

Determining Existing District Boundaries

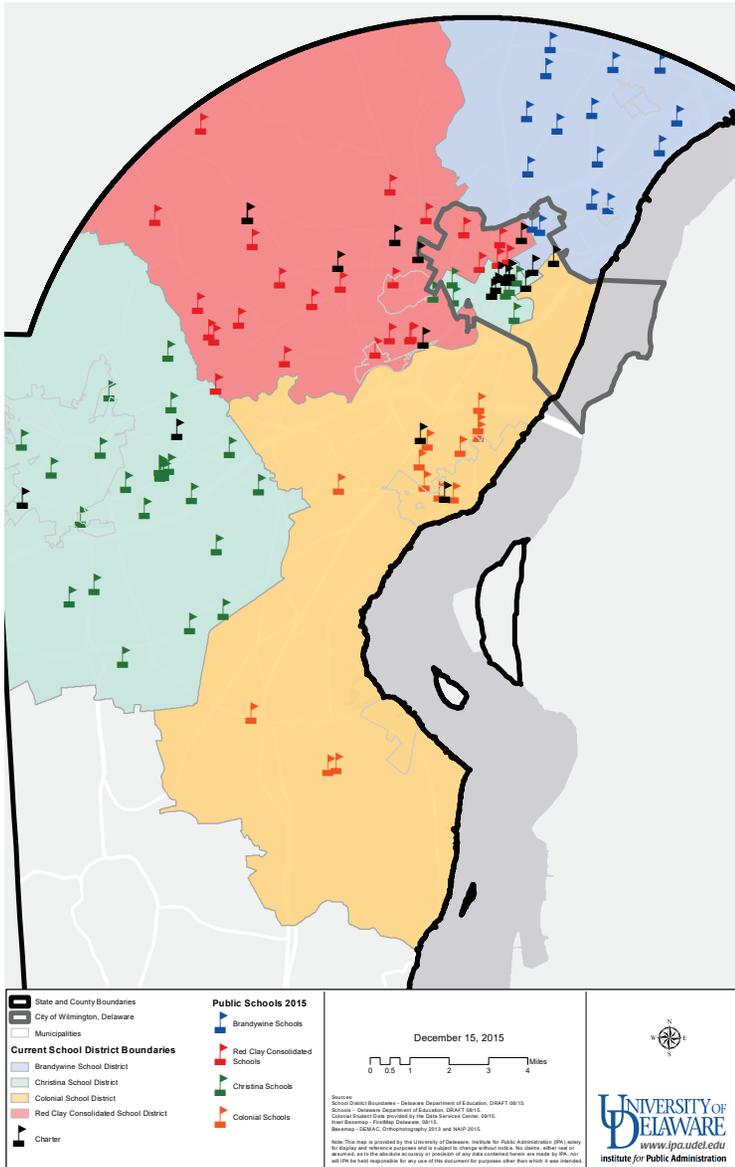
The following actions were taken to determine the existing district boundaries. Written boundaries were taken from the 2004 report Delaware School District Organization & Boundaries: Closing the Gap and sent to the Brandywine, Christina, Colonial, and Red Clay Consolidated School Districts to either confirm or provide the boundaries they currently use. All four districts that were contacted confirmed that the written district boundaries provided were consistent with they were using. It was also determined that each district relies on the Geographic Information Systems (GIS) maps, not the written boundaries, for determining the borders of their districts. The boundaries in this report are based on current boundaries and not intended to address any current disputes.

Current School District Boundaries for Confirmation

The following section provides maps and written district boundaries for the Brandywine, Christina, Colonial, and Red Clay Consolidated School Dis-

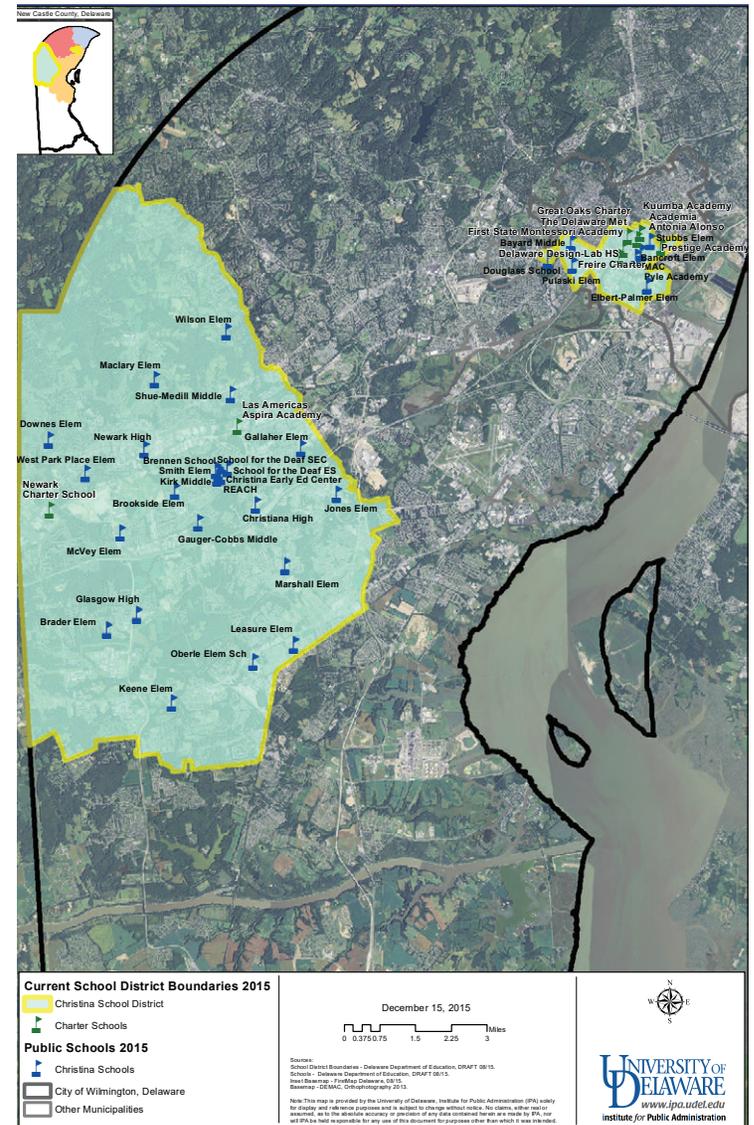
tricts, the four districts affected by Part III of this report. Figure 42 provides a representation of the current boundaries.

Figure 42: Map of 2015 School District Boundaries in New Castle County



Current Christina School District Boundaries

Figure 43: Map of Current Christina School District Boundaries with School Locations



Current Christina School District Written Boundaries

BRANDYWINE – CHRISTINA (EAST) City Boundaries

Beginning at the intersection of Market Street and the Brandywine Creek, southeast following the centerline of the Brandywine Creek to its intersection with Northeast Boulevard (Route. 13);

Then northeast following the centerline of Northeast Boulevard to its intersection with Vandever Avenue.

RED CLAY CONSOLIDATED – CHRISTINA (EAST) City Boundaries

Beginning at the intersection of Market St. and the Brandywine Creek, south following the centerline of the Market St. to its intersection with King St. and 15th St.;

Then west following the centerline of Market St. to its intersection with 14th St.;

Then northwest by a line to the intersection of 14th St. and Orange St.;

Then southwest following the centerline of Orange St. to its intersection with 13th St.;

Then northwest following the centerline of 13th St. to its intersection with Chippey St.;

Then southwest following the centerline of Chippey St. to its intersection with 12th St.;

Then northwest following the centerline of 12th St. to its intersection with Delaware Ave.;

Then northwest following the centerline of Delaware Ave. to its intersection with Adams St.;

Then southwest following the centerline of Adams St. to its intersection with Lancaster Ave.;

Then northwest following the centerline of Lancaster Ave. to its intersection with Union St.;

Then southwest following the centerline of Union St. becoming Kirkwood Highway (Rte. 2) to the City of Wilmington boundary;

Then in a southeasterly direction by the City of Wilmington boundary to a point where it intersects the Amtrak Railroad;

Then northeast following the Amtrak Railroad to its intersection with Beech St.;

Then southeast by a straight line, coincident with the southern boundary of parcel 2604900005, to a point at which said line intersects the centerline of the Christina River;

Then south by the centerline of the Christina River to its intersection with the City of Wilmington boundary.

COLONIAL – CHRISTINA (EAST) City Boundaries

Beginning at the intersection of Northeast Blvd. and Vandever Ave., southeast following the centerline of Vandever Ave. approximately 1000 feet to the Amtrak Railroad;

Then southwest following the centerline of the Amtrak Railroad to the intersection of Church St. and Christina Ave.;

Then southeast following the centerline of Christina Ave. to its intersection with the Christina River;

Then east and south following the centerline of the Christina River to its intersection with the Conrail Railroad;

Then west following the centerline of the Conrail Railroad to its intersection with New Castle Ave.;

Then south following the centerline of New Castle Ave. to its intersection with the City of Wilmington boundary;

Then northwest by the City of Wilmington boundary to its intersection with the Christina River.

RED CLAY CONSOLIDATED – CHRISTINA (WEST) Non-City Boundaries

Beginning at the intersection of White Clay Creek and Choate Creek, northwest following the centerline of White Clay Creek to the southern corner of parcel 0805500002 (YMCA, Western Branch);

Then northwest along the boundary of the aforementioned parcel extended to the centerline of Kirkwood Highway (Rte. 2);

Then southwest following the centerline of Kirkwood Highway approximately 360 ft. to the eastern boundary line of the Peikin Park Subdivision extended;

Then northwest along the boundary of Peikin Park to the northern corner of the Peikin Park Subdivision;

Then southwest by a line approximately 1900 ft. coincident with the northwestern boundary of Peikin Park to a point 200 ft. east of Upper Pike Creek Road and 200 feet north of Route 2; Then north to the northern corner of parcel 0804930026;

Then northwest along the boundary of the Crossan Pointe Subdivision to Route 316;

Then west to the intersection of Route 316 and Upper Pike Creek Rd.;

Then northwest following the centerline of Upper Pike Creek Rd. to its intersection with Paper Mill Rd.;

Then northeast approximately 300 ft. following the centerline of Paper Mill Rd. to its intersection with Pike Creek;

Then northwest following the centerline of Pike Creek to its intersection with Crossan Rd. about 100 ft. west of Stirrup Run;

Then west following the centerline of Crossan Rd. to its intersection with Doe Run Rd.;

Then north following the centerline of Doe Run Rd. to the eastern parcel boundary of the Sunset Valley Subdivision;

Then in a westerly direction along the southern parcel boundary of the Sunset Valley Subdivision to parcel 0802200041;

Then west along the southern boundary of parcel 0802200041 to the Merestone Subdivision;

Then west along the southern boundary of the Merestone Subdivision to the Delaware-Pennsylvania border.

CHRISTINA (WEST) – COLONIAL Non-City Boundaries

Beginning at the intersection of Choate Creek and White Clay Creek, south following the centerline of Choate Creek south and southeast to its intersection with Route 4;

Then southeast by a line to a point at the intersection of the middle branch of Eagle Run Creek and I-95, approximately 3700 feet northeast of Route 273;

Then southeast following the centerline of the middle branch of Eagle Run Creek to its intersection with the Christina River;

Then east following the centerline of the Christina River to the northeast corner of parcel 1002800025;

Then south along the aforementioned parcel line extended to its southeast corner;

Then southwest by a line to the northwest corner of parcel 1002910032;

Then south along the boundary of the aforementioned parcel to the Wedgewood subdivision boundary;

Then east and southeast along the Wedgewood subdivision to the intersection of the northeastern Wedgewood subdivision boundary extended and Winburne Dr.;

Then northeast following the centerline of Winburne Dr. to its intersection with Appleby Rd.;

Then southeast following the centerline of Appleby Rd. to the southern boundary extended of parcel 1002910099;

Then west and southwest along the southern boundary of the aforementioned parcel and the Wedgewood subdivision to the northern corner of parcel 1002800055;

Then southwest along the northern boundary of the aforementioned parcel to its westernmost point;

Then southwest by a line to the centerline of School Bell Rd. (Rd. 344);

Then southeast following the centerline of School Bell Rd. to its intersection with the northern boundary extended of the Whethersfield subdivision;

Then southwest along the boundary of the Whethersfield subdivision to the western corner of the Whethersfield subdivision (Across Route 1);

Then southeast along the boundary of the Whethersfield subdivision (Across Route 1) to a point at which it meets with parcel 1003340033;

Then southwest by a line to a point in the center of Route 40, approximately 450 ft. southwest of its intersection with Route 1;

Then southeast by a line to a point on the western boundary of parcel 1003900046, approximately 740 ft. from the northwestern corner of the aforementioned parcel;

Then south along the boundary of the aforementioned parcel to its southern corner;

Then northeast by a line approximately 1285 ft. to a point on the centerline of the Conrail Railroad;

Then southwest and south following the centerline of the Conrail Railroad (Continue straight at the forks in the railroad) to its intersection with the northeastern boundary line of parcel 1103800275 extended;

Then northwest and southwest along the boundary of parcel 1103800275 to the western corner of the parcel;

Then south by a line to the southeastern boundary of parcel 1103800166;

Then west by a line to the southeastern corner of parcel 1103800242;

Then west by a line to the intersection of Woods Rd. and the northern boundary extended of parcel 1103800052.

CHRISTINA (WEST) – APPOQUINIMINK Non-City Boundaries

Beginning at the intersection of Woods Rd. and the northern boundary extended of parcel 1103800052, west following the boundary of the Mansion Farms subdivision to the southeastern corner of parcel 1103200024;

Then north along the boundary of the aforementioned parcel 1300 ft. to a point approximately 240 feet short of the centerline of Porter Rd.;

Then west to the southeastern corner of parcel 1103200021;

Then south to a point in the middle of the southern boundary of parcel 1103200024;

Then west along the southern boundaries of parcels 1103200024, 1103200019, 1103200018,

and 1103200017 to the southwest corner of parcel 1103200017;

Then north along the boundary of parcel 1103200017 to the intersection of the western boundary extended of parcel 1103200017 and Porter Rd.;

Then west along the centerline of Porter Rd. to its intersection with the southbound lane of Route 301;

Then north by a line to the northeastern corner of parcel 1103200002;

Then west along the boundary of the aforementioned parcel and the Marabou Meadows subdivision (southern boundary of Marabou Meadows 2) to the northwestern corner of the Marabou Meadows subdivision;

Then south along the boundary of the Marabou Meadows subdivision to the southwestern corner of the Marabou Meadows subdivision;

Then west along the boundary of the Farmington Subdivision to the intersection of the northern boundary extended of the Farmington Subdivision and Frazer Rd. (Rd. 391);

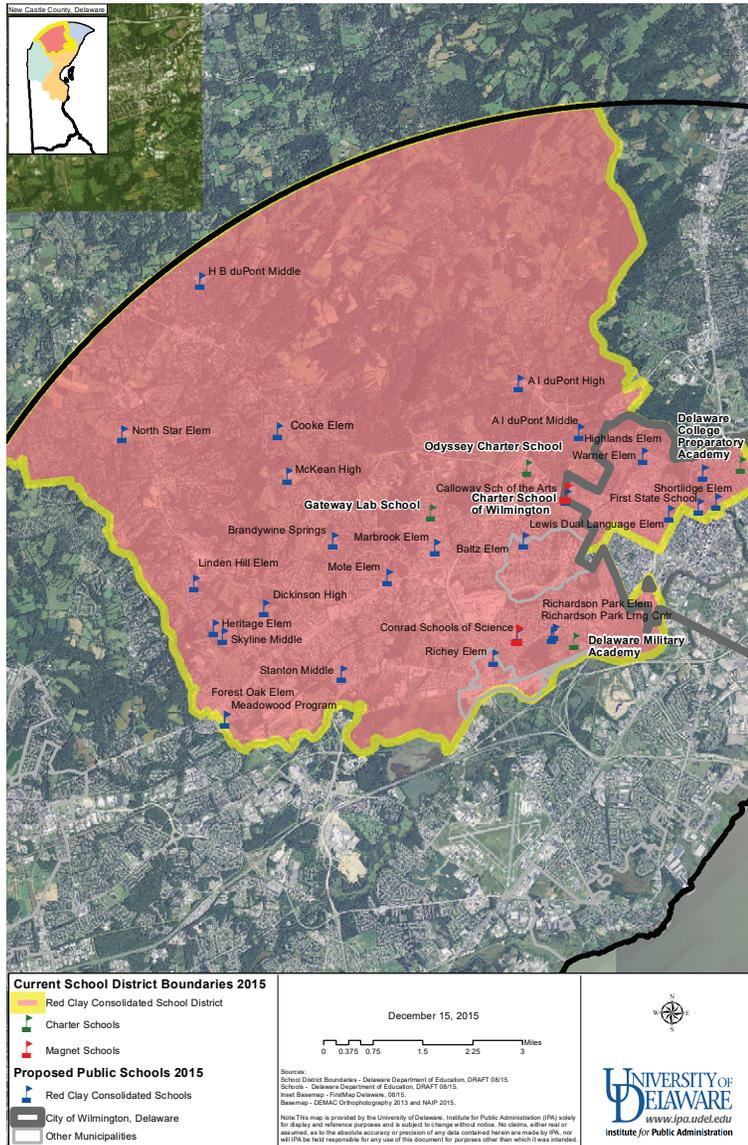
Then north following the centerline of Frazer Rd. to its intersection with Frenchtown Rd.;

Then west following the centerline of Frenchtown Rd. to the Delaware-Maryland Border.

Source: Delaware School District Organization & Boundaries: Closing the Gap. Published March 2004 by the Institute for Public Administration at the University of Delaware.

Current Red Clay Consolidated School District Boundaries

Figure 44: Map of Current Red Clay Consolidated School District Boundaries



Current Red Clay Consolidated School District Written Boundaries

BRANDYWINE – RED CLAY CONSOLIDATED

Beginning at the intersection of the Pennsylvania border and the Brandywine Creek, south following the centerline of the Brandywine Creek to a point approximately 850 feet south of the intersection of Husbands Run and the Brandywine Creek;

Then southeast by a line approximately 1180 feet to a point at the centerline of Powder Mill Rd (Route 141) at a distance of approximately 1060 feet southwest of the intersection of Powder Mill Road and Alapocas Drive;

Then northeast following the centerline of Powder Mill Road to its intersection with Alapocas Drive;

Then southeast following the centerline of Alapocas drive to the southeastern boundary extended of parcel 0612600002 (DuPont Experimental Station);

Then southwest along the parcel boundary to the midpoint of the Brandywine Creek;

Then east following the City of Wilmington boundary to its intersection with the CSX railroad tracks;

Then northeast following the CSX railroad to its intersection with 30th street extended;

Then southeast along 30th Street to its intersection with Market Street;

Then southwest along Market Street to its intersection with the Brandywine Creek.

RED CLAY CONSOLIDATED – CHRISTINA (EAST)

Beginning at the intersection of Market St. and the Brandywine Creek, south following the centerline of the Market St. to its intersection with King St. and 15th St.;

Then west following the centerline of Market St. to its intersection with 14th St.;

Then northwest by a line to the intersection of 14th St. and Orange St.;

Then southwest following the centerline of Orange St. to its intersection with 13th St.;

Then northwest following the centerline of 13th St. to its intersection with Chippey St.;

Then southwest following the centerline of Chippey St. to its intersection with 12th St.;

Then northwest following the centerline of 12th St. to its intersection with Delaware Ave.;

Then northwest following the centerline of Delaware Ave. to its intersection with Adams St.;

Then southwest following the centerline of Adams St. to its intersection with Lancaster Ave.;

Then northwest following the centerline of Lancaster Ave. to its intersection with Union St.;

Then southwest following the centerline of Union St. becoming Kirkwood Highway (Rte. 2) to the City of Wilmington boundary; Then in a southeasterly direction by the City of Wilmington boundary to a point where it intersects the Amtrak Railroad;

Then northeast following the Amtrak Railroad to its intersection with Beech St.;

Then southeast by a straight line, coincident with the southern boundary of parcel 2604900005, to a point at which said line intersects the centerline of the Christina River;

Then south by the centerline of the Christina River to its intersection with the City of Wilmington boundary.

RED CLAY CONSOLIDATED – COLONIAL

Beginning at the intersection of the City of Wilmington boundary and the Christina River, southwest following the centerline of the Christina River to its intersection with White Clay Creek;

Then west following the centerline of White Clay Creek to its intersection with Choate Creek.

RED CLAY CONSOLIDATED – CHRISTINA (WEST)

Beginning at the intersection of White Clay Creek and Choate Creek, northwest following the centerline of White Clay Creek to the southern corner of parcel 0805500002 (YMCA, Western Branch);

Then northwest along the boundary of the aforementioned parcel extended to the centerline of Kirkwood Highway (Rte. 2);

Then southwest following the centerline of Kirkwood Highway approximately 360 ft. to the eastern boundary line of the Peikin Park Subdivision extended;

Then northwest along the boundary of Peikin Park to the northern corner of the Peikin Park Subdivision;

Then southwest by a line approximately 1900 ft. coincident with the northwestern boundary of Peikin Park to a point 200 ft. east of Upper Pike Creek Road and 200 feet north of Route 2; Then north to the northern corner of parcel 0804930026;

Then northwest along the boundary of the Crossan Pointe Subdivision to Route 316;

Then west to the intersection of Route 316 and Upper Pike Creek Rd.;

Then northwest following the centerline of Upper Pike Creek Rd. to its intersection with Paper Mill Rd.;

Then northeast approximately 300 ft. following the centerline of Paper Mill Rd. to its intersection with Pike Creek;

Then northwest following the centerline of Pike Creek to its intersection with Crossan Rd. about 100 ft. west of Stirrup Run;

Then west following the centerline of Crossan Rd. to its intersection with Doe Run Rd.;

Then north following the centerline of Doe Run Rd. to the eastern parcel boundary of the Sunset Valley Subdivision;

Then in a westerly direction along the southern parcel boundary of the Sunset Valley Subdivision to parcel 0802200041;

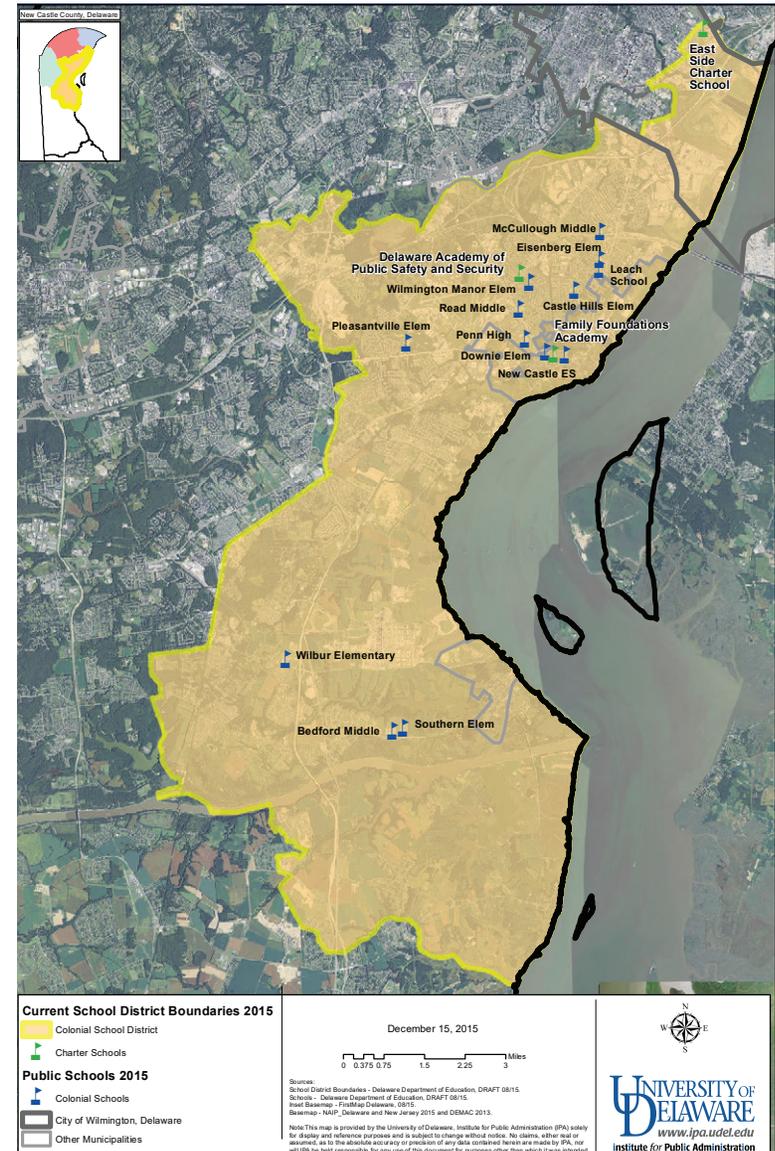
Then west along the southern boundary of parcel 0802200041 to the Merestone Subdivision;

Then west along the southern boundary of the Merestone Subdivision to the Delaware-Pennsylvania border.

Source: Delaware School District Organization & Boundaries: Closing the Gap. Published March 2004 by the Institute for Public Administration at the University of Delaware.

Current Colonial School District Boundaries

Figure 45: Map of Current Colonial School District Boundaries with School Location



Current Colonial School District Written Boundaries

BRANDYWINE – COLONIAL

Beginning at the intersection of Northeast Boulevard and Vandever Avenue, northeast following the centerline of Northeast Boulevard to the City of Wilmington boundary;
Then southeast following the City of Wilmington boundary to the Delaware River.

COLONIAL – CHRISTINA (EAST)

Beginning at the intersection of Northeast Blvd. and Vandever Ave., southeast following the centerline of Vandever Ave. approximately 1000 feet to the Amtrak Railroad;
Then southwest following the centerline of the Amtrak Railroad to the intersection of Church St. and Christina Ave.;
Then southeast following the centerline of Christina Ave. to its intersection with the Christina River;
Then east and south following the centerline of the Christina River to its intersection with the Conrail Railroad;
Then west following the centerline of the Conrail Railroad to its intersection with New Castle Ave.;
Then south following the centerline of New Castle Ave. to its intersection with the City of Wilmington boundary;
Then northwest by the City of Wilmington boundary to its intersection with the Christina River.

RED CLAY CONSOLIDATED – COLONIAL

Beginning at the intersection of the City of Wilmington boundary and the Christina River, southwest following the centerline of the Christina River to its intersection with White Clay Creek;
Then west following the centerline of White Clay Creek to its intersection with Choate Creek.

CHRISTINA (WEST) – COLONIAL

Beginning at the intersection of Choate Creek and White Clay Creek, south following the centerline of Choate Creek south and southeast to its intersection with Route 4;
Then southeast by a line to a point at the intersection of the middle branch of Eagle Run Creek and I-95, approximately 3700 feet northeast of Route 273;
Then southeast following the centerline of the middle branch of Eagle Run Creek to its intersection with the Christina River;
Then east following the centerline of the Christina River to the northeast corner of parcel 1002800025;
Then south along the aforementioned parcel line extended to its southeast corner;
Then southwest by a line to the northwest corner of parcel 1002910032;
Then south along the boundary of the aforementioned parcel to the Wedgewood subdivision boundary;
Then east and southeast along the Wedgewood subdivision to the intersection of the northeastern Wedgewood subdivision boundary extended and Winburne Dr.;

Then northeast following the centerline of Winburne Dr. to its intersection with Appleby Rd.;
Then southeast following the centerline of Appleby Rd. to the southern boundary extended of parcel 1002910099;
Then west and southwest along the southern boundary of the aforementioned parcel and the Wedgewood subdivision to the northern corner of parcel 1002800055;
Then southwest along the northern boundary of the aforementioned parcel to its westernmost point;
Then southwest by a line to the centerline of School Bell Rd. (Rd. 344);
Then southeast following the centerline of School Bell Rd. to its intersection with the northern boundary extended of the Whethersfield subdivision;
Then southwest along the boundary of the Whethersfield subdivision to the western corner of the Whethersfield subdivision (Across Route 1);
Then southeast along the boundary of the Whethersfield subdivision (Across Route 1) to a point at which it meets with parcel 1003340033;
Then southwest by a line to a point in the center of Route 40, approximately 450 ft. southwest of its intersection with Route 1;
Then southeast by a line to a point on the western boundary of parcel 1003900046, approximately 740 ft. from the northwestern corner of the aforementioned parcel;
Then south along the boundary of the aforementioned parcel to its southern corner;
Then northeast by a line approximately 1285 ft. to a point on the centerline of the Conrail Railroad;
Then southwest and south following the centerline of the Conrail Railroad (Continue straight at the forks in the railroad) to its intersection with the northeastern boundary line of parcel 1103800275 extended;
Then northwest and southwest along the boundary of parcel 1103800275 to the western corner of the parcel;
Then south by a line to the southeastern boundary of parcel 1103800166;
Then west by a line to the southeastern corner of parcel 1103800242;
Then west by a line to the intersection of Woods Rd. and the northern boundary extended of parcel 1103800052.

APPOQUINIMINK – COLONIAL

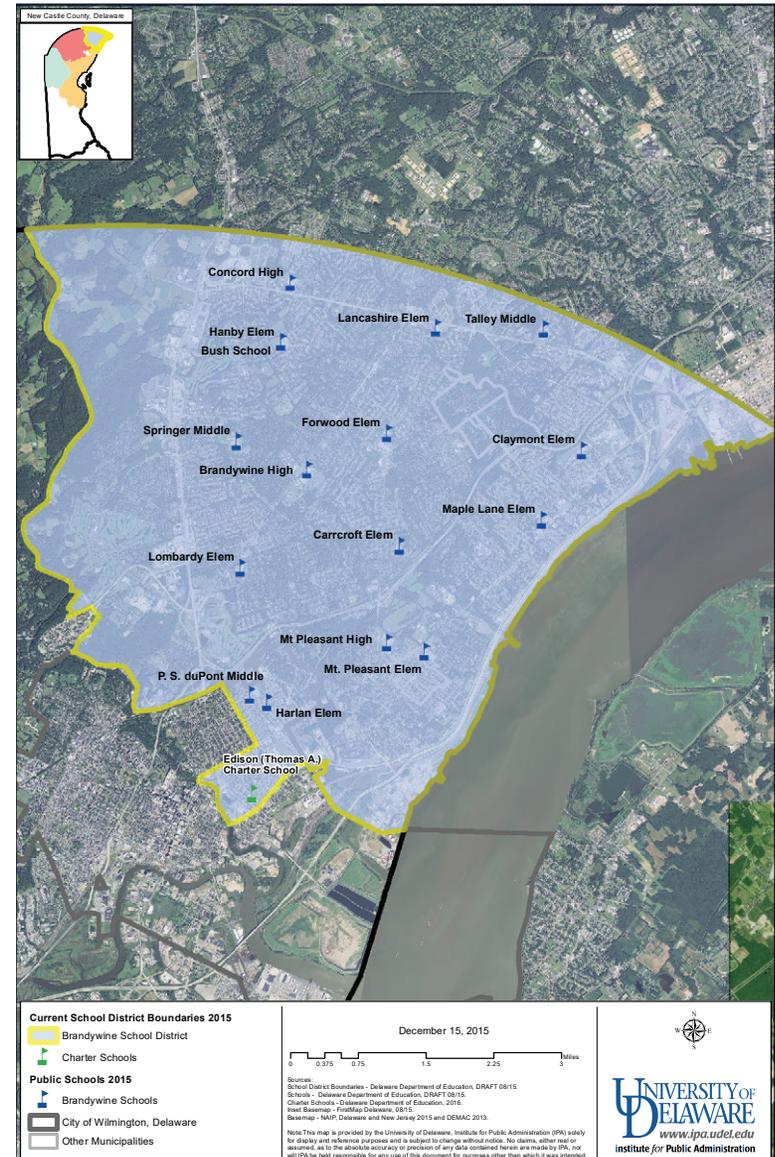
Beginning at the intersection of Woods Rd. and the northern boundary extended of parcel 1103800052, south following the centerline of Woods Rd. to its intersection with Howell School Rd.;
Then south by a line to the intersection of Buck Jersey Rd. and a stream flowing into the northern-most part of Lum's Pond (Approximately 2230 feet south of the intersection of Howell School Rd. and Buck Jersey Rd.);
Then south by the centerline of the previously mentioned stream into Lum's Pond approximately 4200 ft. to another small stream; origin of the stream approximately 300 ft. west of the Conrail Railroad;
Then west by a line, roughly paralleling the slough to its south, approximately 2350 ft. to a point;
Then south by a line to the centerline of the aforementioned slough;

Then east by the centerline of the slough to its eastern shore;
 Then east by a line to the westernmost point of the ox bow;
 Then southeast by the centerline of the ox bow to the southern shore of the ox bow;
 Then south by a line to the centerline of the C&D Canal (approximately 3000 ft. from the Conrail Railroad bridge);
 Then east by the centerline of the C&D Canal to a point where it intersects the extension of a creek that flows through the eastern part of parcel 1300200012;
 Then south following the centerline of the aforementioned creek to its intersection with Lorewood Grove Rd. (Rd. 412);
 Then east by a line to the western corner of the Mount Hope Development;
 Then south along the boundary of the Mount Hope Development to the westernmost corner of parcel 1300330006;
 Then northeast and southeast along the northern boundary of parcel 1300330006 to the eastern corner of this parcel;
 Then southeast by a line to the northwestern corner of parcel 1300340062;
 Then east along the boundary of the aforementioned parcel to the western boundary of parcel 1300340043;
 Then south along the western boundary of parcels 1300340043, 1300340044, 1300340068, 1300340045, 1300340053, and 1300340054 to the southern corner of parcel 1300340054;
 Then southeast by a line to the western corner of parcel 1300340019;
 Then southeast and east along the southern boundary of parcel 1300340019 to the eastern corner of this parcel;
 Then southeast along the eastern boundary of the Mount Hope subdivision to the eastern corner of parcel 1300820007;
 Then southwest along the southeastern boundary of the Mount Hope subdivision approximately 295 ft to a point;
 Then southeast by a line approximately 690 ft. to a point on Scott's Run, approximately 600 ft. south from the northeastern boundary of parcel 1300800026;
 Then southwest by Scott's Run to its intersection with the southwestern boundary of parcel 1300800036;
 Then southeast by a line to the western corner of the Asbury Chase subdivision;
 Then east along the boundary of the Asbury Chase subdivision to the northeastern corner of the Grande View Farms subdivision;
 Then south, southeast, and east along the boundary of the Grande View Farms subdivision to the northeastern corner of parcel 1301320049;
 Then southeast by a line approximately 100 feet to the intersection of Route 13 and Augustine Creek;
 Then east following the centerline of Augustine Creek to its intersection with the Delaware River.

Source: Delaware School District Organization & Boundaries: Closing the Gap. Published March 2004 by the Institute for Public Administration at the University of Delaware.

Current Brandywine School District Boundaries

Figure 46: Map of Current Brandywine School District Boundaries with School Locations



Current Brandywine School District Written Boundaries

BRANDYWINE – RED CLAY CONSOLIDATED

Beginning at the intersection of the Pennsylvania border and the Brandywine Creek, south following the centerline of the Brandywine Creek to a point approximately 850 feet south of the intersection of Husbands Run and the Brandywine Creek;

Then southeast by a line approximately 1180 feet to a point at the centerline of Powder Mill Rd (Route 141) at a distance of approximately 1060 feet southwest of the intersection of Powder Mill Road and Alapocas Drive;

Then northeast following the centerline of Powder Mill Road to its intersection with Alapocas Drive;

Then southeast following the centerline of Alapocas drive to the southeastern boundary extended of parcel 0612600002 (DuPont Experimental Station);

Then southwest along the parcel boundary to the midpoint of the Brandywine Creek;

Then east following the City of Wilmington boundary to its intersection with the CSX railroad tracks;

Then northeast following the CSX railroad to its intersection with 30th street extended;

Then southeast along 30th Street to its intersection with Market Street;

Then southwest along Market Street to its intersection with the Brandywine Creek.

BRANDYWINE – CHRISTINA (EAST)

Beginning at the intersection of Market Street and the Brandywine Creek, southeast following the centerline of the Brandywine Creek to its intersection with Northeast Boulevard (Route 13);

Then northeast following the centerline of Northeast Boulevard to its intersection with Vandever Avenue.

BRANDYWINE – COLONIAL

Beginning at the intersection of Northeast Boulevard and Vandever Avenue, northeast following the centerline of Northeast Boulevard to the City of Wilmington boundary;

Then southeast following the City of Wilmington boundary to the Delaware River.

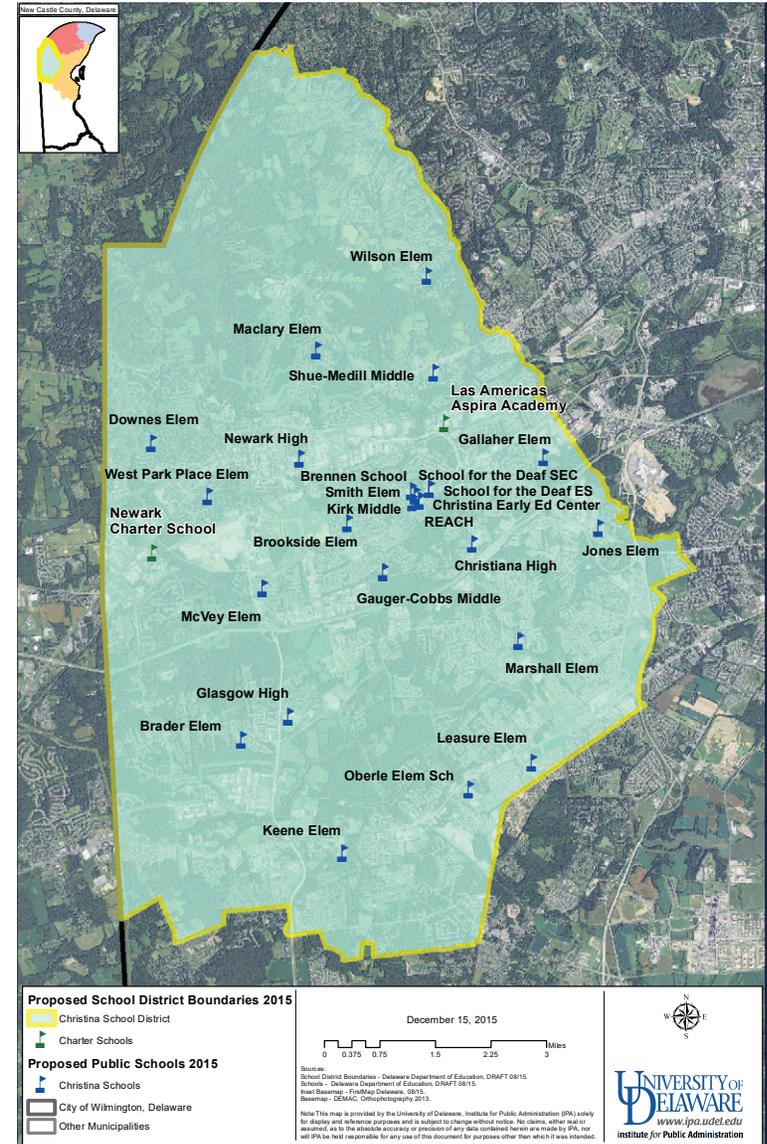
Source: Delaware School District Organization & Boundaries: Closing the Gap. Published March 2004 by the Institute for Public Administration at the University of Delaware.

Proposed New District Boundaries for Confirmation

This section depicts the changes that are being proposed in Part III of this report through maps and written descriptions. Deletions to the written boundaries are denoted with a ~~strickthrough~~. Additions to the written boundaries are denoted in **bold**. There are currently no direct changes proposed to the Brandywine or Colonial School District boundaries; changes in this section reflect the Red Clay Consolidated School District merging with the section of the City of Wilmington served by the Christina School District.

Christina School District: Proposed Changes

Figure 47: Map of Proposed Christina School District Boundaries with School Locations



Proposed Christina School District Written Boundaries

BRANDYWINE – CHRISTINA (EAST) City Boundaries

Beginning at the intersection of Market Street and the Brandywine Creek, southeast following the centerline of the Brandywine Creek to its intersection with Northeast Boulevard (Route 13);

Then northeast following the centerline of Northeast Boulevard to its intersection with Vandever Avenue.

RED CLAY CONSOLIDATED – CHRISTINA (EAST) City Boundaries

Beginning at the intersection of Market St. and the Brandywine Creek, south following the centerline of the Market St. to its intersection with King St. and 15th St.;

Then west following the centerline of Market St. to its intersection with 14th St.;

Then northwest by a line to the intersection of 14th St. and Orange St.;

Then southwest following the centerline of Orange St. to its intersection with 13th St.;

Then northwest following the centerline of 13th St. to its intersection with Chippey St.;

Then southwest following the centerline of Chippey St. to its intersection with 12th St.;

Then northwest following the centerline of 12th St. to its intersection with Delaware Ave.;

Then northwest following the centerline of Delaware Ave. to its intersection with Adams St.;

Then southwest following the centerline of Adams St. to its intersection with Lancaster Ave.;

Then northwest following the centerline of Lancaster Ave. to its intersection with Union St.;

Then southwest following the centerline of Union St. becoming Kirkwood Highway (Rte. 2) to the City of Wilmington boundary.;

Then in a southeasterly direction by the City of Wilmington boundary to a point where it intersects the Amtrak Railroad;

Then northeast following the Amtrak Railroad to its intersection with Beech St.;

Then southeast by a straight line, coincident with the southern boundary of parcel 2604900005, to a point at which said line intersects the centerline of the Christina River;

Then south by the centerline of the Christina River to its intersection with the City of Wilmington boundary.

COLONIAL – CHRISTINA (EAST) City Boundaries

Beginning at the intersection of Northeast Blvd. and Vandever Ave., southeast following the centerline of Vandever Ave. approximately 1000 feet to the Amtrak Railroad;

Then southwest following the centerline of the Amtrak Railroad to the intersection of Church St. and Christina Ave.;

Then southeast following the centerline of Christina Ave. to its intersection with the Christina River;

Then east and south following the centerline of the Christina River to its intersection with the Conrail Railroad;

Then west following the centerline of the Conrail Railroad to its intersection with New Castle Ave.;

Then south following the centerline of New Castle Ave. to its intersection with the City of Wilmington boundary;

Then northwest by the City of Wilmington boundary to its intersection with the Christina River.

RED CLAY CONSOLIDATED – CHRISTINA (WEST) Non-City Boundaries

Beginning at the intersection of White Clay Creek and Choate Creek, northwest following the centerline of White Clay Creek to the southern corner of parcel 0805500002 (YMCA, Western Branch);

Then northwest along the boundary of the aforementioned parcel extended to the centerline of Kirkwood Highway (Rte. 2);

Then southwest following the centerline of Kirkwood Highway approximately 360 ft. to the eastern boundary line of the Peikin Park Subdivision extended;

Then northwest along the boundary of Peikin Park to the northern corner of the Peikin Park Subdivision;

Then southwest by a line approximately 1900 ft. coincident with the northwestern boundary of Peikin Park to a point 200 ft. east of Upper Pike Creek Road and 200 feet north of Route 2; Then north to the northern corner of parcel 0804930026;

Then northwest along the boundary of the Crossan Pointe Subdivision to Route 316;

Then west to the intersection of Route 316 and Upper Pike Creek Rd.; Then northwest following the centerline of Upper Pike Creek Rd. to its intersection with Paper Mill Rd.;

Then northeast approximately 300 ft. following the centerline of Paper Mill Rd. to its intersection with Pike Creek;

Then northwest following the centerline of Pike Creek to its intersection with Crossan Rd. about 100 ft. west of Stirrup Run;

Then west following the centerline of Crossan Rd. to its intersection with Doe Run Rd.;

Then north following the centerline of Doe Run Rd. to the eastern parcel boundary of the Sunset Valley Subdivision;

Then in a westerly direction along the southern parcel boundary of the Sunset Valley Subdivision to parcel 0802200041;

Then west along the southern boundary of parcel 0802200041 to the Merestone Subdivision;

Then west along the southern boundary of the Merestone Subdivision to the Delaware-Pennsylvania border.

CHRISTINA (WEST) – COLONIAL Non-City Boundaries

Beginning at the intersection of Choate Creek and White Clay Creek, south following the centerline of Choate Creek south and southeast to its intersection with Route 4;

Then southeast by a line to a point at the intersection of the middle branch of Eagle Run Creek and I-95, approximately 3700 feet northeast of Route 273;

Then southeast following the centerline of the middle branch of Eagle Run Creek to its intersection with the Christina River;

Then east following the centerline of the Christina River to the northeast corner of parcel 1002800025;

Then south along the aforementioned parcel line extended to its southeast corner;

Then southwest by a line to the northwest corner of parcel 1002910032;

Then south along the boundary of the aforementioned parcel to the Wedgewood subdivision

boundary;

Then east and southeast along the Wedgewood subdivision to the intersection of the northeastern Wedgewood subdivision boundary extended and Winburne Dr.;

Then northeast following the centerline of Winburne Dr. to its intersection with Appleby Rd.;

Then southeast following the centerline of Appleby Rd. to the southern boundary extended of parcel 1002910099;

Then west and southwest along the southern boundary of the aforementioned parcel and the Wedgewood subdivision to the northern corner of parcel 1002800055;

Then southwest along the northern boundary of the aforementioned parcel to its westernmost point;

Then southwest by a line to the centerline of School Bell Rd. (Rd. 344);

Then southeast following the centerline of School Bell Rd. to its intersection with the northern boundary extended of the Whethersfield subdivision;

Then southwest along the boundary of the Whethersfield subdivision to the western corner of the Whethersfield subdivision (Across Route 1);

Then southeast along the boundary of the Whethersfield subdivision (Across Route 1) to a point at which it meets with parcel 1003340033;

Then southwest by a line to a point in the center of Route 40, approximately 450 ft. southwest of its intersection with Route 1;

Then southeast by a line to a point on the western boundary of parcel 1003900046, approximately 740 ft. from the northwestern corner of the aforementioned parcel;

Then south along the boundary of the aforementioned parcel to its southern corner;

Then northeast by a line approximately 1285 ft. to a point on the centerline of the Conrail Railroad;

Then southwest and south following the centerline of the Conrail Railroad (Continue straight at the forks in the railroad) to its intersection with the northeastern boundary line of parcel 1103800275 extended;

Then northwest and southwest along the boundary of parcel 1103800275 to the western corner of the parcel;

Then south by a line to the southeastern boundary of parcel 1103800166;

Then west by a line to the southeastern corner of parcel 1103800242;

Then west by a line to the intersection of Woods Rd. and the northern boundary extended of parcel 1103800052.

CHRISTINA (WEST) – APPOQUINIMINK Non-City Boundaries

Beginning at the intersection of Woods Rd. and the northern boundary extended of parcel 1103800052, west following the boundary of the Mansion Farms subdivision to the southeastern corner of parcel 1103200024;

Then north along the boundary of the aforementioned parcel 1300 ft. to a point approximately 240 feet short of the centerline of Porter Rd.;

Then west to the southeastern corner of parcel 1103200021;

Then south to a point in the middle of the southern boundary of parcel 1103200024;

Then west along the southern boundaries of parcels 1103200024, 1103200019, 1103200018, and 1103200017 to the southwest corner of parcel 1103200017;

Then north along the boundary of parcel 1103200017 to the intersection of the western boundary extended of parcel 1103200017 and Porter Rd.;

Then west along the centerline of Porter Rd. to its intersection with the southbound lane of Route 301;

Then north by a line to the northeastern corner of parcel 1103200002;

Then west along the boundary of the aforementioned parcel and the Marabou Meadows subdivision (southern boundary of Marabou Meadows 2) to the northwestern corner of the Marabou Meadows subdivision;

Then south along the boundary of the Marabou Meadows subdivision to the southwestern corner of the Marabou Meadows subdivision;

Then west along the boundary of the Farmington Subdivision to the intersection of the northern boundary extended of the Farmington Subdivision and Frazer Rd. (Rd. 391);

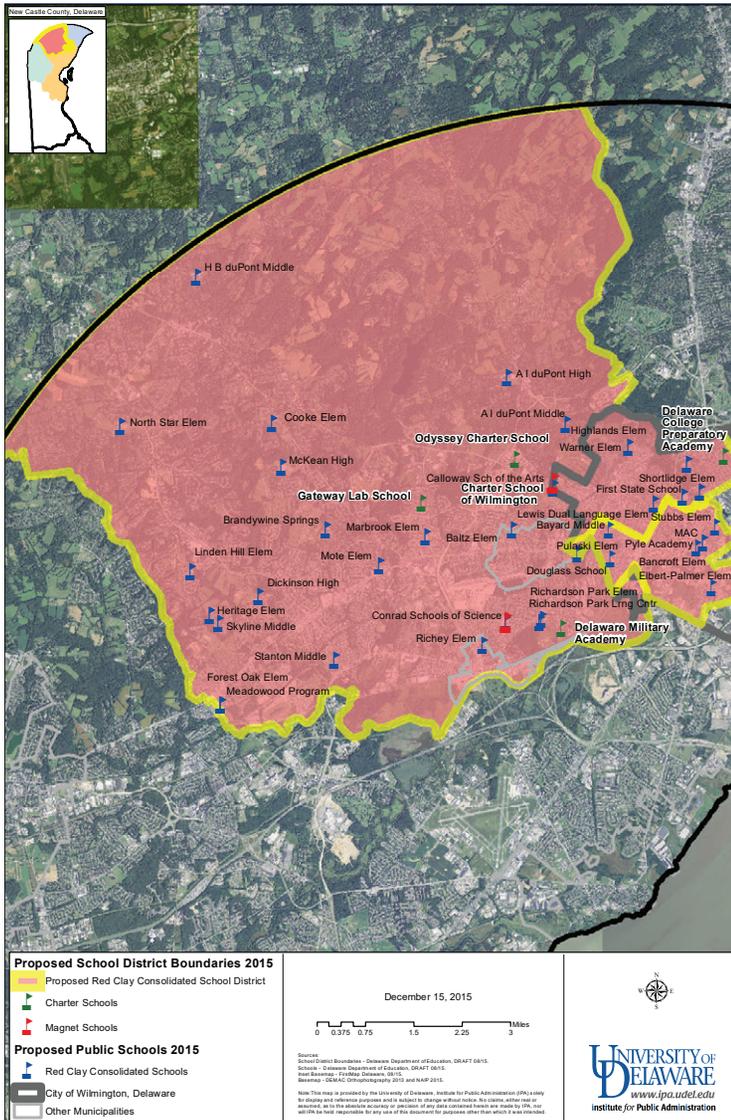
Then north following the centerline of Frazer Rd. to its intersection with Frenchtown Rd.;

Then west following the centerline of Frenchtown Rd. to the Delaware-Maryland Border.

Source: Delaware School District Organization & Boundaries: Closing the Gap. Published March 2004 by the Institute for Public Administration at the University of Delaware.

Proposed Red Clay Consolidated School District Boundary Changes

Figure 48: Map of Proposed Red Clay Consolidated School District Boundaries with School Locations



Proposed Red Clay Consolidated School District Written Boundaries

BRANDYWINE – RED CLAY CONSOLIDATED

Beginning at the intersection of the Pennsylvania border and the Brandywine Creek, south following the centerline of the Brandywine Creek to a point approximately 850 feet south of the intersection of Husbands Run and the Brandywine Creek;

Then southeast by a line approximately 1180 feet to a point at the centerline of Powder Mill Rd (Route 141) at a distance of approximately 1060 feet southwest of the intersection of Powder Mill Road and Alapocas Drive;

Then northeast following the centerline of Powder Mill Road to its intersection with Alapocas Drive;

Then southeast following the centerline of Alapocas drive to the southeastern boundary extended of parcel 061260002 (DuPont Experimental Station);

Then southwest along the parcel boundary to the midpoint of the Brandywine Creek;

Then east following the City of Wilmington boundary to its intersection with the CSX railroad tracks;

Then northeast following the CSX railroad to its intersection with 30th street extended;

Then southeast along 30th Street to its intersection with Market Street;

Then southwest along Market Street to its intersection with the Brandywine Creek.

Beginning at the intersection of Market Street and the Brandywine Creek, southeast following the centerline of the Brandywine Creek to its intersection with Northeast Boulevard (Route. 13);

Then northeast following the centerline of Northeast Boulevard to its intersection with Vandever Avenue.

RED CLAY CONSOLIDATED – CHRISTINA (EAST)

Beginning at the intersection of Market St. and the Brandywine Creek, south following the centerline of the Market St. to its intersection with King St. and 15th St.;

Then west following the centerline of Market St. to its intersection with 14th St.;

Then northwest by a line to the intersection of 14th St. and Orange St.;

Then southwest following the centerline of Orange St. to its intersection with 13th St.;

Then northwest following the centerline of 13th St. to its intersection with Chippey St.;

Then southwest following the centerline of Chippey St. to its intersection with 12th St.;

Then northwest following the centerline of 12th St. to its intersection with Delaware Ave.;

Then northwest following the centerline of Delaware Ave. to its intersection with Adams St.;

Then southwest following the centerline of Adams St. to its intersection with Lancaster Ave.;

Then northwest following the centerline of Lancaster Ave. to its intersection with Union St.;

Then southwest following the centerline of Union St. becoming Kirkwood Highway (Rte. 2) to the City of Wilmington boundary; Then in a southeasterly direction by the City of Wilmington boundary to a point where it intersects the Amtrak Railroad;

Then northeast following the Amtrak Railroad to its intersection with Beech St.;

Then southeast by a straight line, coincident with the southern boundary of parcel 2604900005, to a point at which said line intersects the centerline of the Christina River;

Then south by the centerline of the Christina River to its intersection with the City of Wilmington boundary.

RED CLAY CONSOLIDATED – COLONIAL

Beginning at the intersection of Northeast Blvd. and Vandever Ave., southeast following the centerline of Vandever Ave. approximately 1000 feet to the Amtrak Railroad;

Then southwest following the centerline of the Amtrak Railroad to the intersection of Church St. and Christina Ave.;

Then southeast following the centerline of Christina Ave. to its intersection with the Christina River;

Then east and south following the centerline of the Christina River to its intersection with the Conrail Railroad;

Then west following the centerline of the Conrail Railroad to its intersection with New Castle Ave.;

Then south following the centerline of New Castle Ave. to its intersection with the City of Wilmington boundary;

Then northwest by the City of Wilmington boundary to its intersection with the Christina River.

Beginning at the intersection of the City of Wilmington boundary and the Christina River, southwest following the centerline of the Christina River to its intersection with White Clay Creek;

Then west following the centerline of White Clay Creek to its intersection with Choate Creek.

RED CLAY CONSOLIDATED – CHRISTINA (WEST)

Beginning at the intersection of White Clay Creek and Choate Creek, northwest following the centerline of White Clay Creek to the southern corner of parcel 0805500002 (YMCA, Western Branch);

Then northwest along the boundary of the aforementioned parcel extended to the centerline of Kirkwood Highway (Rte. 2);

Then southwest following the centerline of Kirkwood Highway approximately 360 ft. to the eastern boundary line of the Peikin Park Subdivision extended;

Then northwest along the boundary of Peikin Park to the northern corner of the Peikin Park Subdivision;

Then southwest by a line approximately 1900 ft. coincident with the northwestern boundary of Peikin Park to a point 200 ft. east of Upper Pike Creek Road and 200 feet north of Route 2;

Then north to the northern corner of parcel 0804930026;

Then northwest along the boundary of the Crossan Pointe Subdivision to Route 316;

Then west to the intersection of Route 316 and Upper Pike Creek Rd.;

Then northwest following the centerline of Upper Pike Creek Rd. to its intersection with Paper Mill Rd.;

Then northeast approximately 300 ft. following the centerline of Paper Mill Rd. to its intersection with Pike Creek;

Then northwest following the centerline of Pike Creek to its intersection with Crossan Rd. about 100 ft. west of Stirrup Run;

Then west following the centerline of Crossan Rd. to its intersection with Doe Run Rd.;

Then north following the centerline of Doe Run Rd. to the eastern parcel boundary of the Sunset Valley Subdivision;

Then in a westerly direction along the southern parcel boundary of the Sunset Valley Subdivision to parcel 0802200041;

Then west along the southern boundary of parcel 0802200041 to the Merestone Subdivision;

Then west along the southern boundary of the Merestone Subdivision to the Delaware-Pennsylvania border.

Proposed Colonial School District Boundary Changes

Proposed Colonial School District Written Boundaries

The following changes reflect the Red Clay Consolidated School District merging with the City of Wilmington section of Christina.

BRANDYWINE – COLONIAL

Beginning at the intersection of Northeast Boulevard and Vandever Avenue, northeast following the centerline of Northeast Boulevard to the City of Wilmington boundary;

Then southeast following the City of Wilmington boundary to the Delaware River.

~~**COLONIAL – CHRISTINA (EAST)**~~

COLONIAL – RED CLAY CONSOLIDATED

Beginning at the intersection of Northeast Blvd. and Vandever Ave., southeast following the centerline of Vandever Ave. approximately 1000 feet to the Amtrak Railroad;

Then southwest following the centerline of the Amtrak Railroad to the intersection of Church St. and Christina Ave.;

Then southeast following the centerline of Christina Ave. to its intersection with the Christina River;

Then east and south following the centerline of the Christina River to its intersection with the Conrail Railroad;

Then west following the centerline of the Conrail Railroad to its intersection with New Castle Ave.;

Then south following the centerline of New Castle Ave. to its intersection with the City of Wilmington boundary;

Then northwest by the City of Wilmington boundary to its intersection with the Christina River.

Beginning at the intersection of the City of Wilmington boundary and the Christina River, southwest following the centerline of the Christina River to its intersection with White Clay Creek;

Then west following the centerline of White Clay Creek to its intersection with Choate Creek.

CHRISTINA (WEST) – COLONIAL

Beginning at the intersection of Choate Creek and White Clay Creek, south following the centerline of Choate Creek south and southeast to its intersection with Route 4;

Then southeast by a line to a point at the intersection of the middle branch of Eagle Run Creek and I-95, approximately 3700 feet northeast of Route 273;

Then southeast following the centerline of the middle branch of Eagle Run Creek to its intersection with the Christina River;

Then east following the centerline of the Christina River to the northeast corner of parcel 1002800025;

Then south along the aforementioned parcel line extended to its southeast corner;

Then southwest by a line to the northwest corner of parcel 1002910032;

Then south along the boundary of the aforementioned parcel to the Wedgewood subdivision boundary;

Then east and southeast along the Wedgewood subdivision to the intersection of the northeastern Wedgewood subdivision boundary extended and Winburne Dr.;

Then northeast following the centerline of Winburne Dr. to its intersection with Appleby Rd.;

Then southeast following the centerline of Appleby Rd. to the southern boundary extended of parcel 1002910099;

Then west and southwest along the southern boundary of the aforementioned parcel and the Wedgewood subdivision to the northern corner of parcel 1002800055;

Then southwest along the northern boundary of the aforementioned parcel to its westernmost point;

Then southwest by a line to the centerline of School Bell Rd. (Rd. 344);

Then southeast following the centerline of School Bell Rd. to its intersection with the northern boundary extended of the Whethersfield subdivision;

Then southwest along the boundary of the Whethersfield subdivision to the western corner of the Whethersfield subdivision (Across Route 1);

Then southeast along the boundary of the Whethersfield subdivision (Across Route 1) to a point at which it meets with parcel 1003340033;

Then southwest by a line to a point in the center of Route 40, approximately 450 ft. southwest of it intersection with Route 1;

Then southeast by a line to a point on the western boundary of parcel 1003900046, approximately 740 ft. from the northwestern corner of the aforementioned parcel;

Then south along the boundary of the aforementioned parcel to its southern corner;

Then northeast by a line approximately 1285 ft. to a point on the centerline of the Conrail Railroad;

Then southwest and south following the centerline of the Conrail Railroad (Continue straight at the forks in the railroad) to its intersection with the northeastern boundary line of parcel 1103800275 extended;

Then northwest and southwest along the boundary of parcel 1103800275 to the western corner of the parcel;

Then south by a line to the southeastern boundary of parcel 1103800166;

Then west by a line to the southeastern corner of parcel 1103800242;

Then west by a line to the intersection of Woods Rd. and the northern boundary extended of parcel 1103800052.

APPOQUINIMINK – COLONIAL

Beginning at the intersection of Woods Rd. and the northern boundary extended of parcel 1103800052, south following the centerline of Woods Rd. to its intersection with Howell School Rd.;

Then south by a line to the intersection of Buck Jersey Rd. and a stream flowing into the northern-most part of Lum's Pond (Approximately 2230 feet south of the intersection of Howell School Rd. and Buck Jersey Rd.);

The south by the centerline of the previously mentioned stream into Lum's Pond approximately 4200 ft. to another small stream; origin of the stream approximately 300 ft. west of the Conrail Railroad;

Then west by a line, roughly paralleling the slough to its south, approximately 2350 ft. to a point;

Then south by a line to the centerline of the aforementioned slough;

Then east by the centerline of the slough to its eastern shore;

Then east by a line to the westernmost point of the ox bow;

Then southeast by the centerline of the ox bow to the southern shore of the ox bow;

Then south by a line to the centerline of the C&D Canal (approximately 3000 ft. from the Conrail Railroad bridge);

Then east by the centerline of the C&D Canal to a point where it intersects the extension of a creek that flows through the eastern part of parcel 1300200012;

Then south following the centerline of the aforementioned creek to its intersection with Lorewood Grove Rd. (Rd. 412);

Then east by a line to the western corner of the Mount Hope Development;

Then south along the boundary of the Mount Hope Development to the westernmost corner of parcel 1300330006;

Then northeast and southeast along the northern boundary of parcel 1300330006 to the eastern corner of this parcel;

Then southeast by a line to the northwestern corner of parcel 1300340062;

Then east along the boundary of the aforementioned parcel to the western boundary of parcel 1300340043;

Then south along the western boundary of parcels 1300340043, 1300340044, 1300340068, 1300340045, 1300340053, and 1300340054 to the southern corner of parcel 1300340054;

Then southeast by a line to the western corner of parcel 1300340019;

Then southeast and east along the southern boundary of parcel 1300340019 to the eastern corner of this parcel;

Then southeast along the eastern boundary of the Mount Hope subdivision to the eastern corner of parcel 1300820007;

Then southwest along the southeastern boundary of the Mount Hope subdivision approximately 295 ft to a point;

Then southeast by a line approximately 690 ft. to a point on Scott's Run, approximately 600 ft. south from the northeastern boundary of parcel 1300800026;

Then southwest by Scott's Run to its intersection with the southwestern boundary of parcel 1300800036;

Then southeast by a line to the western corner of the Asbury Chase subdivision;

Then east along the boundary of the Asbury Chase subdivision to the northeastern corner of the Grande View Farms subdivision;

Then south, southeast, and east along the boundary of the Grande View Farms subdivision to the northeastern corner of parcel 1301320049;

Then southeast by a line approximately 100 feet to the intersection of Route 13 and Augustine Creek;

Then east following the centerline of Augustine Creek to its intersection with the Delaware River.

Proposed Brandywine School District Boundary Changes

There are no direct changes to the Brandywine School District Boundaries except for the changes to reflect the Red Clay Consolidated School District merging with the City of Wilmington section of Christina.

Proposed Brandywine School District Written Boundaries

BRANDYWINE – RED CLAY CONSOLIDATED

Beginning at the intersection of the Pennsylvania border and the Brandywine Creek, south following the centerline of the Brandywine Creek to a point approximately 850 feet south of the intersection of Husbands Run and the Brandywine Creek;

Then southeast by a line approximately 1180 feet to a point at the centerline of Powder Mill Rd (Route 141) at a distance of approximately 1060 feet southwest of the intersection of Powder Mill Road and Alapocas Drive;

Then northeast following the centerline of Powder Mill Road to its intersection with Alapocas Drive;

Then southeast following the centerline of Alapocas drive to the southeastern boundary extended of parcel 0612600002 (DuPont Experimental Station);

Then southwest along the parcel boundary to the midpoint of the Brandywine Creek;

Then east following the City of Wilmington boundary to its intersection with the CSX railroad tracks;

Then northeast following the CSX railroad to its intersection with 30th street extended;

Then southeast along 30th Street to its intersection with Market Street;

Then southwest along Market Street to its intersection with the Brandywine Creek.

Beginning at the intersection of Market Street and the Brandywine Creek, southeast following the centerline of the Brandywine Creek to its intersection with Northeast Boulevard (Route. 13);

Then northeast following the centerline of Northeast Boulevard to its intersection with Vandever Avenue.

BRANDYWINE – CHRISTINA (EAST)

BRANDYWINE – COLONIAL

Beginning at the intersection of Northeast Boulevard and Vandever Avenue, northeast following the centerline of Northeast Boulevard to the City of Wilmington boundary;

Then southeast following the City of Wilmington boundary to the Delaware River.

Source: Delaware School District Organization & Boundaries: Closing the Gap. Published March 2004 by the Institute for Public Administration at the University of Delaware.



“Too many city students leave school unprepared to live a lifetime of success in terms of both core academic knowledge and the skills and attributes to go beyond academics.”

VISION COALITION OF DELAWARE

Part IX: Milestones and Measures of Success

The Commission will submit to the State Board an annual evaluation of progress in achieving milestones and in improving success for City of Wilmington students. This evaluation also will be part of the annual report that the Commission is mandated to provide to the Governor and the General Assembly. Pending approval of the redistricting plan, the first evaluation will be issued in December 2016.

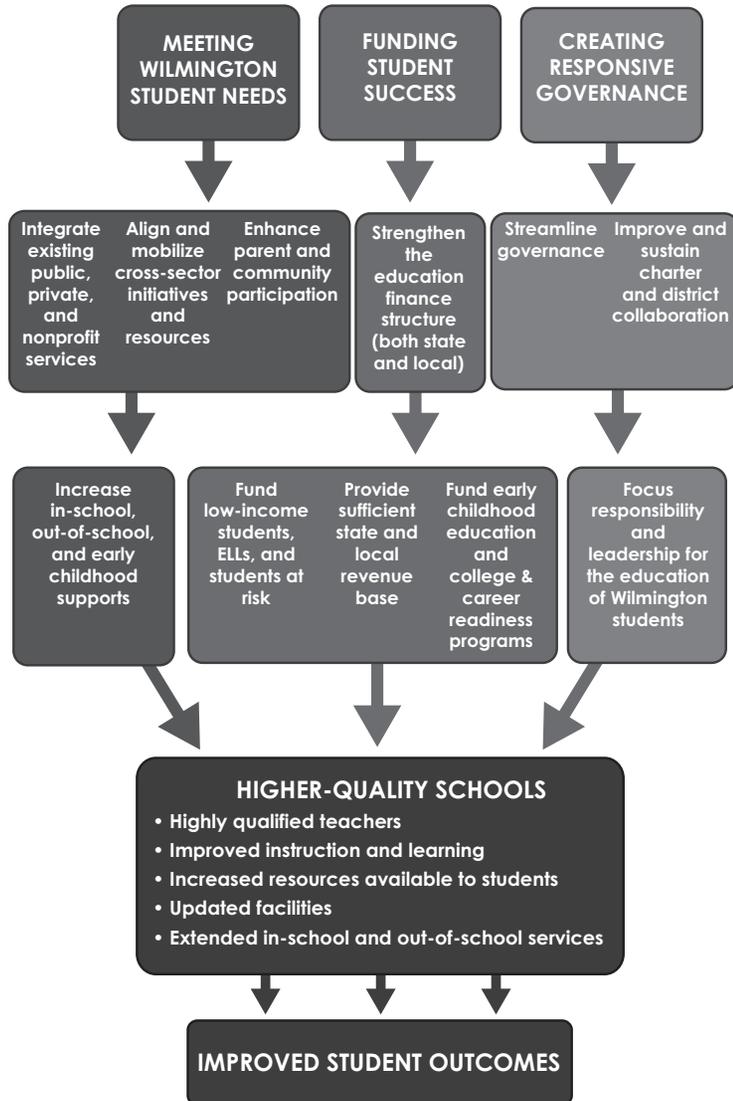
The evaluation of progress will address all facets of the Commission’s action agenda for improving City of Wilmington student outcomes as described in Part I and as depicted in Figure 2. The evaluation will report on milestones for each of the three action streams: creating responsive governance, funding student success, and meeting Wilmington student needs. It also will assess how effectively these streams of action converge and document the success of these actions in creating higher-quality schools and improved student outcomes.

This section of the Commission Plan describes the initial milestones and measures of success to be used for evaluating progress. The Commission or the State Board may add additional dimensions as the process moves forward. The overriding measure of success is and must remain improved student outcomes.

As described in Part II, research has documented that improving educational outcomes depends upon strengthening the leadership roles of districts and the capacity and performance of schools in ways that deliver improved teaching and learning. It also includes community, home, and family supports that reinforce what takes place in the classroom. A more coherent and responsive district governance structure for City of Wilmington schools will enable improvements in citywide student outcomes. However, that alone will not be enough to achieve continuous improvement in student learning. To make quality education available to all students requires actions that go far beyond an alteration of boundaries among traditional school districts. Most of all, the change in boundaries must be accompanied by a **new vision**, backed by **common commitment**, to strengthening public education in the City of Wilmington and northern New Castle County—and, by extension, all of Delaware. That vision must focus on all facets of the system, including how vo-tech and charter schools may better enrich the overall performance of the public education system rather than largely function as publicly financed alternatives.

The outcomes must be reduced fragmentation of efforts, increased collaboration and coherence in the development and delivery of educational programs, and shared responsibility for the overall improvement of public education.

Figure 49: Action Agenda for Improved Wilmington Student Outcomes



The improvements in governance must be accompanied by the resources needed to address the complex challenges facing students in poverty, English language learners, and other students at risk and must address the extra needs of schools with high concentrations of these students. And it must mobilize the capacity of all sectors and all facets of our communities in stronger, more sustained and more coordinated support of all our schools. These are essential ingredients of a system that will strengthen student learning in a continuous and sustainable fashion.

Figure 2 illustrates the research-based action agenda for how streamlined and coherent governance combined with resources to fund student success and cross-sector programs to meet the needs of City of Wilmington students will lead to higher-quality schools and improved student outcomes. The key steps and related milestones and measures of success for the Commission’s plan and for all other facets of the Commission’s mandate relate directly to the dimensions of this action agenda.

The first section of this part of the Commission’s plan provides a summary of the key milestones for each of the first four years of the implementation process. The second section of Part IV focuses on some of the key measures of success that will be used to evaluate progress and outcomes. These measures all align with the action agenda presented in Figure 2. They also align with the descriptions of the challenges to be met through implementing that action agenda on behalf of all City of Wilmington students, especially low-income students and English language learners. The measures are indicators for evaluating progress in overcoming the current conditions that both reflect and sustain poor student outcomes. In the area of student academic achievement, Table 1–4 in Part I: Introduction of the plan demonstrate that for all districts and most charter schools, City of Wilmington low-income students perform below the levels of low-income students across the district and charter school; the performance of Wilmington residents’ is even further below that of all students enrolled in the district or charter. Reducing and eventually eliminating these achievement gaps and increasing the overall performance for all students in each district and charter is a key objective of the Commission’s action agenda. This and other measures of progress in achieving improved student outcomes are described in the final section of this plan.

Milestones of Progress

Progress on implementation will be monitored based on reaching milestones at each stage of the action agenda. This will enable adjustments and corrections needed to sustain improvements and generate the best student outcomes. The initial set of milestones is defined in, SB 122, the enabling legislation for redistricting (see Appendix A). For example, implementation must be carried out in a manner that ensures “the orderly and minimally disruptive reassignment of students affected by the boundary change and the reassignment of governance responsibilities,” and with “equitable adjustments to local collective bargaining agreements.” The milestones derived from the legislation also include “the resources that will be required from state, district, and local sources, to support the redistricting transition, and provide for the effective ongoing education of all affected students, for the support of schools with high concentrations of low-income students and English Language Learners” (p. 3). These and other stipulations from the enabling legislation will be addressed as milestones of progress in the annual evaluation presented to the State Board throughout the multi-year process of implementation.

Each part of the Commission’s plan includes additional milestones of progress beginning with the detailed timetable for implementation described in Part III: Redistricting Recommendations. That four-year timetable for redistricting extends through the stages of approval, planning, transition, and implementation and provides specific milestones to be achieved at each of those stages. Consistent with the action agenda depicted in Figure 2, Part V: Funding Student Success, Resources for Redistricting, Part VII: Red Clay Consolidated and Christina School Districts Transition, Resource, and Implementation Plan, Part VI: Mobilizing Cross-Sector Resources and Support, and Part VI: Mobilizing Cross-Sector Resources and Support describe additional milestones that must be part of each stage of the implementation process. Further, Part VII: Red Clay Consolidated and Christina School Districts Transition, Resource, and Implementation Plan provides specific milestones for each of the dimensions addressed. The milestones described in the Commission’s plan are matched by more detailed milestones in the interim frameworks for planning of the Christina School District in Appendix B, and the Red Clay Consolidated School District in Appendix C.

There will be milestones for each of the three streams of the action agenda: Meeting Wilmington Student Needs, Funding Student Success, and Creating Responsive Governance—as well as other milestones for the given year. Each

stream will be assessed year by year. The following outline summarizes milestones of success for the next five years.

2015 to June 2016 Milestones for the Approval Stage

Creating Responsive Governance

- The Delaware State Board of Education approves the implementation plan.
- The Delaware General Assembly approves a joint resolution supporting the plan and the Governor approves.
- The affected districts finalize Memorandums of Understanding around the transition of their respective collective bargaining groups.
- Districts begin planning programmatic changes.

Funding Student Success

- Recurrent funding is approved and allocated for fiscal year 2017 to support a weighted unit for low-income students, English language learners, and basic special education for grades K-3 in Red Clay Consolidated School District and the current Christina School District schools in the City of Wilmington—the schools impacted by redistricting—thereby providing the necessary and sufficient funding to proceed with redistricting. This recurrent funding should be expanded to include all City of Wilmington students and then statewide as rapidly as possible.
- A Wilmington Transition Fund is approved, with initial allocation of funds for fiscal year 2017.
- Initial capital funding is allocated for fiscal year 2017 to begin improvements to buildings to be transferred from Christina School District to Red Clay Consolidated School District.
- A property tax rate adjustment for impacted districts is reviewed for implementation at the time of redistricting.
- Funding is approved to sustain and accelerate early childhood education.
- Recommendations of the Education Funding Improvement Commission are released and reviewed by WEIC for alignment.

Meeting Wilmington Student Needs

- WEIC committees initiate development of plans to adequately support the needs of City of Wilmington students.
- Arrangements are begun with Student Success 2025, the Access to Justice Commission, and other potential partners to coordinate efforts to support the plan.

July 2016 to June 2017 Milestones for the Planning Stage

Creating Responsive Governance

- Red Clay Consolidated School District and Christina School District will identify programmatic changes and attendance zone changes needed for transition.
- Red Clay Consolidated School District and Christina School District will identify staffing needs for the programmatic and school changes, including new school configurations and programs offered.
- Initial options and choices will be offered to Christina School District employees impacted by redistricting.
- Red Clay Consolidated School District will conduct a facilities assessment to determine any updates needed.
- Structures and processes to support increased collaboration among districts serving City of Wilmington students and between districts and Wilmington charters are established.

Funding Student Success

- Major capital improvement funding is allocated to support school improvement plans based on the facilities assessment.
- Weighted unit funding for low-income students, English language learners, and basic special education for grades K-3 is sustained for districts all Red Clay Consolidated School District schools and Christina School District School in the City of Wilmington and expanded to all Christina School District Schools for fiscal year 2018.
- Additional allocation to the Wilmington Transition Fund is approved for fiscal year 2018.

- Review begins on longer-term funding adjustments recommended by WEIC and the Education Funding Improvement Commission.

Meeting Wilmington Student Needs

- WEIC committees create detailed plans to support the needs of City of Wilmington students and begin implementation of the plans.
- The Commission develops a proposal for more effective integration of state and local government services for low-income students and their families, including partnering with private and nonprofit institutions.
- The United Way completes a plan to coordinate nonprofit and community institutional support for public schools in the City of Wilmington.
- WEIC partnerships with Student Success 2025, the UD Partnership for Public Education, and Access to Justice Commission move from alignment to action plans.
- Develop plan for the Wilmington Office of Education and Public Policy.
- The Commission and partners begin development of an early childhood community plan for the City of Wilmington to further increase access of low-income children to high-quality early childhood services.

July 2017 to June 2018 Milestones for the Transition Stage

Creating Responsive Governance

- Districts will begin implementation of major capital improvements to continue over the next three years.
- Students will be assigned to their schools and given the opportunity for choice.
- Administrative staffing will be complete by November 2017.
- Non-administrative staffing will be complete by February 2018.
- Professional development for transitioning staff begins and continues through implementation.

- Transfer of assets, contracts, and accounts is completed.
- Purchase of curriculum materials and other assets necessary for transition occurs in time for implementation.
- The Department of Elections resolves the implications for district governance on board-nominating districts.
- Increased collaboration is sustained among districts serving City of Wilmington students and between districts and Wilmington charters.

Funding Student Success

- The weighted-unit funding program for low-income students, English language learners, and basic special education for grades K-3 is sustained for current districts and expanded to include Brandywine School District, Colonial School District, and all charter schools in the City of Wilmington for fiscal year 2019 and expanded to all schools statewide as rapidly as possible.
- Initiation of property reassessment begins, including a feasibility study.
- Sustain early childhood investments.

Meeting Wilmington Student Needs

- Continue implementation of WEIC committees' action plans to support the needs of Wilmington students.
- Continue development of a proposal by the IRMC for the development and implementation of a complete plan for state and local services including partnering with private and nonprofit institutions. Legislation is created to facilitate the integration of state services.
- Increased engagement and coordination of nonprofits in the City of Wilmington.
- The Student Success 2025, Access to Justice Commission, and other partnerships continue to execute WEIC-aligned action plans.
- Finalization of an early childhood community plan for the city of Wilmington, which includes a partnership to increase access to high-quality early childhood services.

- Continue to create plan for increased school supports.
- Begin to see changes in collaboration between districts and charter schools.
- Establish the Wilmington Office of Education and Public Policy.
- Begin development of recommendations by the Delaware P-20 Council to improve the alignment of resources and programs to support student learning from birth through college and career, with specific attention to transitions.

July 2018 to June 2019 Milestones for the Implementation Stage

Creating Responsive Governance

- First year of implementation of the full transition of students. Minimal disruptions for students, parents, and educators.
- Increased collaboration is sustained among Wilmington districts and between districts and Wilmington charters. New partnerships are proposed and initiated.

Funding Student Success

- The weighted-unit funding program for low-income students, English language learners, and basic special education for grades K-3 is sustained for all districts and charter schools for fiscal year 2020.
- The Process for implementation of Property Reassessment is initiated.

Meeting Wilmington Student Needs

- Continue implementation of WEIC committees' action plans to support the needs of Wilmington students.
- The United Way-led alliance of nonprofit and community institutions is fully implemented in support of Wilmington public schools.
- New programs are put in place through the alliance of WEIC with Student Success 2025, Access to Justice Commission, and other partners.
- Begin implementation of the proposal for the development and implementation of a complete plan for integration of state and local services including partnering with private and nonprofit institutions.

- Begin implementation of the early childhood community plan for the city of Wilmington, which includes a partnership to increase access to high quality early childhood services.
- Begin implementation of new roles for the Delaware P-20 Council to improve the alignment of resources and programs to support student learning from birth through college and career with specific attention to transitions. Begin relevant legislation.

July 2019 to June 2020 Milestones for Continuation

Creating Responsive Governance

- Second year of implementation of the full transition of students. Minimal disruptions for students, parents, and educators. Adjustments from first-year experience.
- Continued collaboration is sustained among Wilmington districts and between districts and Wilmington charters. New partnerships are proposed and initiated.

Funding Student Success

- The weighted-unit funding program for low-income students, English language learners, and basic special education for grades K-3 is sustained for all districts and charter schools for fiscal year 2021 and beyond.
- The process for implementation of property reassessment is continued.

Meeting Wilmington Student Needs

- Continued implementation of WEIC committees' action plans to support the needs of Wilmington students.
- New programs are put in place through the alliance of WEIC with Student Success 2025, Wilmington Education Strategy Think Tank, Access to Justice Commission, and other partners.
- Continued implementation of the proposal for a comprehensive plan for integration of state and local services including partnering with private and nonprofit institutions.
- Continued implementation of the early childhood community plan

for the City of Wilmington, which includes a partnership to increase access to high-quality early childhood services.

- Continued implementation of new roles for the IRMC and Delaware P-20 Council to improve the alignment of resources and programs to support student learning from birth through college and career with specific attention to transitions. Begin relevant legislation.

Measures of Success

The measures of success for the improvement efforts of the Commission must go beyond documenting the milestones met at each stage. They must include evaluating the impacts of actions taken in achieving the key objectives at each stage. Ultimately, the Commission must evaluate the cumulative impact of the converging actions across all three streams (Meeting Wilmington Student Needs, Funding Student Success, and Creating Responsive Governance, as depicted in Figure 49) in creating higher-quality schools and improved student outcomes.

Measuring Success of Early Actions

Evaluating the impact of improvement efforts requires continuous monitoring of substantive progress, which may involve targeted research. For example, in the current stage of work focused on Creating Responsive Governance, the most direct measure of the impact of redistricting on reducing the fragmentation of governance responsibilities would be data indicating changes in the level of system coherence and responsiveness, including increased collaboration among and between districts and charters. This may be measured through a survey of school and central office leaders relating to the flow of communication and information within the district and among schools as well as district-wide culture/climate. Measures of this type have been used to support reform efforts in districts such as Rochester, New York, and San Diego, California, among others.

Measures of subsequent stages of the action agenda—those associated with Meeting Wilmington Student Needs, and Funding Student Success, for example—must be determined based on the improvement efforts launched in the districts and charters serving Wilmington, by the allocation and use of funds needed to sustain and accelerate progress, and by the success of the work of the Commission and its partners in aligning and mobilizing cross-sector supports for schools and students. The Commission will identify appropriate

measures and work with partners to secure resources necessary to collect evidence for the ongoing evaluation of improvement efforts.

Measuring Success for Higher-Quality Schools and Improved Student Outcomes

Figure 50 on the Multiple Contexts for Student Success provides a framework for considering how improved student outcomes are at the center of any assessment of progress. As described earlier, student outcomes are at the center, influenced most immediately by teaching and learning opportunities in the classroom and school as well as the immediate community and home context in which students become ready to learn. Teaching and learning, including curriculum and instruction, are shaped by the school context, including leadership, school culture, and resources, that are in turn shaped by leadership and policy at the district level. Home and family, similarly, are shaped by the community context, including safety, engagement, poverty, and opportunities outside of school.

Figure 50: Multiple Contexts for Student Success

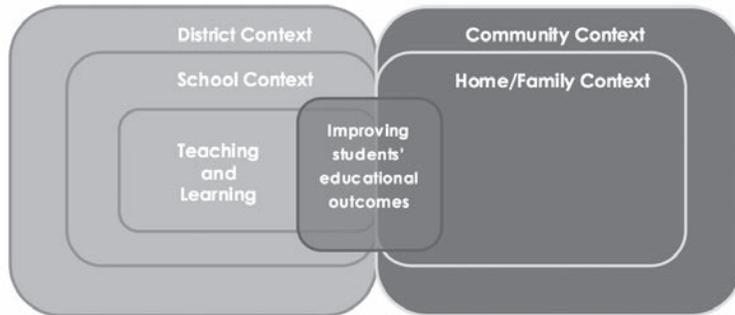


Table 15 below builds on this framework to identify initial measures of progress for the multiple contexts of student success. These measures will be refined as the process of implementation and evaluation moves forward.

Table 15: Measures of Success for Higher-Quality Schools and Improved Student Outcomes

Action Agenda Objective	Evidence-Based Measures of Progress
Improved Quality of Community and Family Contexts (These dimensions relate to redistricting. Other measures will apply to the work of the other committees.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community and parent surveys. Measures of student mobility within and between schools. Counts and evaluations of school-community partnerships. Improved school culture/climate as indicated by established survey measures.
Improved Quality of School Context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased cultural competency in classrooms and throughout the school context (e.g., student and teacher surveys on the welcoming school environment for culturally diverse students). Recruitment and retention of high-quality teachers and leaders in urban schools. Reducing the resource gap between urban and suburban schools.
Improved Instruction and Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher and student surveys. Delaware Comprehensive Success Review. Observational measure of instructional quality.

Action Agenda Objective	Evidence-Based Measures of Progress
Improved Student Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher developmental assessments beginning in early childhood. • Early learning survey. • Reduced achievement gap between both low-income and low-income City of Wilmington students and all low-income students and students statewide, as demonstrated by test scores. • Increased attendance and persistence of City of Wilmington students and low-income students, English language learners, and students at risk statewide. • Reduced disciplinary incidents of City of Wilmington students and low-income students, English language learners, and students at risk statewide. • Increased graduation rates of City of Wilmington students and low-income students, English language learners, and students at risk statewide. • Increased college and workforce readiness of City of Wilmington students and low-income students, English language learners, and students at risk statewide. • Reduced incarceration rates of City of Wilmington children and low-income children, English language learners, and children at risk statewide. • Improved rate of successful employment for at-risk individuals.

The assessment of higher-quality schools should correlate with measures that the Delaware Department of Education is using as well as the measures that individual districts and schools are using. This includes increased test scores, Adequately Yearly Progress, and other indicators. In addition to the DOE’s measures, each priority school has developed a set of measures of success that should also be used to measure success (see Red Clay Consolidated School District Draft Measure of Success for Priority Schools in Appendix E).

While improved student outcomes are a major indicator of higher-quality schools, other facets should also be considered when measuring success. One indicator, highly qualified teachers, can be measured by increasing the

percentage of and retaining teachers with more experience and higher levels of education and teaching experience. Over time, there should be an increase in the percentage of teachers entering and staying in the schools. Teachers should also have the cultural competencies to be sensitive to the needs of students. This can be measured through the availability of and participation in trainings and an increase in the number of families and students who feel that their needs are being taken into consideration.

Improved instruction and learning can be evaluated through a combination of measures. One measure is increased cultural competency in classrooms and the schools measured through an annual survey of the families and students at the schools. Areas such as leadership, classroom instruction, and community engagement can be assessed through a Comprehensive Success Review (CSR). Schools can use the feedback received to create their own improvement plans based on analysis of strengths and challenges found in the process. As schools enact their plans, they should revisit the CSR process periodically to see improved results. Other measures of improved instruction and learning are an increase in performance on formative assessments and other assessments as determined by the schools and districts. Schools can also use surveys to assess what teachers are doing to improve student learning and use a working conditions survey similar to that in North Carolina, to ensure the climate of the school is improving. Other measures are indicated below and are based on student outcomes.

Evaluation of improved student outcomes must include both interim measures and longer-term outcomes. Interim measures can include increased attendance, persistence and engagement rates, reduced student trauma and disciplinary incident rates, and growing participation in high-quality early childhood education programs and other in-school and out-of-school programs that support enhanced developmental progress and learning. Longer-term outcomes must include increased graduation rates, decreased achievement gaps in test scores, improved college and workforce readiness, reduced youth incarceration and recidivism rates, access to and participation in sustainable employment, and greater access to opportunities that result in productive and rewarding lives.

Setting Measurable Goals for Higher-Quality Schools and Improved Student Outcomes

The measures described above are tools for evaluating impact. However, we must also define what it means to be successful and to establish clear goals

for the work of the Commission. One immediate objective is to reduce and then eliminate the gaps in academic performance between City of Wilmington low-income students and district-wide student performance as well as the performance of low-income students enrolled in each district. Tables 16 and 17 below document the current gaps. The gaps should close as a result of greater coherence and collaboration in governance, increased funding to meet the needs of low-income students and English language learners, new models of teaching and learning, and improved alignment of resources in and out of school. At the same time, closing these gaps will begin to raise overall student outcomes district-wide. The immediate objective is to increase overall performance of low-income students district-wide, with no gap for Wilmington's low-income students. Each year, these student outcomes will be evaluated.

Closing the gaps in academic achievement must be matched by other improvement in student outcomes. Within the current Wilmington public education system there is an overwhelming predominance of disciplinary action for low-income students. In 2014, low-income students accounted for 60 percent of both in-school and out-of-school suspensions. One expected outcome of the increased supports for students at risk provided in this plan is a reduction of the number of suspensions and other disciplinary actions among all students and decrease of the difference in the suspension rate of low-income students and all students both in the four affected districts and statewide. Increasing the supports for low-income students both in school and out of school is intended to combat this challenge. Improving these outcomes is expected to also lead to improved future outcomes including higher rates of college and career readiness, lower unemployment, and decreased incarceration rates.

Table 18 shows the performance by district overall and the performance by district of City of Wilmington students based on several indicators.

Table 16: 2014 ELA DCAS Proficiency: District-Wide Compared with Low-Income and Low-Income City of Wilmington Student Performance

District	Grade Level	District-Wide		Low-Income		Difference		Low-Income City of Wilmington		Difference	
		Students	Proficiency	Students	Proficiency	Students	Proficiency	Students	Proficiency	Students	Proficiency
Brandywine	K-12	6,481	74%	2,061	57%	-17%		730	51%	-23%	
Red Clay	K-12	10,114	68%	3,759	49%	-19%		1,568	41%	-27%	
Christina	K-12	9,532	62%	4,298	53%	-9%		1,138	38%	-24%	
Colonial	K-12	6,158	65%	2,669	57%	-8%		133	41%	-24%	

Source: Delaware Department of Education, 2014.
Note: Difference in both cases is calculated against the district or school-wide percent proficient.

Table 17: 2014 Math DCAS Proficiency: District-Wide Compared with Low-Income and Low-Income City of Wilmington Student Performance

District	Grade Level	District-Wide		Low-Income		Difference		Low-Income City of Wilmington		Difference	
		Students	Proficiency	Students	Proficiency	Students	Proficiency	Students	Proficiency	Students	Proficiency
Brandywine	K-12	6,552	67%	2,092	48%	-19%		747	38%	-29%	
Red Clay	K-12	10,206	63%	3,791	43%	-20%		1,574	36%	-27%	
Christina	K-12	9,543	60%	4,274	49%	-11%		1,125	33%	-27%	
Colonial	K-12	6,188	61%	2,679	52%	-9%		134	41%	-20%	

Source: Delaware Department of Education, 2014.
Note: Difference in both cases is calculated against the district or school-wide percent proficient.

Table 18: Performance of Students By District

	Colonial	Brandywine	Christina	Red Clay	State Average
Enrollment	9,825	10,700	16,255	18,046	n/a
Suspension	19%	13%	15%	11%	12.00%
Passing AP Exam	22.40%	46.50%	37.80%	68.40%	49.10%
Drop-Out Rate	4%	2.60%	3.40%	2%	2.10%
College Readiness	6.60%	25.00%	13.60%	40.90%	19.30%
SAT Composite Average	1,162	1,364	1,242	1,452	1,305
Graduation Rates					
Overall	80.80%	84.60%	74.50%	90.30%	87.00%
Low-Income	76.70%	74.20%	71.90%	81.00%	77.80%
African American	83.70%	81.80%	71.30%	83.40%	80.10%

Source: Delaware Department of Education, 2014.

Although the statewide graduation rate was 87 percent in 2014 and 2015, only 68 percent of the students from the City of Wilmington graduated in 2014. City of Wilmington students made up 30 percent of the dropouts in the four northern New Castle County school districts, while City of Wilmington students are only 16 percent of the total population of students in those four districts. In Brandywine, Christina, Colonial, and Red Clay Consolidated School Districts, the total AP participation in grades 11 and 12 in the four districts was 35 percent. Compared to fifteen percent for City of Wilmington students in those four districts. Broken down by district for City of Wilmington students, AP participation was 17 percent in Brandywine School District, 8 percent in Christina School District, 19 percent in Red Clay School Consolidated School District, and the number of Colonial School District students is too small to report.

These indicators reflect that across the board, the school districts are serving their children well; however, the City of Wilmington students lag behind. This is due in part to factors related to the coherence of the system, resources available, and the coordination of services. Consistently, a primary measure of success is that over time the table for the City of Wilmington performance should mirror that of the district as a whole. This means closing the gaps in college readiness, graduation rates, SAT Composite Average, and AP Exam Passing rates by improving these outcomes for City of Wilmington students. Additionally, the gap should close between City of Wilmington students dropping out of school and the percentage suspended when compared with district-wide averages. These measures can be evaluated this year, comparing the differences between both the district and state averages and the City of Wilmington performance within those districts.

The initial goal of the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission is to improve the education for City of Wilmington students, removing the indefensible achievement and opportunity gaps for those students. Long-term, the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission hopes to meet the Student Success 2025 goals, improving education for all Delawareans.



“We encourage you not to miss this opportunity to make long lasting, fundamental, and critical changes needed to empower the young men and women, especially throughout Wilmington, to succeed in life and hopefully be the future leaders of the businesses throughout the state.”

DELAWARE STATE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
DELAWARE BUSINESS ROUNDTABLE

Supplement to the Plan

1. Responses to Questions from the State Board of Education
December 18, 2015
2. Response to Information Request Received by the Commission Leadership from the State Board of Education on Thursday, January 14, 2016, at 9:07 a.m.
January 15, 2016
3. Addendum to the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission’s Plan:
Redistricting in the City of Wilmington and New Castle County: A Transition, Resource and Implementation Plan
February 11, 2016

December 18, 2015

Responses to Questions from the State Board of Education

1. *What are the funding requirements for redistricting, and when are those funds needed?*

- The Commission's highest funding priority is the initiation of weighted unit funding to address the needs of low-income students, English language learners, and basic special education K-3 students. Delaware is 1 of only 5 states without a specific allocation for English language learners and 1 of 15 states without a specific allocation for low-income students. This recurrent funding should begin with the districts impacted by redistricting with the long-term goal of expanding statewide.
- In addition, one-time funding for a Wilmington Transition Fund is needed to complete a full-scale facilities assessment of the schools, develop new grade configurations, design transportation feeder patterns, and develop action plans to assure that redistricting takes place in a manner that is minimally disruptive to students, parents, and educators. The transition fund will support the identification and implementation of national best practices and new models for Red Clay and Christina schools with high concentrations of low-income students, English language learners, and basic special education K-3 students, in a process that includes community input.

Fiscal Year 2017: \$10.5 million in new funds -\$7.5 million recurrent and \$3 million one-time

- Low-income, English language learner, and special education unit for students in all Red Clay schools plus those in Christina's Wilmington schools: \$7.5 million recurrent based on the model illustrated in the Commission's plan (Appendix D).
- Wilmington Redistricting Transition Fund: \$3 million in one-time money to support the planning and development of new models and proposals on facilities.
- While not required for redistricting, the Commission strongly supports additional funding for early childhood education for low-income students.

Fiscal Year 2018: \$4.5 million in new funds-\$3.5 million recurrent and \$1 million one-time

- Low-income, English language learner, and special education unit applies to all Red Clay schools plus all Christina schools: additional \$3.5 million in recurrent funding (added to the 7.5 million for FY2017 for a total of \$11 million in FY2018). This is based on the model used for illustration in the Commission's plan (Appendix D).
- An additional increment to the Wilmington Redistricting Transition Fund: \$1 million.

Fiscal Year 2019: Additional funding needed is contingent on the extent of statewide roll-out.

- Low-income, English language learner, and special education unit expands for all northern New Castle County districts and then statewide as rapidly as possible. The statewide expansion extends beyond the scope of redistricting and the cost depends on the pace and extent of expansion. The Commission will prepare estimates of the cost of expansion for discussion with the Governor and General Assembly.
- Some short-term contingency funding to balance the impacts on the New Castle County tax district and capacity for local districts to make limited adjustments to meet operating expenses.
- **Other fiscal changes, such as the move to a new education funding allocation system and the initiation of property reassessment are under review by the Educational Funding Improvement Commission which is scheduled to release its report by the end of March 2016.**

2. *What happens if the needed funding is not provided?*

- The Redistricting Resolution (page 10) is explicit and specific about what will happen if the necessary and sufficient resources are not provided.

“If the necessary and sufficient funding and transition supports are not provided by the conclusion of each stage and in the manner proposed, the State Board, at the request of the Commission after consulting with the affected districts, shall suspend the timetable

for implementation until the resources and supports are provided. If the necessary and sufficient funding and transition supports are not confirmed by the Commission in consultation with the affected districts by July 2018, the plan will expire.”

- The Commission has been consistent that the residents of the Red Clay school district should not be expected to assume responsibility for an unfunded or underfunded mandate, and should not bear any undue tax burden as a result of redistricting.
3. *Isn't the proposed funding for low-income students, English language learners and other students at risk independent of redistricting?*
- The Commission has always stated that redistricting alone will not accomplish the needed improvements in student outcomes. All of the changes proposed in the Commission's framework (see pages, 21-26) must be carried out. In Wilmington, the two changes must go hand-in-hand: consolidating 50% of Wilmington's students into a single district and providing additional resources.
 - Funding to districts engaged in redistricting is targeted to address the learning needs of low-income students, English language learners and other students at risk is essential to the educational success of redistricting.
 - The Commission strongly supports the eventual expansion of this targeted funding statewide, but that expansion is not a requirement of redistricting. The Commission's broader recommendation is consistent with its mandate under HB148 to advise the Governor and General Assembly on “addressing the needs of all schools within the State with high concentrations of children living in poverty, English language learners, or both” (page 32-33, and Appendix A).
4. *What responsibility does the State Board of Education have for ensuring that the needed funds are provided?*
- The State Board of Education is not responsible for insuring that the needed funds are provided. The Governor and General Assembly are responsible for allocating the needed funds and the Commission will seek that funding beginning with the coming legislative session.

- The Commission is explicit (pages 26-27) that the “State Board's authority to approve the plan is separate and distinct from the authority to carry out the plan” and that the “Governor, General Assembly and school districts must allocate the resources needed to support the re-districting transition and provide for the equitable and effective education of all students and for the support of schools with high concentrations of low-income student and English language learners.”

5. *When will the Commission and the affected districts begin to address the teaching and learning needs of Wilmington students?*

- This work on best practices for addressing the developmental learning needs of students is already underway. A research team from the University of Delaware is identifying best practices in support of improved teaching and learning in schools with high concentrations of low-income students, English language learners and other students at risk.
- The application of this work can begin as soon as the districts can adopt changes and this work will intensify during the next school year and beyond with ongoing support of the Commission and its committees through a community-engaged process.
- This is essential to carrying out the Commission's full action agenda (see pages 21-26) and it will engage the work of all the Commission's committees, primarily the committees on Charter-District Collaboration, Meeting the Needs of Students in Poverty, and Parent, Educator and Community Engagement. Key facets of this work and the initial cross-sector partnerships already supporting this work are described in Part VI of the Commission's plan (pages 102-119).

6. *Are the Christina and Red Clay plans in the Commission's report specifically focused on redistricting or are these plans the same as the priority schools plans proposed earlier?*

- No, they are not the priority schools plans. The Christina and Red Clay plans that are included in the Commission's report (Appendix B and C) are new plans that were developed specifically as frameworks for planning the implementation of redistricting.
- The administrative staff of the two districts worked together and with the Commission to be sure that the plans are aligned and mutually reinforcing.

- The district plans are labeled interim because, immediately upon approval of the Commission's submitted redistricting plan, the two districts will proceed with stage two of the process and produce further detailed planning for implementation, including the new configurations of schools, feeder patterns and new programs to better support teaching and learning.
- The Commission's plan (Part VII, pages 120-137) builds upon the detailed plans of the two districts and also adds dimensions of particular importance to the overall success of the implementation process, such as clear guidelines for the assignment of educators impacted by redistricting (pages 126-129) and the continuation and extension of choice options for students (pages 133-137).

7. *What makes redistricting so critical to changing student outcomes?*

- Redistricting will streamline the governance of Wilmington public education and focus primary responsibility for student outcomes in the Red Clay School District, which then will enroll more than half of the public school students living in the City of Wilmington.
- Many of the other improvements in Wilmington public education will be more effectively supported with redistricting. Our belief is without approval of redistricting, the momentum for needed changes will dissipate and the broad-based community support for the needed changes will be difficult to sustain. The inaction over 40 years is evidence of what can be expected.

8. *Why was the Commission's recommendation on the Colonial district changed from what was earlier proposed?*

- The Colonial School District voted to continue to serve its Wilmington students, with the expectation that it can be effective in the education of those students and it has submitted the initial outline for a plan to do so.
- After much discussion with leaders of the Colonial School District, the Commission's leadership team concluded that we were not willing to risk support for the full plan based on the Colonial decision to continue to serve the fewer than 200 Wilmington students now in its schools. We so recommended to the Commission which supported this judgement, as reflected in the final plan submitted to the State Board of Education.

- While some members of the Commission have concerns about the district's role in the education of Wilmington students, we are prepared to work with the district to consider how to strengthen education for those Wilmington students it continues to serve. We also will explore the possibility of a greater role for the Colonial School District in collaboration with other districts and charters to help to overcome the adverse impacts of the fragmentation of responsibilities.
- The Commission will report annually on these efforts as well as those of all other districts, and also on the learning outcomes for all Wilmington students.

9. *What is the evaluative methodology and on what dimensions will you determine success?*

- The Commission's evaluation plan includes a stipulation of the milestones and measures of success for evaluating progress and outcomes (see Part IX, pages 167-182).
- One distinctive feature of this evaluation plan is that it includes an analysis of Wilmington students that previously has been absent. This analysis will be continued annually and reported to the State Board of Education and others.
- The Commission's evaluation plan includes milestones and measures of success that align with all the facets of the Commission's action agenda and also align with research on key student developmental needs and outcomes, especially for low-income students and students at risk.
- The Commission will add to the initial set of indicators as the process moves forward and will respond to requests from the State Board of Education and the participating districts for additional analysis of outcomes and impacts.
- The Commission will submit to the State Board of Education an annual evaluation of progress in achieving milestones and improving the success of City of Wilmington students.

January 15, 2016

Response to Information Request Received by the Commission Leadership from the State Board of Education on Thursday, January 14, 2016, at 9:07 a.m.

Public Comment

Please add Dr. Allen’s December 18, 2015 email to the SBE addressing questions raised by the SBE at the December meeting to the record of public comment.

- This response has been added to the Commission’s website in the section for the public record. That section has been updated to include all public comment received before public comment closed on January 14, 2016. This correspondence will also be added to the public record.

Redistricting

1. *The action taken by each school board with regard to approval or conditional approval of the WEIC plan occurred well before the plan was finalized. Did WEIC discuss the final plan with each board or was there discussion from the board representatives serving on WEIC of the board’s approval of the plan? Was there any additional feedback from district boards received on the final proposal?*
 - Christina and Red Clay Consolidated School Board members and administrative staff worked collaboratively to develop the frameworks for planning, found in Appendix B and C respectively. The Commission’s own plan for implementation of the Christina/Red Clay redistricting (Part VII) is based on the collaborative work of the two school districts.
 - The Christina and Red Clay Consolidated School Boards voted to approve the drafts of their respective frameworks for planning (see page 54), and no changes to those plans have been made to those plans since those votes were taken.

- The Colonial School Board and the Brandywine School Board voted after the Commission’s final redistricting recommendations were resolved. Boards supported the move of Christina out of the City of Wilmington and affirmed their commitment to continue to serve Wilmington students within their current boundaries, which also is the recommendation of the Commission.
- Members of the Commission, including members of the Red Clay Consolidated School Board and District gave updates at every scheduled Red Clay School Board meeting from September through December. The Board was advised of all updates in the Commission’s plan including an update by the President of the Red Clay School Board (who is Vice Chair of the Commission) on December 16th, 2015, the day before the Commission’s plan was submitted to the State Board of Education.
- At each Christina School Board meeting from September through December an update on the Commission’s plan was presented in the agenda and discussed at the board meeting. The President of the Christina School Board affirms that the board members were advised and encouraged to provide feedback throughout the period of public comment and that the board supports the proposals in the Commission’s final plan.
- The Red Clay, Christina, and Colonial School Board Presidents, and the Brandywine School Board Vice-President, serve on the Commission. These same Board representatives as well as representatives from the district administrations serve on the Redistricting Committee and the Funding Student Success Committee, and were therefore involved in all facets of the process, including the review of all the redistricting recommendations in the final plan.
- All four school board representatives voted on behalf of their boards on December 15, 2015, to approve the Commission’s Transition, Resource, and Implementation Plan and submit it to the State Board of Education on December 17, 2015.

2. *In both the Red Clay transitional plan as well as the Redistricting section of the plan there is reference to changes that would need to be made for the school board election districts but there is not a timeline for that work to indicate 1) when that work would be completed and 2) if there are addition-*

al costs associated with that work. If there are additional costs, what is an estimate of them and where do they fit into the estimated funding?

- Transferring population from the Christina School District to the Red Clay Consolidated School District will require adjustments in both the Red Clay and Christina school boards. Christina's total population will drop from 170,139 to 147,043 (estimate from New Castle County Board of Elections based on 2010 census data). Red Clay's total population will increase from 138,228 to 163,957. Consistent with the timeline laid out in the Commission's proposal, these changes would be effective July 1, 2018.
 - The New Castle Board of Elections believes that given the magnitude of the population change involved it would be appropriate to seek legislation authorizing redrawing of boundaries earlier than 2020. Such a redrawing would be based on 2010 census data. Presumably, new boundaries would then be needed again following the 2020 census.
 - At this time, the Department of Elections has identified no additional costs associated with these changes.
3. Please clarify what is meant by "program complete" in the 4th bullet of the Executive Summary "Redistricting Recommendation" section, which pertains to students transitioning or remaining at their existing school during Redistricting.
- Senate Bill 122 states, **"The plan shall permit students to continue their attendance at the school they attended prior to the boundary change, with tuition payments by the sending district as provided in Chapter 6 of this title, until such time as the pupils complete the grade levels offered in that school."**
 - The intent of this language was to allow students to remain in their schools, as of the end of the 2017–18 school year, until their grade configuration is complete, or until they complete their unique program. Some examples of specialized programs include Sarah Pyle Academy, Douglass Academy, and students receiving special education services.
4. Please clarify recommendations referencing the addition of additional seats for Wilmington students at vocational schools and the plan initially recommended for development of a vocational education partnership between the NCC districts and vocational district.

- This question refers to a recommendation from the Wilmington Education Advisory Committee (WEAC) Final Report, *Strengthening Wilmington Education: An Action Agenda*, submitted in April 2015. The reference is repeated on page 51 of the Commission's plan (pages 25–27 from the WEAC Final Report are set aside in a box for reference. The quote referenced is below.

"The New Castle County Vocational-Technical School District (NCC Vo-tech) should actively collaborate with the Red Clay Consolidated and Brandywine School Districts and with the Wilmington charter schools to expand vocational education opportunities for Wilmington students. We recommend the development of joint programs among NCC Vo-tech, district high schools, Wilmington charter high schools, Delaware Technical Community College, and Delaware businesses to facilitate coordinated pathways for students from all high schools to employment opportunities and advanced technical training. The NCC Vo-tech district should take the lead in developing a comprehensive plan for this new vocational education partnership and presenting it to the governor, secretary of education, and state legislature by January 2016."

- No action has been taken by the Commission on this WEAC recommendation. This and other recommendations related to collaboration will be considered in the coming year by the Commission's Committee on Charter and District Collaboration. Representatives from the New Castle County Vo-Tech District sit on both the Redistricting Committee and the Funding Student Success Committee and will be invited to participate in the work of the Commission on Charter and District Collaboration.
5. How does this final plan address the "case for redistricting" which sites 23 different governing units but this proposal reduces that number by only 1 and introduces at least one additional body with the creation of the Wilmington Office of Education and Public Policy?
- Reducing fragmentation in the City of Wilmington requires a two-track strategy: consolidation then coordination.
 - **Redistricting is the first step of consolidation. This single step will consolidate more than 50 percent of City of Wilmington students under one governing authority, the Red Clay Consolidated School**

District. This would be the first time in 40 years, one governing unit will have responsibility for the majority of City of Wilmington students.

- The second step is to coordinate policies and programs of district, charter, and vo-tech schools in order to better streamline governance for City of Wilmington students. This will be a primary focus for the Commission and Committee on Charter and District Collaboration during the next year.
- The Wilmington Education Improvement Commission is not a governing unit. The Commission has designated and limited responsibilities under legislation, and has no governing authority over schools or students. The Commission’s mandate ends in 2021 when the Commission sunsets.
- **If created, the Office of Education and Public Policy would be a part of the Wilmington City Government. It would have no governing authority over schools or students. The Commission supports its formation as a vehicle for supporting parent and community engagement, but the Commission is not responsible for the development of that office or for its funding, nor is the creation of the office a contingency for redistricting.**

Funding

6. *Please define the term “other students at risk” which is used in the description of the new weighted unit recommendation.*
 - “Other students at risk” refers to basic special education grades K-3.
7. *Please further explain any costs associated with the creation of, as well as the responsibilities of, the Wilmington Office of Education and Public Policy within this plan.*
 - The Office of Education and Public Policy is a recommendation of the Wilmington City Council that the Commission has endorsed.
 - If implemented, funding for the Office would come from the City of Wilmington.
 - Please see the answer to question 5.

8. *Please identify the way funds requested as transition funds will be used and to whom they would be allocated for those uses. Additionally, if there is a request for “ongoing” funds (not planning or transition funds) beyond those outlined in the recommendation for a weighted “At Risk Unit” please outline what those ongoing costs would be used for. Lastly, with respect to the At Risk Unit outline the costs per year in the years beyond the roll out to Red Clay and Christina, what is the estimated funding cost?*
 - During the planning year, the transition funds would be used to conduct a facilities assessment for all of the impacted schools, which would be of value under any circumstances as a guide for facilities improvement. In addition, funds would be used for research and analysis of best practices for schools with high concentrations of low-income students and English language learners and best practices for the configuration of schools and programs to serve those students. This would be valuable regardless of which district is responsible for those schools and it would be valuable to other schools in Wilmington and across Delaware with high concentrations of low-income students and English language learners.
 - **Beyond the weighted unit, there are no “ongoing” funding requests. The cost is dependent on the model used and the weights given.**
9. *The timelines for implementation of this new unit allocation formula do not include all students of the city of Wilmington before expanding to include students in the suburbs of the Red Clay and Christina districts. Please discuss the proposed timeline and further explain the decision of WEIC to implement the funding model in this fashion so that we can fully understand why the recommendation is phased in this manner.*
 - The Commission has endorsed a change in the allocation system to a more flexible model; however, the Commission did not believe that funding for low-income students, English language learners, and basic special education K-3 should be contingent on changing the funding allocation system in the future.
 - Given fiscal constraints, the Commission specifically proposed an initial commitment of funding that applies to the districts impacted by redistricting, Red Clay Consolidated and Christina School Districts.

- We are proposing that funding would expand to all districts and charter schools in the city in the third year and that statewide roll-out be implemented as rapidly as possible given the fiscal constraints.
10. *The funding recommendations for expansion of the unit funding system within the proposal have been discussed before the Board as attempting to work within our existing funding structure. Please address these recommendations, which have been presented not as short term recommendations but as recommendations for 2021 and beyond, with respect to complementary or potentially conflicting actions with the currently meeting task force established through SJR4, Education Funding Improvement Commission, including the statement on page 87 of the tracked changes document that the Commission believes a new allocation system would provide the best opportunity to incorporate the needs of those most at risk.*
- The work of the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission (WEIC) and the Education Funding Improvement Commission (EFIC) are complementary. To be clear, many members of WEIC and its working committees are on EFIC, most notably Jill Floore, Red Clay CFO and Mike Jackson, Deputy Controller General, who chair the WEIC Funding Student Success Committee. WEIC and its Funding Student Success Committee began prior to the initiation of EFIC. It is our understanding that this commission is undertaking a review of the allocation formula as well as matters related to revenue and property reassessment.
 - The focus of the WEIC Funding Student Success Committee was on factors relevant to redistricting, specifically the funding for low-income students, English language learners, and basic special education K-3 and the transition fund.
 - WEIC endorsed the movement to a more flexible funding system. **The Education Funding Improvement Commission is considering the possibility of a move to a new funding system. Should a new funding allocation system be implemented, the WEIC funding requests would be moved into the new system.**
11. *Property Reassessment: please clarify the financial burden of this recommendation- is it state or county? Is this a required component of this proposal in order for it to have adequate and sufficient funds?*
- No. We believe property reassessment is essential for the long-term fiscal health of the public education system, and ultimately the state. However, redistricting is not contingent on property reassessment.
 - The Commission has not recommended a specific process for property tax reassessment. The Funding Student Success Committee has recognized the 2008 report of the committee formed by House Joint Resolution 22, which did recommend that the process be undertaken at the state level. This report can be found in Appendix E.
12. *If funding is not “restored to FY2008 levels” does that mean that this plan is not adequately funded?*
- Redistricting is not contingent on returning state funding of public education to fiscal year 2008 levels.
 - Restoration is supported by the Commission and is highly desirable for the long-term benefit and improvement of Delaware public education.
13. *Please discuss whether the requests for funding of Early Childhood Education initiatives are in addition to existing requests from the Office of Early Learning and pertinent agencies funding Early Childhood education and care or if this request is simply complementary and vocalized support for those existing requests.*
- The Commission’s recommendation refers directly to the existing request from the Office of Early Learning.
14. *Please clarify the IRMC’s roles and responsibilities with respect to this plan and clarify if this is reducing potential duplicative efforts by multiple groups. Please also identify how WEIC factors into those efforts.*
- The Commission’s recommendation is specifically related to alignment of resources and working with existing state groups to strengthen their contributions, not to duplicate efforts, as described on page 112 of the Commission’s plan.
- “The Meeting the Needs of Students in Poverty Committee will be addressing these recommendations and rolling out their plan in parallel to the implementation of redistricting. This work will engage collaborations with key state agencies and councils, including the Interagency Resource Management Committee (IRMC)**

responsible for the integration of services for children and families across state agencies, the Delaware P-20 Council responsible for the alignment of educational programs and student support services from early childhood through college and career readiness, and the council on higher education to mobilize coordinated support from all higher education institutions. These collaborations will be instrumental for the development and implementation of the Advisory Committee’s recommendation for a comprehensive plan for state and local services, including partnerships with private and nonprofit institutions, which will create a community of support for low-income children and their families.”

15. *Please identify the source of data used for establishing baseline goals as well as the responsibility for providing data and information to determine success of these milestones. Please identify the actual baseline metrics and goals for those stated measures and milestones.*
 - The baseline analysis is the 2015–16 school year, which will be included in the first annual report of the Commission. The reports will use each school year’s verified data from the Department of Education. Currently, the Department of Education does not disaggregate data for the City of Wilmington; therefore, this additional analysis is necessary and will not duplicate current efforts.
 - The Commission would be pleased to defer to the Department of Education should the Department desire to prepare a report that contains this analysis.
16. *Within the letter to WEIC from the Christina School District in their transitional plan there is statement that the tax base will go down by 20% and a statement that the impact should not negatively impact Christina residents. Please clarify the impact this plan would have on the residents of both Christina and Red Clay districts.*
 - The movement of students and schools would change the allocation of funds, and the Commission believes that the funding should follow the students. A district with fewer students will have lower expenses. There may be a need for contingency funds to moderate the impacts of those shifts in the short term, as referenced on page 98 of the Plan. The contingency funds would not be necessary until redistricting takes place in fiscal year 2019.

- This reference refers to the expected impact on the allocation of the New Castle County tax district. Local tax funding for the four northern New Castle County school districts is governed by the guidelines established for the New Castle County tax district, in place since the 1981 court order.

Transition Plans from Christina and Red Clay

17. *Please clarify the educational impacts ongoing for the students in these schools between now and FY2019. Clarification is needed for the educational and instructional programs that may be enacted in some of the impacted schools in the Christina district between now and 2019 that are in process of implementing school turnaround programs.*
 - Questions related to the Christina School District’s implementation of school turnaround programs should be directed to the Delaware Department of Education (DDOE) and the Christina School District.
 - Secretary Godowsky has confirmed that questions about the educational and instructional programs in turnaround/priority schools should be directed to DDOE and the districts.
18. *Please clearly specify how this plan directly addresses instructional programs/initiatives critical to improving student outcomes and how these are aligned in measures of success and stated milestones.*
 - The action agenda, laid out in the graphic on page 8, and its explanation on pages 1–2 and 11–19 specify how this plan directly addresses improved student outcomes. This action agenda is connected back to the milestones and measures of success on pages 164–178. The action agenda was developed purposefully to keep improved student outcomes at the forefront of all recommendations made by the Commission, and action requested of the State Board, General Assembly, and the Governor.
 - During the planning year, the transition funds will be used to conduct a facilities assessment for all of the impacted schools. In addition, funds will be used for research and analysis of best practices for schools with high concentrations of low-income students and English language learners and best practices for the configuration of schools and programs. The Commission will not be involved directly in the instruction, but will continue to support the collaboration already

going on between the Christina and Red Clay Consolidated School Districts to develop programs and initiatives that best serve these high needs students and lead to the improved student outcomes outlined in the milestones and measures of success.

19. *Are there projected timelines for revisions to in-district boundary lines (feeder patterns) for both districts that have been discussed and are able to further inform these plans?*

- The 2016–17 school year is the planning year. During this time, analysis and research will be conducted on best practices for schools serving high concentrations of low-income students and English language learners and the optimal configuration of schools to support students.
- The Red Clay Consolidated School District and Christina School District will determine any needed changes to feeder patterns during the transition year, the 2017–18 school year, based on the outcomes of the planning year.
- New feeder patterns will be implemented when district boundaries change for school year 2018–19.

20. *There is reference to potential capital repairs of buildings currently in the Christina district that are proposed to become Red Clay facilities. Are those repairs proposed to be state funded, locally funded, or a separate option of public/private partnerships?*

- The districts will collaborate on the facilitation of changes. During the planning year, the 2016–17 school year, funds will be used to conduct a facilities assessment for the impacted schools. The repairs will occur during the 2017–18 school year based on the facilities assessment and should be paid for by the state.
- Any capital fund requests not related to redistricting will continue to be made in the traditional way.³

21. *Please clarify the details of WEIC’s role and responsibility in future requests for capital funding or major capital design for updating or constructing new schools in the city of Wilmington?*

- The Commission has no role in current or future capital funding or major capital design requests. That is the responsibility of the affected districts, Christina and Red Clay.

Choice and Collaboration Efforts

22. *There are existing collaborations underway and organizations already in place which are developing charter and district collaboration. What controls or precautions to avoid duplication of those existing collaborative efforts have been discussed by WEIC to include in the proposed plan?*

- The Commission recognizes that there are many existing collaborations underway but also believes that city wide collaboration is not as effective or widespread as necessary to create a coherent system of governance.
- The Charter and District Collaboration Committee is working to identify and review existing collaboration with the intent to expand upon them, not to duplicate or substitute. Any recommendations on this will come from that committee to the Commission for review.
- There are no recommendations related to this phase of streamlining governance, as this is not part of redistricting. See the answer to question 5.

23. *Please explain any specific asks or proposed policy changes with regard to choice that are being recommended in this section.*

- See the answers to questions 5 and 22. The section on Choice Options and Policies refers to the second phase of streamlining governance: coordination.

Milestones and Measures of Success

(The State Board of Education has flagged questions that were already referenced and discussed in previous questions with a star.)

24. *Are baselines for performance being set from most current student achievement and growth data? Who will be responsible for collecting this data and running reports moving forward? How does this differ from the reporting already done by DDOE? Are these baselines goals aligned to state goals and accountability metrics?**

- The milestones and measures of success are entirely consistent with the state’s measures.
- The Commission has included consideration of these milestones and measures for City of Wilmington students disaggregated, which is not included in the state’s assessment.

Resolution and Plan as a Whole

- The Commission would be pleased if the Delaware Department of Education would like to take on this responsibility.
25. *Please clarify the milestones and timelines for the Department of Elections**
- Please see the answer to question 2.
26. *The weighted unit funding model was initially understood as a transitional piece that would be implemented immediately. How will this work transition if EFIC recommendations result in a different statewide education funding structure? Is there flexibility for changes as a result of the recommendations from this commission, how does this plan recognize the ongoing work and incorporate that into the final components of the plan? **
- Please see the answer to question 10.
27. *How does the Red Clay district plan commit to and align with the measurable outcomes of the WEIC plan?*
- The Red Clay district’s plan fully aligns with the Commission’s plan.
 - The measureable outcomes of the Commission plan were developed through extensive collaboration with the Red Clay Consolidated and Christina School Districts as well as the Redistricting Committee, which had representation from the Brandywine, Colonial, Christina, and Red Clay Consolidated School District administrations and School Boards.
 - The Commission will continue to work with all four districts to align with the milestones and measures of success that they helped develop in the Commission’s plan.
28. *Will measures and milestones be applicable to all students residing within the City of Wilmington or just those students from the city attending Red Clay schools?*
- The milestones and measures of success will be applicable to all students residing within the City of Wilmington. All City of Wilmington students will be included in the annual report submitted by the Commission.

29. *Please clarify the funding components that are incorporated and required to meet the “necessary and sufficient” funding measure.*
- The “necessary and sufficient” funding, as specified on pages 167–168 of the Commission’s plan, include the Wilmington Transition Funds requested for the 2016–17 and 2017–18 school years and recurrent funding approved and allocated for fiscal year 2017 to support weighted unit funding for low-income students, English language learners, and basic special education for grades K-3 in the entire Red Clay Consolidated School District and the current Christina School District schools in the City of Wilmington. These are the funds related directly to redistricting.
 - Please see Q&A sent on December 18, 2015, question 1, for the timeline of the funding rollout.
30. *Does this proposal, and the SBE approval of such, expire if necessary and sufficient funding is not allocated? Please clarify provision in Resolution #2 relating to Board’s suspension of implementation timetable.*
- This provision is consistent with the State Board of Education’s authority under SB 122. Under SB 122, only the State Board of Education is authorized to alter the boundaries, therefore the State Board must be involved in any suspension of the timetable or the expiration of the Commission’s plan.
 - It is the responsibility of the Commission in collaboration with the districts to report to the State Board whether they are able to continue with the redistricting commitment based on the available state funds. This is a multi-district change; therefore, the Commission must facilitate a collaborative decision about the adequacy of funding to meet the contingencies up until July 2018.
 - The opportunity to suspend the redistricting timeline only exists for the next two budget cycles. If the funding is not provided by July 2018, the plan expires. After July 2018, the opportunity of suspension of the timeline ends as this is when redistricting would occur. The suspension is only contingent on the conditions stipulated on page 98 of the plan.

- Suspension is only necessary if the state is unable to meet the financial targets that have been set out in the phased approach by July 2018, otherwise the Commission’s plan expires. There are no further contingencies beyond 2018.
 - The Commission shares the feeling with the State Board that merely changing district boundaries is not adequate. This authority ensures that district boundaries will not change without the adequate funding.
31. *Within the Resolution’s Whereas statements it states that this plan is consistent with the objective of improving student outcomes and is in the best interest of all students in NCC. Please provide details supporting this assertion. In prior questions above, we have referenced questions regarding these topics as well specifically in questions 9, 17, 18, 24, 27, 28*
- This statement confirms the expectation shared by both the State Board and the Commission that action should be consistent with the best interests of students. The statement does not refer to the impact of what is being proposed, but rather the objectives and intentions of the Transition, Resource, and Implementation Plan submitted by the Commission and under review by the State Board.
 - The Commission commits itself to center all actions around the best interests of students, as does the State Board.
 - The Commission’s intention is for the plan to serve in the best interests of all students is clear in the action agenda, laid out in the graphic on page 8, and its explanation on pages 1–2 and 11–19, and connected back to the milestones and measures of success on pages 164–178.

Additional Questions Identified by WEIC Staff

32. *Will the State commit the necessary and sufficient funds?*
- Governor Markell was present at the Commission Meeting on December 9. He acknowledged the necessity of additional state funding to ensure the plan’s success and avoid placing undue burden on the taxpayers, particularly those from the Red Clay Consolidated School District.
33. *What is the role of the Commission after implementation?*
- The Commission will take an active role in collaboration with the dis-

tricts to implement redistricting. Beyond redistricting, the Commission’s mandate is to facilitate the development and implementation of the recommendations of the other Committees. Specifically, the legislation states:

“The Wilmington Education Improvement Commission (WEIC) shall advise the Governor and General Assembly on the planning, recommending, and implementing improvements to the quality and availability of education for children in Pre-K through grade 12 in the City of Wilmington and for which such changes maybe be instructive for addressing needs of all schools within the State with high concentrations of children living in poverty, English language learners, or both.”

- The Commission will submit to the State Board an annual evaluation of progress in achieving milestones and in improving success for City of Wilmington students.
 - Page 99 of the Commission’s plan references the continued mandate of the Commission:
- “The Commission has accepted these recommendations as a baseline for its work not only in redistricting, but in all other aspects of its mission. The Commission will build upon that baseline through all of its operations, beginning with redistricting and extending until it sunsets in 2021. It should be reaffirmed that in this domain the Commission’s legislated mandate is statewide; the Commission is to advise the Governor and General Assembly on addressing the needs of all Delaware schools with high concentrations of low-income students and English language learners. The Commission’s plan for redistricting represents the beginning of the Commission’s efforts to fulfill that larger responsibility. The Commission is committed to the alignment of supports and services through a strong partnership between the community and its schools. Governor Markell was present at the Commission Meeting on December 9. He acknowledged the necessity of additional state funding to ensure the plan’s success and avoid placing undue burden on the taxpayers, particularly those from the Red Clay Consolidated School District.”**

February 11, 2016

Addendum to the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission’s Plan: Redistricting in the City of Wilmington and New Castle County: A Transition, Resource and Implementation Plan

“In a state whose courts set the precedent for Brown vs. Board of Education more than 60 years ago, but yet never acted to make any real change until told to do so by the federal courts, the time has come to take bold action on behalf of the children of Wilmington.”

“Forty years is long enough to have school district boundaries that divide neighbors and dilute the ability of the City community to engage in education. District leaders, teachers, parents, students, and advocates all support change.”

Governor Jack A. Markell
 State of the State
 January 21, 2016

Addendum Contents

This addendum to the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission’s Plan provides direct and concise responses to each of the concerns listed in the State Board of Education’s January 31, 2016 letter to the Commission. The Commission’s responses in the narrative portion of the addendum are provided in the order listed in the letter from the State Board of Education (herein referred to as State Board and SBE). The addendum also includes the following additional documentation:

- a compendium that includes additional details related to those responses;
- an integrated timeline that summarizes action steps, milestones, and funding at each stage of implementation;
- letters solicited by the Commission from each of the Wilmington school districts specifically responding to issues raised by the State Board;

- links to additional documentation provided by the Red Clay and Christina School Districts in response to the Commission’s request (now posted at the Commission’s website, www.solutionsfordelaware-schools.com and available for State Board review); and,
- copies of the answers provided by the Commission on December 18, 2015 and January 15, 2016 to earlier questions raised by the State Board.

SBE Reason One: “A clear connection was not sufficiently established that identified how shifting district boundary lines would lead to improved student outcomes.”

When all are separately accountable, no one is truly accountable. Redistricting will establish a clear leadership responsibility for the improvement of Wilmington student outcomes. Building a community of accountability is the path to securing a better future for public education in Wilmington.

The Wilmington Education Improvement Commission’s vision for Wilmington students and their families is a coherent public education system that increases accountability for student performance and reduces fragmentation for families. This vision is supported by innovative district-driven solutions grounded in proven best practices from around the country that will enhance community partnerships, increase instructional coherence, and ensure instructional quality.

The change in boundaries alone would be significant in that, for the first time in 40 years, more than half of Wilmington’s children will be experiencing a common set of instructional services and supports already approved for radical transformation of student performance by the Department of Education and the State Board. Redistricting would be supported by an increase in funding both from the priority schools’ allocation and the anticipated increase in funding for the affected students as recommended by the Commission and partially supported in the Governor’s proposed Fiscal Year 2017 budget.

For the remaining 50 percent, we now have commitments, in writing, for enhancements to the districts’ own plans to increase student outcomes for City of Wilmington and all low-income students. Equally important is the yearly evaluation we pledge to undertake that would, for the first time, aggregate the performance of all City of Wilmington students.

We have included the supporting documentation for this response

in the accompanying compendium and make it clear how the proposed changes are linked to research-based findings on enhancing student outcomes. (“SBE Reason One” on pages 11–12).

SBE Reason Two: “There are not commitments to evidence based programs and best practices to address instruction, student learning outcomes, and support services for all Wilmington students now and throughout the proposed implementation timeline.”

Each of the four districts serving Wilmington students has provided commitments and specific plans for enhancing their services to City of Wilmington students.

The five districts serving City of Wilmington students are on record confirming their continuing commitment to apply the best evidence-based programs and practices to address instruction, student learning outcomes, and support services for their City of Wilmington students. We have attached their written communications in the compendium (starting on page 22). This is unprecedented progress. Never in the previous four-decade saga of Wilmington education have so many people been committed to finding a common path forward.

The Red Clay Consolidated School District is already carrying out its approved priority schools plan. With respect to the affected students in Christina School District, during the transition the Commission expects that the Department of Education would approve Christina’s priority schools plan and that the Christina and Red Clay Consolidated School Districts will initiate the collaboration on improvement programs so that they can be readily adapted to Red Clay once the students transfer. **The Commission will continue to facilitate collaboration among the districts and the Department of Education.**

The planning year (2016-17) is of central importance for the Red Clay Consolidated School District. Red Clay, in collaboration with the Commission and the University of Delaware, will gain a deeper understanding of the needs of Christina’s Wilmington students, and identify the programs and services required to meet their needs.

As indicated earlier, the Commission will submit an annual evaluation of all students residing in Wilmington to the State Board of Education, the Governor, and the General Assembly. This annual evaluation will be conducted by the University of Delaware through a collaboration between the Institute for Public Administration and the School of Education. This work will be

strengthened by a groundbreaking University of Delaware Partnership for Public Education which will draw upon the interdisciplinary resources of the University. The annual evaluation will focus on milestones and measures of success for improved student outcomes, interim and long-term, that are both quantitative and qualitative. The evaluation will address all facets of the Commission’s action agenda for improving Wilmington student outcomes. Particular attention will focus on indicators for evaluating progress in overcoming the conditions that both reflect and sustain poor student outcomes in the area of academic achievement. The key overall objective is to reduce the achievement gap between Wilmington low-income students and other students in all districts and charters.

Quantitative Outcome Indicators

- Increased attendance rates
- Increased persistence and engagement rates
- Reduced disciplinary incident rates
- Increased participation in high-quality early childhood education programs
- Increased participation in in-school and out-of-school programs that support enhanced developmental progress and learning
- Increased graduation rates
- Reduced achievement gaps in standardized tests
- Reduced youth incarceration and recidivism rates

Qualitative Outcome Indicators

- Reduced student trauma
- Increased in-school and out-of-school programs to support developmental progress and learning.
- Improved college and workforce readiness
- Improved family stability
- Increased employment

We have included the supporting documentation for this response in the accompanying compendium (see “SBE Reason Two” on pages 13–14).

SBE Reason Three: “The proposed weighted funding recommendations are not broad enough for meaningful city-wide change. The proposed timeline and distribution for funding does not provide an equitable impact for all students in the City of Wilmington.”

The Commission is committed to additional funding for all low-income students, English language learners, and basic special education for grades K-3, in the City of Wilmington.

The total cost of this funding will be based on the weighted-unit formula approved by the General Assembly. Based on the model illustrated in the Commission’s plan, the total cost for City of Wilmington districts and charter schools is between \$22 and \$26 million in recurrent funding, depending on the weights approved.

Given state fiscal constraints, our approach is to phase in such funding over three years, beginning with the affected districts, and moving to the remaining districts and charters serving City of Wilmington students. For the first year, Fiscal Year 2017, we estimate a need for \$7.5 to \$11 million recurrent funding, depending upon the weights approved by the General Assembly, to apply this unit to the Red Clay Consolidated School District and the Christina School District schools in the City of Wilmington.

To be clear, we see the increased funding for City of Wilmington low-income students, English language learners, and basic special education for grades K-3 as a baseline leading to statewide application of this essential support.

We have included the supporting documentation for this response in the accompanying compendium (see “SBE Reason Three” on page 15).

SBE Reason Four: “There is not an executive summary or concise overview that outlines all associated costs with appropriate categorization mapped to implementation milestones.”

A summary timeline is provided on pages 16–18 of this document that includes a concise overview of the costs associated with implementation milestones (see “SBE Reason Four” on pages 16–18).

SBE Reason Five: “Without milestones connecting the work of other WEIC committees, it is unclear how essential services and supports will integrate with redistricting efforts to allow meaningful impact on student outcomes.”

The Commission’s committees are focused on how essential services and supports will be integrated with redistricting to support meaningful positive impacts on student outcomes.

The Commission’s committees on Meeting the Needs of Students in Poverty; Charter and District Collaboration; and Parent, Educator, and Community Engagement are focused on how best to mobilize and focus needed supports for schools, students, and their families. A key step is to identify the needs of schools with high concentrations of low-income students and English language learners. The committees have outlined work plans and goals that focus on improvements based on national best practices for these schools. Key areas of focus include alignment and integration of early childhood, in-school, and out-of-school supports and services; tools for increasing parent and community engagement; recommendations on strengthening educator professional development; and more effective coordination of collaboration between districts and charter schools.

The committees are focused on recommending ways to strengthen support and services for all City of Wilmington students. Some groups have committed themselves to play a much larger role supporting the work of the committees and the schools impacted by redistricting. This includes the University of Delaware Partnership for Public Education, as referenced earlier, and the United Way of Delaware, which works collectively with business, government, social service agencies, academic groups, community organizations, and concerned individuals. The United Way of Delaware will mobilize community resources to support the Commission’s efforts. Additional organizations are being invited to join this effort, including the Metropolitan Wilmington Urban League, FAME, Inc., One Village Alliance, Education Voices, Inc., the Latin American Community Center, the Vision Coalition of Delaware, the Delaware Hispanic Commission, the YMCA, the Boys and Girls Clubs of Delaware, the Business Roundtable, the Delaware Public Policy Institute, the State and New Castle County Chambers of Commerce, and the Interdenominational Ministers Action Council.

Milestones for Fiscal Year 2017 (July 2016 – June 2017)

- United Way will study and evaluate national best practices and models for the effective mobilization of community capacity.
- The University of Delaware in partnership with United Way of Delaware and the Commission’s Meeting the Needs of Students in Poverty committee will develop a comprehensive map of Wilmington community assets to support schools and students.
- The Commission’s Parent, Educator, and Community Engagement Committee will produce recommendations based on national and local best practices for how to strengthen engagement in order to improve student outcomes. The initial focus will be on the schools involved in redistricting.
- The University of Delaware Partnership for Public Education will work with the Commission’s Charter and District Collaboration Committee to conduct an evaluation of national best practices for charter and district collaboration, and for the effective support of charter school operations. This will provide the basis for recommending improvements.
- The Commission’s Charter and District Collaboration Committee will develop recommendations for collaborative professional development opportunities among districts and charter schools.

Milestones for Fiscal Year 2018 (July 2017 – June 2018)

- The University of Delaware will assist the Commission in undertaking a comprehensive review of current state policies and programs intended to serve low-income children and families, accompanied by a fiscal mapping of the flow of funds associated with those policies and programs. This review will provide the necessary baseline for recommending improvements in state policies and programs.
- The Commission’s Parent, Educator, and Community Engagement Committee will engage partner and community organizations (see above) to help strengthen parent engagement in all schools serving City of Wilmington students.
- The Commission’s Charter and District Collaboration Committee will develop a plan grounded in effective practice research for strengthening collaboration between and among charter schools and districts.

We have included the supporting documentation for this response in the accompanying compendium (see “SBE Reason Five” on pages 19–20).

SBE Reason Six: “There is not a clear and concise summary of required components for the redistricting transition, resource, and implementation as it relates to the overall timeline. It is difficult to differentiate what’s required immediately versus the broader recommendations within the full report.”

The compendium includes a clear and concise summary of the required components for the redistricting transition, resource, and implementation timeline.

The Redistricting Plan includes a detailed timeline for redistricting transition, resources and implementation, as well as a funding timeline and the specific timelines outlined by the Red Clay Consolidated District and the Christina School District. The summary timeline on pages 16–18 of the compendium is based on the more detailed timelines provided in the Redistricting Plan. This summary includes the yearly action steps required for the redistricting, planning, and transition for the provision of necessary fiscal and community resources, and for effective implementation.

We have included the supporting documentation for this response in the accompanying compendium (see “SBE Reason Four” on pages 16–18).

SBE Reason Seven: “A lack of milestones related to relevant work to be done by the Department of Elections.”

The Commission commits to the following milestones in working with the New Castle County (NCC) Board of Elections:

- **July 5, 2016:** The Commission would request that the NCC Board of Elections addresses Christina Nominating District A and the Commission would craft the necessary legislation to redraw boundaries or expanding/contracting boards. The Commission’s attorneys would work with Board of Elections officials to devise necessary legislation.
- **August to November 2016:** The Commission would consider the proposed solution and would conduct discussions with the Red Clay Consolidated and Christina School boards.
- **January to February 2017:** The Commission and NCC Board of Elections would seek sponsors in the General Assembly for proposed leg-

islation. Legislation would be introduced into the General Assembly and considered by the Senate and House Education committees.

- **June 2017:** Legislation would be adopted prior to the July 2018 redistricting implementation. This provides adequate time to prepare for necessary actions prior to the onset of redistricting July 1, 2018.

The ultimate application of these proposed milestones will be at the clear discretion of the New Castle County Department of Elections.

SBE Reason Eight: “The Board does not support all components within the “Board Resolution” and does not support the inclusion of a “Board Resolution” within the WEIC proposal.”

The “Redistricting Resolution” is not intended to limit, contravene, or replace the State Board’s procedures for acting on the Commission’s plan.

We do understand that the State Board of Education’s procedure is to initiate a motion from a member of the Board to act upon the plan, and that the Board does not intend to approve or not approve the Commission’s plan by resolution.

The “Redistricting Resolution” is an integral part of the Commission’s plan. The school districts’ representatives have informed the Commission that inclusion of the Resolution is necessary for their school boards’ support of the Plan. At the Commission meeting on February 2, 2016, all four school board representatives reaffirmed their commitment to the resolution and identified it as critical to their support of the plan.

SBE Reason Nine: “The Board expressed concerns with the proposed approach around suspension of the implementation timetable and expiration of the plan.”

Redistricting should not go forward without the necessary and sufficient resources to support improvements in student outcomes.

The Commission has always agreed with the position articulated by the State Board of Education: Real education change requires much more than redistricting. For redistricting to have an impact, resources must be provided to better support student learning. The possibility of suspending the timetable for implementation applies only for the next two budget cycles, prior to the actual change in district boundaries. Once the boundaries change, there are no contingencies. If the necessary and sufficient funding is not provided by

July 2018, before the boundaries change, then the plan expires. This provision ensures that redistricting does not occur without the resources required to change instruction in these schools. This avoids creating an unfunded mandate.

SBE Reason Ten: “It is not clear how broad and sufficient community/stakeholder support for this proposal will be sustained throughout the duration of the implementation timeline and beyond.”

Community and stakeholder engagement is a priority for the Commission. The Commission’s process has been the most transparent and inclusive citizen-engagement effort for any major public policy reform in state history, and we intend to sustain this process of active community/stakeholder engagement through the duration of implementation and beyond.

Wilmington education has been shaped by top-down strategies for 40 years. The results speak for themselves. WEAC and WEIC have consciously developed a plan from the ground up, the only process capable of producing sustained change for public education.

The commission has reached an estimated 25,000 Delawareans directly, including ongoing engagements with community leaders and decision-makers, a social media strategy actively engaging 2,500 citizens in two-way communication, and broad opportunity for community participation that has resulted in 500 pages of direct input from hundreds of interested citizens. We believe this process fully meets the standard articulated in the State Board’s second guiding principle that calls for inclusion of the most diverse perspectives that fully represent the breadth and depth of citizen views. The Commission, working with the impacted school districts and with the support of Wilmington community organizations, remains committed to sustaining this high level of stakeholder engagement throughout the process.

The Commission has dedicated an entire committee, the Parent, Educator, and Community Engagement Committee, to ensuring that plans are in place for continuous engagement throughout all stages of this process. The committee is exploring ways to build on school-to-community connections using both school-based and community-based approaches, and mobilizing community-based assets for family support. The United Way of Delaware will expand its leadership role in mobilizing and coordinating community support for schools with high concentrations of low-income students and English

language learners, and other students at risk. These efforts will include partners from all sectors.

Finally, the Red Clay Consolidated and Christina School Districts have developed plans for how they will communicate with families, students, and educators throughout the process of redistricting. Some examples of this communication include meetings with stakeholders, social media, letters and postcards, emails, and both traditional and nontraditional media outlets. Both school districts are committed to maintaining and strengthening this communication. The Commission plans to work with all Wilmington districts and charters to sustain community and stakeholder engagement.

SBE Reason Eleven: “Potential for duplicative actions and additional levels of bureaucracy among WEIC and other entities (IRMC, Office of Early Learning, P-20, Delaware Charter Schools Network, etc.) are referenced in the proposal.”

The Commission will not be an ongoing part of Delaware Public Education and will not duplicate the work of any other institutions.

The Commission is a community-based advisory group, not a part of the state government. The Commission has a specific mission and set of responsibilities defined by state law (HB148) that will end on June 30, 2021. Its purpose is to facilitate the activities and effectiveness of others, and to recommend how existing institutions may be strengthened and augmented to improve Wilmington student outcomes. For example, the Commission proposes that the Office of Education and Public Policy can fill a gap by strengthening City of Wilmington parent and community engagement in support of the schools serving Wilmington students. As the Wilmington Education Strategy Think Tank describes, “It is critical that officials in Wilmington play a more direct role in shaping and monitoring the educational opportunities and resources afforded to youth growing up in the city – a role that has been completely eroded over the past several decades.” **The Commission seeks to reduce duplication by strengthening the alignment and integration of existing agencies and services to address the specific needs of City of Wilmington students and their families.**

We have included the supporting documentation for this response in the accompanying compendium (see “SBE Reason Eleven” on page 21).

Compendium to Responses to State Board of Education

SBE Reason One: “A clear connection was not sufficiently established that identified how shifting district boundary lines would lead to improved student outcomes.”

The recommended shift in boundary lines will transfer responsibility for approximately 5,000 City of Wilmington students from the Christina School District to the Red Clay Consolidated School District. This change, and the accompanying resource commitments proposed by the Commission, will lead to improved outcomes for these students.

The Commission’s goal is to provide the opportunity for an excellent and equitable education for all students, the first principle in the State Board’s mission statement. We have documented that many, if not most, Wilmington students enjoy neither equity nor excellence. Achieving that goal requires a transformation. Currently, a bare majority of City of Wilmington students meets the state’s standards in only one school district. In all four districts, a majority of low-income Wilmington students do not meet the state’s standards and perform below other low-income students residing in the suburbs.

An important contributing factor to low student achievement is the Christina School District’s disconnected configuration, which is inconsistent with national best practices for aligning district boundaries with the communities they serve; one of only four such districts among 14,000 nationally. This configuration imposes burdens on City of Wilmington students that are greater than the burdens placed on non-Wilmington students, with no compensating educational benefits. Separating students from the communities in which they reside makes it far more difficult to develop school, family, and community partnerships which research has shown to be powerful influences on student achievement.

Many Wilmington students experience instructional incoherence rather than the instructional coherence that research has shown is important to student achievement. A majority of City of Wilmington students in the Christina School District choose out to other districts and charters but often return to the default district, moving back and forth between other districts and charters. Between 20 percent and 30 percent of Christina’s City of Wilmington students change schools each year, approximately double the student turnover rate in their suburban schools. Changing schools in the City of Wilmington often means that students change districts, reducing education progress because of differences in curriculum, instructional materials, and instructional

strategies. The alignment gained by consolidating the City of Wilmington students in the Christina and Red Clay districts will remove one of the important sources of disruption experienced by many students.

Redistricting will mean that all of the lowest performing City of Wilmington schools in both districts will be in a single district that is implementing an approved and funded improvement plan. The Christina School District's plan for improving its lowest performing schools in the City of Wilmington has not been approved by the Department of Education, and the district currently lacks funding to carry out its plan. By contrast, the Red Clay Consolidated School District has a plan approved by the Department of Education for improving its lowest performing schools in the City of Wilmington and is actively implementing that plan. The Red Clay Consolidated School District has made a commitment to work with the Commission and other partners, such as the University of Delaware and United Way of Delaware, to further strengthen instruction and both in-school and out-of-school supports beginning immediately upon approval of the Commission's plan. City of Wilmington students moving to the Red Clay Consolidated School District will enjoy considerably more program and school options at the middle and high school levels than they currently have in the Christina School District. Overall, instructional quality will be enhanced.

Governor Markell has included funding for the Red Clay Consolidated School District in his proposed Fiscal Year 2017 budget, pending the approval of redistricting, to initiate a unit for low-income students, English language learners, and basic special education for grades K-3. That funding will enable educational supports for City of Wilmington, such as smaller class sizes and socio-emotional supports, that would otherwise be unaffordable.

Implementation of the recommended shift in district boundaries will result in a majority of Wilmington students being the responsibility of one school district for the first time in forty years. It will confer a leadership role in Wilmington public education on the Red Clay Consolidated School District, enabling a concerted focus on improvements based on best practices that may be scaled up across low-performing schools and reduce the gap in achievement between Wilmington low-income students and low-income students district wide.

SBE Reason Two: “There are not commitments to evidence based programs and best practices to address instruction, student learning outcomes, and support services for all Wilmington students now and throughout the proposed implementation timeline.”

- See memos from Red Clay Consolidated School District, Christina School District, Colonial School District, Brandywine School District, and New Castle County Vocational Technical School District, starting on page 22.
- See Christina Priority Schools Plan here.⁴⁹
- See Red Clay's Highlands Priority School Plan here.
- See Red Clay's Shortlidge Priority School Plan here.
- See Red Clay's Warner Priority School Plan here.

The research on how schooling affects educational outcomes reflects that student outcomes are related to differences among students, teachers, classrooms, schools and districts. The greatest percentage in variability in outcomes, achievement in particular, is attributable to differences among students, which includes their background, family, and community context, which explains about two thirds to three-quarters of the differences in outcomes. Differences between teachers or classrooms account for another 10–15 percent of the variance, while school-based differences account for about another 20 percent.⁵⁰

In the education system, teachers have direct effects on student outcomes, influenced most immediately by learning opportunities in the classroom as well as the immediate community and home context in which students become ready to learn. School leaders (and schools themselves) impact student outcomes by shaping school culture, supporting instructional quality, and managing community relationships. These are well documented indirect impacts. District level reform is one step further removed from instruction and student outcomes, directly impacting schools, school leaders, and teachers, but not directly impacting students. The effects of districts are felt through changes in schools and teachers. Therefore, student outcomes are impacted by teaching and learning, which are shaped by the school context, which are

⁴⁹ The priority school plans can be found at www.solutionsfordelawareschools.com/resources/#background

⁵⁰ Nye, B., Konstantopoulos, S., & Hedges, L. V. (2004). How large are teacher effects?. *Educational evaluation and policy analysis*, 26(3), 237-257

in turn shaped by leadership and policy at the district level.

Some educational reforms that are made possible through a more streamlined governance system include:

Professional learning communities among schools: Research on professional learning, particularly for teachers, indicates that time for, and structures that support, collaboration can result in the diffusion of ideas, resources, and practices, and may ultimately impact student learning. While schools currently engage in these practices, there are limited opportunities for schools serving Wilmington students to regularly engage in this type of shared learning and growth. A streamlined governance system – including both redistricting and greater charter-district collaboration – may enable the organization of professional learning communities within Wilmington, as it will create fewer barriers to coordination and implementation and facilitate the establishment of structures and supports.

School, family, and community partnerships: The work of Joyce Epstein and colleagues focuses on the power of partnerships and their relationship to student outcomes such as achievement, grades, attitudes, and long-term educational success.⁵¹ Establishing policies and practices for communicating with families, engaging with community stakeholders, and establishing partnerships with local organizations to collaboratively meet student needs may be more consistent, coherent, and effective with a streamlined governance system. In the current structure, stakeholders, families, and organizations must navigate unusual district boundaries and establish relationships with multiple districts with different visions, policies, and practices.

Instructional coherence: Research suggests that one lever that districts and schools have in improving student outcomes is instructional coherence – that is, providing a consistent vision for student learning accompanied with the supports and structures made available system-wide. While there are many research-based models of instruction, educational programs, and whole school reforms that may be helpful in addressing the needs of Wilmington students, ensuring system-wide supports and structures for implementation is made more challenging when that system is governed by multiple organizations with different resources and political contexts.

Ensuring instructional quality: One of the indirect ways in which schools and districts influence student outcomes is by influencing instructional qual-

ity. Instructional quality results from professional development, hiring, mentoring, and evaluating educators. As many of those functions lie with initiatives or support from district central offices, a more streamlined governance system can enable a more coherent approach to staffing schools with high quality teachers through human resources practices and supporting high quality teaching through system-wide policies and supports related to professional development.

Redistricting creates many possibilities for quality and coherence in the educational opportunities in Wilmington schools. District reform plans will take advantage of these possibilities and leverage the opportunity to implement strategies to improve instructional quality, such as but not limited to those described above.

SBE Reason Three: “The proposed weighted funding recommendations are not broad enough for meaningful city-wide change. The proposed timeline and distribution for funding does not provide an equitable impact for all students in the City of Wilmington.”

As a result of its funding system, educational opportunity in Delaware is inequitable. Delaware is one of fifteen states without funding designated for low-income students and one of only four states without designated funding for English language learners. Additionally, Delaware does not provide funding for basic special education for grades K-3. While the lack of funding affects schools and students statewide, the impact is particularly acute for students in the City of Wilmington, which has the highest concentration of poverty in the state.

The Commission supports, without qualification, extending additional funding to all low-income students, English language learners, and basic special education for grades K-3 in the City of Wilmington at the earliest practicable time. Indeed, the Commission believes such funding should be extended to all qualified students statewide. Recognizing the fiscal constraints of the state and the districts, the Commission has recommended an alternative to immediate city-wide allocation, a three-year roll-out to full implementation in all schools in which City of Wilmington students are enrolled, with the first two years of funding provided to the schools in the two districts impacted by redistricting. The Commission believes that we must start now to address these needs and that the roll-out of needed funding for all City of Wilmington students, and all comparably needy students statewide, should move forward

⁵¹ Epstein, Joyce L. (2013). Perspectives and previews on research and policy for school, family, and community partnerships. In Booth, Alan, and Judith F. Dunn, Eds. *Family-school links: How do they affect educational outcomes?*, pp 209-246. New York: Routledge.

as rapidly as possible.

In order for the weighted unit funding to have an equitable impact for all students living in the City of Wilmington, it cannot be allocated only to schools citywide but must be provided to all schools in which City of Wilmington students are enrolled. Many Wilmington students and most Wilmington middle and high school students are enrolled in schools outside of the City of Wilmington. This is largely not a matter of choice. There is no traditional high school in the City of Wilmington. For this reason, allocation of the recommended funding unit needs to include schools in suburban New Castle County, in which Wilmington students are enrolled.

Using the funding model illustrated in the December 17, 2015 WEIC Transition, Resource and Implementation Plan, it is estimated by the Office of the Controller General that it may cost the State of Delaware between \$22 and \$26 million to provide the funding unit to all schools in which City of Wilmington students are enrolled, depending on the weights approved by the General Assembly; this does not include the required local share of funding.

Governor Markell has supported the Commission's proposed roll-out by recommending that \$4 million dollars in recurrent funding be provided in Fiscal Year 2017 to begin the implementation of the weighted unit funding. The Commission appreciates the Governor's commitment to this funding but recognizes that it is not sufficient to fully fund the Commission's recommendation. We will work with the Governor and the General Assembly during the current legislative session to achieve full funding for the Commission's recommendation for the first year, which includes the Christina schools in the City of Wilmington and basic special education for grades K-3. For the first year, Fiscal Year 2017, we estimate a need for \$7.5 to \$11 million recurrent, depending upon the weights approved by the General Assembly, to apply this unit to the Red Clay Consolidated School District and the Christina School District schools in the City of Wilmington.

SBE Reason Four and Six: "There is not an executive summary or concise overview that outlines all associated costs with appropriate categorization mapped to implementation milestones." And "There is not a clear and concise summary of required components for the redistricting transition, resource, and implementation as it relates to the overall timeline. It is difficult to differentiate what's required immediately versus the broader recommendations within the full report."

Implementation Timeline

Action Steps, Fiscal Year 2017 (July 2016 – June 2017): Planning Stage

- The Christina and Red Clay districts would continue to collaborate on transition planning.
- Initiation of a weighted unit for low-income students/English language learners/basic special education for grades K-3 for all Red Clay schools plus Christina Wilmington schools. Estimated cost: \$7.5 to \$11 million recurrent, depending upon the weights approved by the General Assembly.
- Wilmington Transition Fund: \$3 million in one-time funds.
- Review of property reassessment building on the work of the 2008 task force and the recommendations on property reassessment from the Education Funding Improvement Commission.
- The University of Delaware will assist the Commission in undertaking a review of current state policies and programs intended to serve low-income children and families, accompanied by a fiscal mapping of the flow of funds associated with those policies and programs.
- United Way will study and evaluate national best practices and models for the effective mobilization of community capacity.
- The University of Delaware in partnership with United Way of Delaware and the Meeting the Needs of Students in Poverty committee will develop a comprehensive map of Wilmington community assets that may be mobilized to support schools and students.
- The Commission's Parent, Educator, and Community Engagement Committee will produce recommendations based on national and

local best practices for how to strengthen engagement in order to improve student outcomes. The initial focus will be on the schools involved in redistricting.

- The University of Delaware Partnership for Public Education will work with the Commission's Charter and District Collaboration Committee to conduct an evaluation of national best practices for charter and district collaboration, and for the effective support of charter school operations. This will provide the basis for recommending improvements.
- The Commission's Charter and District Collaboration Committee will develop recommendations for collaborative professional development opportunities among districts and charter schools.
- Christina will consider existing special programs in the city and analyze the capacity to effectively support holistic and enriching programs at the high school level after redistricting.
- Red Clay will initiate a facilities assessment of the schools being acquired from the Christina School District, develop new grade and school configurations, design new feeder patterns and transportation feeder patterns, and develop action plans to assure that redistricting takes place in a manner that is minimally disruptive to students, parents, and educators.
- The Commission will support the Red Clay Consolidated and Christina School Districts' collaboration with DSEA, CEA, RCEA, and AFSCME to establish a multi-year process and joint plan for the staffing needs for the Christina schools in the City of Wilmington. These needs will depend on the configuration of schools and new programs determined by Red Clay.
- Memorandums of understanding between the districts and the representatives of employees about the overall planning, choice, and decision process will be completed by the end of 2016.
- Options for employment for educators and other personnel will be identified after the development of the districts planned configuration of schools and programs, and no later than the spring of 2017.
- Red Clay Consolidated School District and Christina School District will plan for the transfer of student data and other technological needs.

- Christina School District will plan for the relocation of their central offices.
- The Commission, in partnership with the districts, will develop a legal plan for the transfer of property.
- Red Clay Consolidated School District and Christina School District will continue communicating with parents, students, educators, and staff throughout the process through several channels identified in their individual plans.
- The Commission will work with the NCC Board of Elections to determine the school board configurations.
 - July 5, 2016: The Commission will request that the NCC Board of Elections addresses Christina Nominating District A and the Commission will craft the necessary legislation to redraw boundaries or expanding/contracting boards. The Commission's attorneys will work with Board of Elections officials to devise necessary legislation.
 - August to November 2016: The Commission will consider the proposed solution and will conduct discussions with the Red Clay Consolidated and Christina School boards.
 - January to February 2017: The Commission and NCC Board of Elections will seek sponsors in the General Assembly for proposed legislation. Legislation will be introduced into the General Assembly and considered by the Senate and House Education committees.
 - June 2017: Legislation should be adopted prior to the July 2018 redistricting implementation. This provides adequate time to prepare for necessary actions prior to the onset of redistricting July 1, 2018.

Action Steps, Fiscal Year 2018 (July 2017 – June 2018): Transition Stage

- • Expansion of a weighted unit to low-income students/English language learners/basic special education for grades K-3 all Christina schools, in addition to unit already applied to all Red Clay Schools and Christina schools in the City of Wilmington. Estimated Additional Cost: \$3.5 to \$6.5 million recurrent, for a total cost of \$11 to \$17.5 mil-

lion, depending upon the weights approved by the General Assembly.

- An additional increment to the Wilmington Transition Fund: \$1 million.
- The Commission recommends initiation of a long-overdue process of statewide property tax reassessment and to establish that process on a regular schedule that is in accordance with national best practices.
- The University of Delaware will assist the Commission in undertaking a comprehensive review of current state policies and programs intended to serve low-income children and families, accompanied by a fiscal mapping of the flow of funds associated with those policies and programs. This review will provide the necessary baseline for recommending improvements in state policies and programs.
- The Commission's Parent, Educator, and Community Engagement Committee will engage partner and community organizations (see above) to help strengthen parent engagement in all schools serving City of Wilmington students.
- The Commission's Charter and District Collaboration Committee will develop a plan grounded in effective practice research for strengthening collaboration between and among charter schools and districts.
- Red Clay Consolidated School District and Christina School District will continue collaborating on the minimal disruption to students.
- Students will be assigned to their schools and given the opportunity for choice.
- The Red Clay Consolidated and Christina School Districts will provide professional development opportunities and related support services to employees to enhance their capabilities to assume new responsibilities associated with changes in positions and expectations.
- Red Clay Consolidated School District will plan for the changing transportation needs.
- Professional development for transitioning staff begins and continues through implementation.
- Transfer of assets, contracts, and accounts completed.

- Purchase of curriculum materials and other assets necessary for transition occurs in time for implementation.
- Red Clay Consolidated School District, Christina School District, and the Commission will continue to communicate with students, families, and educators.

Action Steps, Fiscal Year 2019 (July 2018 – June 2019): Initial Implementation

- Effective July 1, 2018, the schools and students in the City of Wilmington that are now served by the Christina School District will be assigned to the Red Clay Consolidated School District.
 - All students can choose to remain in their schools, as of the end of the 2017–18 school year, until their grade configuration is complete, or until they complete their unique program. If approved, the change in district boundaries and the reassignment of Christina School District students and City of Wilmington schools to the Red Clay Consolidated School District will begin at the start of the 2018–2019 school year.
- Expansion of a weighted unit to low-income students/English language learners/basic special education for grades K-3 **all City of Wilmington districts and charter schools**, in addition to unit already applied to all Red Clay Schools and all Christina schools. Estimated Additional Cost: \$8.5 to \$11 million recurrent, for a total cost of \$22 to \$26 million, depending upon the weights approved by the General Assembly.
- Initiation of the process for implementation of property reassessment.
- The districts impacted by redistricting will be authorized to enact tax rate adjustments to meet current operating expenses as voted by their school boards until property reassessment occurs. Annual adjustments should not exceed an established inflation threshold, such as CPI.
- Contingency funding for the adjustments needed in the NCC tax pool, \$3 million.
- Increased collaboration will be sustained among Wilmington districts and between districts and Wilmington charters. New partnerships are proposed and initiated.

- Continue implementation of WEIC committees’ action plans to support the needs of Wilmington students.
- Full implementation will be complete for the United Way of Delaware-led alliance of nonprofit and community institutions in support of Wilmington public schools.
- Begin implementation of the proposal for the development and implementation of a complete plan for integration of state and local services including partnering with private and nonprofit institutions.
- Begin implementation of the early childhood community plan for the city of Wilmington, which includes a partnership to increase access to high quality early childhood services.
- Begin implementation of new roles for the Delaware P-20 Council to improve the alignment of resources and programs to support student learning from birth through college and career with specific attention to transitions. Begin the development of relevant legislation.

SBE Reason Five: “Without milestones connecting the work of other WEIC committees, it is unclear how essential services and supports will integrate with redistricting efforts to allow meaningful impact on student outcomes.”

The Commission’s committee, Meeting the Needs of Students in Poverty, has divided its work into three distinct working groups: Early Childhood (birth to age five); In-School Support and Services; and Out-of-School Community Supports and Services. The committee continues to work both collectively and in its working groups to address. The three working groups are as follows:

- The Early Childhood working group is committed to identifying and developing support services and programs for babies and young children so that they grow healthily and start school at the appropriate developmental level and are ready to learn.
- The In-School Support and Support Services working group is endeavoring to identify, align, and integrate necessary resources within the school infrastructure to support academic success.
- The Out-Of-School Community Supports and Services working group is seeking to identify, align and ensure that adequate communi-

ty-based resources are in place and working collaboratively to support children and families during non-traditional school based hours.

It is the committee’s position that positive community outcomes will be best achieved through improved alignment and integration of community services and public/private funding. To ensure the execution of this committee’s recommendations, United Way of Delaware and the University of Delaware will work to develop a framework which effectively coordinates and aligns services and funding from both public and private sectors in support of public schools in the City of Wilmington. The framework will include a comprehensive student needs assessment; detailed evaluation of the public and private resources currently supporting efforts and a sustainability analysis. In 2016, the committee anticipates working through all the data collection requirements, and in 2017, the committee anticipates commencing the execution of the framework. With proper alignment of services and resources, both public and private, the committee can best meet the needs of low-income students and their families and work to provide a pathway to success from birth to college and/or career.

The Commission’s Charter and District Collaboration Committee is using demographic data to identify schools with similar populations, and therefore have the potential to learn from each other. They are reviewing state and national models of best practices, identifying challenges faced by students (i.e., prevalence of PTSD), and are exploring ways to build upon existing collaborations to create a coherent public education system that serves all students well.

The Commission’s Parent, Educator, and Community Engagement Committee (PEaCE) is coordinating the engagement of parents, educators, and the community during the development and implementation of the plan and beyond. PEaCE is honing strategies to improve and sustain engagement of parents in support of the schools in which their students are enrolled. While family engagement is recognized broadly as of critical importance to student success, actual mobilization of efforts is fragmented. This committee will evaluate national best practices for engagement of parents, families, and community members and recommend models and strategies that apply to the City of Wilmington and prospectively to all of Delaware. The committee seeks to support the resources necessary to engage youth and their families in understanding why participation is important. This could include the more consistent provision of community liaisons or site coordinators at schools, encouraging schools to make sure meetings are adding value and strengthening

communication with families. The committee is exploring ways to build on school-to-community connections on both the school-based and community-based approaches, bridging between enhanced professional development for staff and teachers (e.g., cultural competency, Train the Trainer) and community-based assets for family support and training. The Commission and the committee are committed to parent, educator, and community engagement and will create a strong plan aligned with this objective.

By the end of the first transition year, each of the affected districts will have an asset map of existing resources and gaps and a coordinated plan for integration of surrounding services, some of which we expected to be employed in all of the affected schools and some of which will be at the discretion of the principal and his or her leaders in those schools. In the second year, said services will be fully operational and evaluated to develop a baseline by school. In the transition year, all services will be fully operational.

The Commission has obtained the commitment of a number of community partners to actively support the provision of essential services and supports for Wilmington Schools. At the Commission's urging, the University of Delaware is launching the Partnership for Public Education to mobilize the university's research, educational, and public service capacities to address the challenges facing Delaware schools with high concentrations of low-income students and other students at risk. The initial focus of the UD Partnership for Public Education will be on assistance to schools impacted by redistricting to complement the work of the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission. UD's research and evaluation capacity will help partners select, craft, and evaluate programs and policies to improve outcomes for students at risk. These include the design of research-based programs and interventions, continuous improvement and implementation research, and impact analysis. Professional development will include UD-based, as well as site-based, professional development opportunities for educators and staff in partnership schools to learn evidence-based practices that strengthen the quality of instruction for all students.

The United Way of Delaware will expand its leadership role in mobilizing and coordinating community support for schools with high concentrations of low-income students and English language learners, and other students at risk of failure. As described on the United Way of Delaware's website, "Founded in 1946, United Way of Delaware (UWD) works to advance the common good by focusing on the three building blocks to a good life: Education, Income and Health. UWD is engaged in a long-term strategy to eliminate the root

causes of Delaware's most pressing social problems in New Castle, Kent, and Sussex counties. United Way of Delaware works collectively with business, government, social service agencies, academic groups, community organizations and concerned individuals to establish positive, long-lasting solutions for today and into the future." United Way of Delaware's initial effort will be to assist schools impacted by redistricting to complement the work of the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission. The United Way's program will provide direct support for both in-school and out-of-school services – including early childhood education programs, developmental screening programs, in-school assistance programs for socio-emotional development, after school programs, extended year-round educational programs, family assistance programs – that address the developmental needs of children and their families, provide needed assistance to teachers and other school staff, and support continuous improvement in student learning outcomes. The United Way of Delaware is now evaluating national models of best practice for the effective mobilization of community capacity. In addition, the university is helping to develop a comprehensive map of Wilmington community assets.

SBE Reason Eleven: “Potential for duplicative actions and additional levels of bureaucracy among WEIC and other entities (IRMC, Office of Early Learning, P-20, Delaware Charter Schools Network, etc.) are referenced in the proposal.”

As stipulated in House Bill 148, the Commission is responsible for “advising the Governor and General Assembly on the planning, recommending, and implementing improvements to the quality and availability of education for children pre-K through grade 12 in the City of Wilmington and for which changes may be instructive for addressing needs of all schools within the State with high concentrations of children in poverty, English language learners, or both.”

The Commission seeks to reduce duplication by strengthening the alignment and integration of existing agencies and services to address the specific needs of City of Wilmington students and their families. Towards this objective, the Commission, in collaboration with the University of Delaware's Center for Community Research and Service and Kid's Count in Delaware, will undertake a review of current state policies and programs intended to serve low-income children and families, accompanied by a fiscal mapping of the flow of funds associated with those policies and programs. This type of analysis reflects national best practices for evaluating the strengths and weaknesses

of the existing policy and program infrastructure serving public purposes. This is precisely the kind of analysis that was used as the foundation for the improvements in early childhood education undertaken in 2010, leading to the sustained improvements in Early Childhood programs and policies over the subsequent five years.

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Appendix A



WEAC 2015 Legislative Priorities

2015 Legislative Priorities

Wilmington Education
Advisory Committee

2015 Legislative Priorities

Members of the 148th Session of the Delaware General Assembly:

From the very beginning of its work through the delivery of its final report, the members of the Wilmington Education Advisory Committee (WEAC) knew that meaningful change would require this: **Action in Legislative Hall.** WEAC has generated significant momentum during the last nine months. WEAC sponsored community forums with thousands of interested constituents, weekly public meetings and community meetings, online coalitions in social media, and one-on-one discussions with hundreds of key decision-makers. Our analysis and recommendations have received broad-based support and encouragement. Now it is time to act. Over the next six weeks the 62 members of the General Assembly must lead the way.

In that context, today we are issuing our priorities for this legislative session. These are based on the recommendations outlined in the WEAC final report. There are a number of legislative proposals already in process that we fully support as well as two new proposals that we believe are central to the next steps in our journey. The new proposals are as follows:

- A proposed bill to establish the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission (WEIC) in code with specific functions to implement the short- and longer-term recommendations outlined in the Advisory Committee's report.
- An amendment to Delaware Code that allows the State Board of Education to redraw district lines in accordance with a resource, transition and implementation plan developed by WEIC under a specified and limited timetable and subject to confirmation by the General Assembly and the Governor.

It's our intention that the work on these two proposals would progress consecutively. First, the WEIC would develop a transition, resource and implementation (timeline/action) plan for streamlining district governance of Wilmington education as outlined in the Advisory Committee's final report. That plan would be submitted to the State Board of Education for approval by December 31, 2015 and then would need to be confirmed by vote of the General Assembly.

The State Board would act only after the General Assembly has consented by joint resolution and the Governor has affirmed. While WEIC would develop the plans, the power to move forward with those plans would be given to the State Board by the General Assembly.

Note that WEIC would be a standalone entity separate from any state department, include representatives from every affected district and comprise representation from parents, students, teachers, community leaders, and union participation. The Commission would sunset in 2020.

Email: tonyallen@comcast.net Phone: 302.290.1445

Wilmington Education
Advisory Committee

May 12, 2015
Page Two

Our other priorities, all of which stem from the recommendations outlined in the WEAC final report, include the following:

- HB 30 (Representative Williams) — to fill the gap in special education funding Kindergarten through the third grade
- HB 117 (Representative Heffernan) — to change the unit count to provide more support for schools with high concentrations of students in poverty; and
- A specific portion of HB 56 (Representative Potter) — to require a comprehensive needs assessment and strategic plan before any more charters are authorized. Governor Markell signed this bill into law in early May.

With the help of Council President Gregory and Councilman Chukwuocha, we are also looking for some legislative support for the proposed Office of Education and Public Policy.

Attached is a published version of our final report. The content is what we submitted to the Governor and to the General Assembly on March 31, while the design includes more photos and graphics, and some historical anecdotes dating back to Delaware's involvement in *Brown v. Board (1954)*. We have also included quotes from a range of stakeholders and constituents including parents, teachers and students. For a soft copy, visit our Facebook page, [Solutions for Wilmington Schools](#).

Now is an important time! **Don't miss the moment!** Thank you.

Sincerely,



Tony Allen, Ph.D.
Wilmington Education Advisory Committee Chair & Members

Email: tonyallen@comcast.net Phone: 302.290.1445

Legislation Passed



SPONSOR: Rep. Keeley & Sen. Henry & Sen. Marshall
Reps. Barbieri, Baumbach, Bolden, Brady, Dukes, Heffernan, J.
Johnson, Kenton, Lynn, Matthews, Miro, Osienski, Potter,
Viola, K. Williams; Sens. McDowell, Townsend

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
148th GENERAL ASSEMBLY

HOUSE BILL NO. 148
AS AMENDED BY
HOUSE AMENDMENT NO. 1
AND
SENATE AMENDMENT NO. 1

AN ACT TO AMEND TITLE 14 OF THE DELAWARE CODE RELATING TO PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF DELAWARE:

Section 1. Amend § 1008, Title 14 of the Delaware Code by making deletions as shown by strike through and insertions as shown by underline as follows:

§ 1008 ~~Creation of interim boards~~ Wilmington Education Improvement Commission.

(a) The Wilmington Education Improvement Commission (WEIC) shall advise the Governor and General Assembly on the planning, recommending, and implementing improvements to the quality and availability of education for children in Pre-K through grade 12 in the City of Wilmington and for which such changes maybe be instructive for addressing needs of all schools within the State with high concentrations of children living in poverty, English language learners, or both. Membership on the WEIC shall be limited to 23 members with full voting rights, including a Chairperson and two Vice-Chairpersons, who shall be appointed according to subsection (d) of this section. At a minimum, the WEIC shall be composed of the following members (or their designees, who shall have full voting rights), who shall be appointed by the Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons, and when appropriate, in consultation with the appropriate board, agency, or authority from whom the member is drawn, including, but not limited to:

1. A member of the Delaware State Senate, appointed by the President Pro Tempore, and a member of the Delaware House of Representatives, appointed by the Speaker;

2. A representative of the School Board of the Red Clay Consolidated School District;

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HD : SLT : APS:5361480070
LC : BCG : RAY:5351480025

3. A representative of the School Board of the Christina School District;

4. A representative of the School Board of the Colonial School District;

5. A representative of the School Board of Brandywine School District;

6. The chair of the Education Committee of the Wilmington City Council;

7. A representative of the Mavor of the City of Wilmington;

8. Two charter school representatives, one located inside the existing boundaries of the City of Wilmington and serving Wilmington students, and one located outside of the City of Wilmington, in New Castle County, serving both Wilmington and County children;

9. Two high school students attending public school, one living in the City of Wilmington, one living outside of the City of Wilmington in New Castle County;

10. Two public school parents, one of a student living in the City of Wilmington, one of a student living outside of the City in New Castle County;

11. Two teachers from the school districts and charter schools, one teaching inside the City of Wilmington, one teaching in New Castle County;

12. A representative from the Delaware State Education Association that represents teachers and/or educational support staff in districts that serve Wilmington students; and

13. Other community leaders or representatives of the Wilmington and greater New Castle County community and educational interests.

(b) An affirmative vote of a majority of all voting members shall be required to take action.

(c) Meetings of the WEIC and all WEIC committees shall be public, unless designated for executive session. Voting membership in WEIC shall be limited to subsection (a) of this section.

(d) The Governor shall appoint a Chairperson and two Vice-Chairpersons. The Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons shall lead the activities of the WEIC, including WEIC's coordination with State leaders and agencies and with public education and community stakeholders. The Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons shall be selected based on, but not limited to, the following criteria:

1. A parent of a public school student living within the city limits of Wilmington;

2. A school board official from the districts serving Wilmington students; and

3. A community leader not otherwise affiliated with any school district, charter school, or governmental body.

(e) The WEIC shall convene regularly-scheduled public meetings, and shall meet at least 6 times annually.

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(f) The WEIC may form an executive committee from its members. The WEIC shall form standing committees to develop recommendations for consideration by the full Commission including, but not limited to committees on: 1) redistricting; 2) charter schools; 3) serving low income and English language learning students; and 4) funding.

(g) The WEIC shall work with and across all governmental agencies, educational entities, and private and nonprofit institutions to promote and support the implementation of all recommended changes from the Wilmington Education Advisory Committee (WEAC). The WEIC also will also monitor the progress of implementation and recommend policies and actions to the Governor and General Assembly to facilitate progress and to promote the continuous improvement of public education. The WEIC shall develop a transition, resource and implementation plan, for presentation to and approval by the State Board of Education, for the provision of necessary services to schools and students affected by the implementation of the changes recommended by WEAC. WEIC shall also develop a resource plan regarding transitional resources to effectively implement school district realignment. Both the transition plan and resource plan must be submitted first to the State Board of Education and then to the General Assembly and the Governor for final approval. Both are due for submission and related action by December 31, 2015.

(h) The WEIC shall report to the Governor, President Pro Tempore of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House at least once each fiscal year. Each report shall include:

1. A summary of the work and actions completed by WEIC to accomplish its purposes as stated above; and
2. Recommendations of the WEIC about whether and how to further implement, promote, and achieve the recommendations of the WEAC.

(i) The WEIC shall be staffed by the University of Delaware's Institute for Public Administration. The staff shall be managed by a WEIC policy director from the Institute for Public Administration, approved by the Chairperson of WEIC.

(k) The WEIC shall conclude its operations by June 30, 2021.

Section 2. This bill shall take effect upon its enactment.



SPONSOR: Sen. Henry & Rep. Potter & Rep. Jaques
Sens. Bushweller, Marshall, McDowell, Pettyjohn,
Townsend, Reps. Baumbach, Bolden, J. Johnson, Keeley,
Osinski, B. Short

DELAWARE STATE SENATE
148th GENERAL ASSEMBLY

SENATE BILL NO. 122

AN ACT TO AMEND TITLE 14, CHAPTER 10 OF THE DELAWARE CODE RELATING TO EDUCATION AND THE REORGANIZATION AND CHANGING OF SCHOOL DISTRICT BOUNDARIES.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF DELAWARE:

1 Section 1. Amend § 1026, Title 14 of the Delaware Code by making insertions as shown by underlining and deletions
2 as shown by strike through as follows:

3 § 1026. Changing boundaries; vocational-technical school districts; City of Wilmington.

4 (a) The State Board of Education may, in accordance with this section, change or alter the boundaries of any
5 reorganized school district except the reorganized district of the City of Wilmington, the boundaries of which shall at all
6 times be the same as the boundaries of the City of Wilmington.

7 (b) Before making changes in the boundaries of a reorganized school district, the State Board of Education shall
8 consult with the school boards of the districts affected by the proposed change. Thereafter, the State Board of Education
9 shall submit for approval or rejection the question of the change of boundary to the qualified voters of the district or
10 districts affected at a special referendum to be held for that purpose, after 2 weeks' notice of the referendum and proposed
11 change has been posted at the school or schools of the district or districts affected. The referendum shall be conducted in
12 each district by the school board of the district. Any person who possesses the qualifications prescribed in § 1077 of this
13 title may vote at the referendum. The question shall be determined by a majority of the total vote cast in each district
14 affected. Each school board shall immediately certify to the State Board of Education the result of the referendum in the
15 district.

16 (c) Subject to subsection (a) of this section, the State Board of Education may change or alter the boundaries of any
17 reorganized school district without a referendum of the voters if the written consent of the owners of the real property to be
18 transferred has been obtained and if also the school boards of the districts affected by such change or alteration have
19 adopted resolutions favoring such change or alteration.

20 ~~(d)(1) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsections (b) and (c) of this section, the State Board of Education may~~
21 ~~change or alter the boundaries of the Sussex County portions of the Milford and Woodbridge school districts if written~~

22 requests for such changes or alterations are submitted by the respective school district boards of education. The proposed
23 changes must result in the clarification of district boundaries using tax parcels registered in Sussex County as of January 1,
24 2008.

25 (2) The school boards of education in the effected districts shall conduct a public hearing on the proposed request prior
26 to taking any formal action. The hearings shall be advertised at least once a week for 2 consecutive weeks in a newspaper
27 published or circulated in Sussex County and the districts. Such advertising shall occur at least 20 days prior to the public
28 hearing on the proposed boundary change or alteration.

29 (3) Furthermore, prior to ordering a change or alteration of a school district boundary under this subsection, the State
30 Board shall conduct a public hearing on the request. The hearing shall be advertised at least once a week for 2 consecutive
31 weeks in a newspaper published or circulated in each county of the State. Such advertising shall occur at least 20 days prior
32 to the public hearing on the proposed boundary change or alteration.

33 (4) In its decision and order to change or alter a school district boundary under this subsection, the State Board of
34 Education shall specify a transition plan, which will provide for the orderly reassignment of pupils affected by the boundary
35 change. Such transition plan may permit pupils to continue their attendance at the school they attended prior to the
36 boundary change, with tuition payments by the sending district as provided in Chapter 6 of this title, until such time as the
37 pupils complete the grade levels offered in that school.

38 (5) The authority of the State Board of Education to act under the provisions of this subsection shall terminate on
39 January 1, 2010.

40 (d)(1) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsections (b) and (c) of this section, the State Board of Education may
41 change or alter the boundaries of school districts in New Castle County in a manner consistent with some or all of the
42 redistricting recommendations made by the Wilmington Education Advisory Committee in the report issued March 31,
43 2015, provided that the General Assembly passes, and the Governor signs, a Joint Resolution supporting the proposed
44 changes.

45 (2) Prior to ordering a change or alteration of a school district boundary under this subsection, the State Board or the
46 Wilmington Education Improvement Commission, shall conduct at least one public hearing in each of the school districts to
47 be affected, including at least two in the City of Wilmington.

48 (3) In its decision and order to change or alter a school district boundary under this subsection, the State Board of
49 Education shall adopt a transition, resource, and implementation plan. The plan shall be developed by the Wilmington
50 Education Improvement Commission, for presentation to and approval by the State Board, and shall, at a minimum, provide
51 for (1) the orderly and minimally disruptive reassignment of students affected by the boundary change and the reassignment

52 of governance responsibilities, (2) implications for educators, administrators, and other personnel that may lead to equitable
53 adjustments to local collective bargaining agreements, (3) resources that will be required from state, district, and local
54 sources, to support the redistricting transition and provide for the effective ongoing education of all affected students, and
55 for the support of schools with high concentrations of low income students and English Language Learners, (4) student
56 transportation, (5) distribution of capital assets, and (6) engagement of educators, staff, parents, district personnel, and
57 community members through-out the transition. The plan shall permit students to continue their attendance at the school
58 they attended prior to the boundary change, with tuition payments by the sending district as provided in Chapter 6 of this
59 title, until such time as the pupils complete the grade levels offered in that school. If the State Board does not approve the
60 plan as submitted by the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission, it shall notify the chairperson of the
61 Commission in writing, give reasons why the plan was not approved, and allow the Commission to resubmit the plan within
62 60 days of the chairperson receiving the notice of denial.

63 (4) The State Board shall base its decision to change or alter school district boundaries on a record developed in
64 compliance with state open meetings laws.

65 (5) The authority of the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission and the State Board of Education to act
66 under the provisions of this subsection shall terminate on March 31, 2016.

67 (e) Notwithstanding subsection (b) of this section, the State Board of Education may change or alter the boundaries of
68 any reorganized vocational-technical school district if the school boards of the districts affected by such change or
69 alteration have adopted resolutions favoring such change or alteration.

SYNOPSIS

This bill would give the State Board of Education the authority to change school district boundaries in New Castle County in a manner consistent with the final report of the Wilmington Education Advisory Group. The State Board would be required to hold public hearings in the school districts affected, and in the City of Wilmington, prior to making such a change. The Wilmington Education Improvement Commission would be required to develop a transition, resource, and implementation plan for the redistricting proposal, for submission and approval by the State Board. The redistricting proposal and transition plan could not be implemented prior to the General Assembly passing, and the Governor signing, a Joint Resolution supporting the changes.

Author: Senator Henry

Legislation Introduced, No Action Taken



SPONSOR: Rep. Potter & Sen. Henry
Reps. Baumbach, Bennett, Bolden, Jaques, Keeley, J. Johnson,
Kowalko, B. Short, K. Williams; Sen. Poore

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
148th GENERAL ASSEMBLY

HOUSE BILL NO. 56
AS AMENDED BY
HOUSE AMENDMENT NO. 1

AN ACT TO AMEND TITLE 14 OF THE DELAWARE CODE RELATING TO CHARTER SCHOOLS.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF DELAWARE:

Section 1. Amend § 511(c), Title 14 of the Delaware Code by making deletions as shown by strike through and insertions shown by underline as follows:

(c) Charter school applications shall be submitted to a local school board or the Department for approval as an approving authority. Whenever a charter school seeks a charter from the Department as approving authority, such approval shall require the assent of both the Secretary and the State Board, as shall any action pursuant to §§ 515 and 516 of this title. The approving authority shall be responsible for approval of the charter school pursuant to this section and for continuing oversight of each charter school it approves. In addition, for a charter school applicant seeking to locate in the City of Wilmington, prior to the approving authority authorizing the school to open, the Mayor and the City Council of the City of Wilmington may review and provide comment regarding the likely impact of the proposed charter school on students in the City of Wilmington as outlined in this chapter and further defined in regulations.

Section 2. No new charter schools shall be authorized to open in the City of Wilmington prior to June 30, 2018, or until the development of a needs assessment and strategic plan for specialized public educational opportunities throughout the State, including those at traditional, magnet, charter, and vocational-technical schools. The strategic plan shall be based on an evaluation of educational needs using national models and best practices.



SPONSOR: Rep. K. Williams & Sen. McDowell & Sen. Poore
Reps. Barbieri, Baumbach, Bennett, Bolden, Brady,
Carson, Heffernan, Jaques, Q. Johnson, J. Johnson,
Keeley, Kowalko, Longhurst, Lynn, Matthews, Mitchell,
Mulrooney, Osinski, Paradee, Potter, Schwartzkopf, B.
Short, M. Smith, Spiegelman, Viola; Sens. Bushweller,
Ennis, Henry, Sokola, Townsend

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
148th GENERAL ASSEMBLY

HOUSE BILL NO. 30

AN ACT TO AMEND TITLE 14 OF THE DELAWARE CODE RELATING TO PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF DELAWARE:

1 Section 1. Amend § 1703, Title 14 of the Delaware Code by making deletions as shown by strike through and
2 insertions shown by underline as follows:

3 § 1703 Unit of pupils.

4 As used in this chapter:

5 (a) "Unit" or "unit of pupils" is defined according to this schedule of numbers of pupils enrolled in schools beginning in
6 kindergarten and through grade 12; and for children prior to entry into kindergarten who are eligible for special education
7 services as defined in Chapter 31 of this title:

8 Beginning July 1, 2011

9 Preschool — 12.8

10 K-3 — 16.2

11 4-12 Regular Education — 20

12 ~~4-12~~ K-12 Basic Special Education (Basic) — 8.4

13 Pre K-12 Intensive Special Education (Intensive) — 6

14 Pre K-12 Complex Special Education (Complex) — 2.6

15 (b) All such units must be authorized by the Department of Education under rules and regulations promulgated by the
16 Department. Partial unit funding is provided for all units based on the cash-in value of the unit. Only the last unit in any
17 category may be a major fraction.

18 (c) In the case of kindergarten, "unit" or "unit of pupils" is defined as 32.4 pupils for half-day kindergarten and 16.2
19 pupils for full-day kindergarten.

20 (d) For funding purposes, the following conditions shall prevail for the calculations of the number of units for children
 21 with disabilities and all other children. The preschool unit shall be 1 unit for 12.8 students. The kindergarten through third
 22 grade unit (K-3) shall be 1 unit for 16.2 students, except as noted in subsection (c) of this section above. The regular
 23 education unit for grades 4 through 12 (4-12 regular education) shall be 1 unit for 20 students. The basic special education
 24 (basic) unit for ~~grades 4 through~~ kindergarten through grade 12 shall be 1 unit for 8.4 students. The intensive special
 25 education (intensive) unit for preschool through grade 12 shall be 1 unit for 6 students. The complex special education
 26 (complex) unit for preschool through grade 12 shall be 1 unit for 2.6 students. Grade 12 is defined as enrollment until
 27 receipt of a regular high school diploma or the end of the school year in which the student attains the age of 21, whichever
 28 occurs first, as defined in Chapter 31 of this title.

29 (1) *Preschool unit* —

30 a. Student shall be counted in the preschool unit if the student is identified as eligible for special
 31 education and related services and not counted in the intensive unit or complex unit described below and
 32 is:

- 33 1. Eligible for special education and related services from birth; or
- 34 2. At least 3 years of age; or
- 35 3. Eligible as described in the interagency agreement with the Department of Health and Social
 36 Services; or
- 37 4. Not yet entered kindergarten.

38 b. The following provisions shall apply to the preschool unit:

- 39 1. Partial unit funding is provided for between 1 and 12.8 students based on the cash-in value of the
 40 unit.
- 41 2. The cash-in value of the unit is tied to the teacher state salary schedule at the master's level plus
 42 10 years of experience as defined in § 1305(a) of this title.
- 43 3. The units include Divisions II and III.
- 44 4. Districts must use all funds generated by preschool unit to support services for the students
 45 counted in the preschool unit. Districts are not limited to using the funds to employ teachers only.
 46 The funds may be used to hire preschool special education teachers, paraprofessionals, and speech
 47 and language pathologists, or other related services personnel as determined at the local level. The
 48 units may also be used to secure contractual services per requirements for the contractual option
 49 described in Chapter 13 of this title.

50 5. Districts may use tuition to pay for the local share and excess costs of special education and
 51 related services.
 52 6. The units are considered teacher/instructional units for purposes of other unit counts.
 53 7. A student is not required to receive a minimum number of hours in special education instruction
 54 to count in the preschool unit.

55 (2) *K-3 unit* —

56 a. A student shall be counted in the K-3 unit if the student is enrolled in kindergarten through grade 3
 57 and not counted in the intensive unit or complex unit described later in this section.

58 b. The following provisions shall apply to the K-3 unit:

- 59 1. Partial unit funding is provided for between 1 and 16.2 students based on the cash-in value of the
 60 unit.
- 61 2. The cash-in value of the unit is tied to the teacher state salary schedule at the master's level plus
 62 10 years of experience as defined in § 1305(a) of this title.
- 63 3. The units include Divisions II and III.
- 64 4. The units are covered under the 98% rule as defined in § 1704(4) of this title and returned to the
 65 buildings that generate them.
- 66 5. At least 20% of teachers at the K-3 building level must be certified in the area of special
 67 education. The units are considered teacher/instructional units for purposes of other unit counts.

68 (3) *4-12 regular education unit* —

69 a. A student shall be counted in the grades 4-12 unit if the student is enrolled in grades 4 through 12 and
 70 not identified as eligible for special education and related services.

- 71 1. Partial unit funding is provided for between 1 and 20 students based on the cash-in value of the
 72 unit.
- 73 2. The cash-in value of the unit is tied to the teacher state salary schedule at the master's level plus
 74 10 years of experience as defined in § 1305(a) of this title.
- 75 3. The units include Divisions II and III.
- 76 4. The units are covered under the 98% rule as defined in § 1704(4) of this title and returned to the
 77 buildings that generate them.
- 78 5. The units are considered teacher/instructional units for purposes of other unit counts.

79 (4) ~~4-12~~ *K-12 basic special education (basic)* —

- 80 a. A student shall be counted in the basic unit if the student is enrolled in ~~grades 4 through kindergarten~~
 81 through grade 12; and identified as eligible for special education and related services; and not counted in
 82 the intensive unit or the complex unit described below.
- 83 b. The following provisions shall apply to the ~~4-12~~ K-12 basic special education ("basic") unit:
- 84 1. Partial unit funding is provided for between 1 and 8.4 students based on the cash-in value of the
 85 unit.
 - 86 2. The cash-in value of the unit is tied to the teacher state salary schedule at the master's level plus
 87 10 years of experience as defined in § 1305(a) of this title.
 - 88 3. The units include Divisions II and III.
 - 89 4. The units are covered under the 98% rule as defined in § 1704(4) of this title and returned to the
 90 buildings that generate them.
 - 91 5. A student is not required to receive a minimum number of hours of instruction to count as a
 92 student in the basic unit.
 - 93 6. The units are considered teacher/instructional units for purposes of other unit counts.
 - 94 7. All units generated by special education students are to be used for professional staff to support
 95 students with disabilities, to include special education teachers, school psychologists,
 96 speech/language pathologists, reading specialists, educational diagnosticians, counselors, class aides
 97 and social workers.
 - 98 8. Districts are authorized to use up to 5% of the units for para-professionals or to cash them in for
 99 related services.

100 Section 2. This Act shall become effective beginning with the fiscal year after its enactment.

SYNOPSIS

This bill provides State funding to kindergarten through third grade for basic special education. State funding already occurs for intensive and complex special education during these grades. Currently the basic special education funding runs from fourth through twelfth grade. This bill is an effort to promote earlier identification and assistance for basic special education needs which should then mitigate costs over the long term.



SPONSOR: Rep. Hefferman & Rep. Bolden & Rep. Jaques &
Rep. K. Williams & Sen. McDowell & Sen. Henry ;
Reps. Keesley Lynn Matthews Osienki ; Sen. Townsend
Reps. Barbieri, Potter

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
148th GENERAL ASSEMBLY

HOUSE BILL NO. 117

AN ACT TO AMEND TITLE 14 OF THE DELAWARE CODE RELATING TO THE CREATION OF A UNIT FOR
LOW-INCOME STUDENTS.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF DELAWARE:

- 1 Section 1. Amend Chapter 17, Title 14 of the Delaware Code by making deletions as shown by strike through and
 2 insertions as shown by underline as follows:
- 3 § 1716B. Unit for low-income students.
- 4 (a) "Unit for low-income students" is defined for funding purposes as 1 unit for each 250 full-time equivalent low-
 5 income students in a school district or charter school, grades K through 12. School districts or charter schools shall qualify
 6 for partial funding for a fractional part of 250 full-time equivalent low-income students enrolled in grades K through 12.
 7 The Department of Education shall define the measure to determine low-income status used to determine students eligible
 8 to be included in the low-income unit count.
- 9 (b) Each student counted in establishing a unit for low income students may be counted only once in a school
 10 district and charter school. For students who attend schools in more than 1 school district during each school day, the
 11 student is to be counted in each school district for the portion of the day that the student is in attendance there.
- 12 (c) Funding authorized by this section shall be used to provide supplemental school and educational services and
 13 programs for low-income students, including the employment of additional classroom support, such as teachers and
 14 paraprofessionals; student support services, such as counselors, school psychologists, social workers, and intervention
 15 specialists; Response to Intervention Services; and before and after school programs offering homework assistance, and for
 16 support for English language learners.
- 17 (d) Funds appropriated in support of a unit for low-income students may be used for expenditures for any Division
 18 III purpose pursuant to §§ 1304, 1707(h), and 1710 of this title. The programs supported by funds authorized under this
 19 section shall operate for the number of hours of employment as specified by § 1305 of this title and the personnel employed
 20 with funds authorized under this section shall be paid in accordance with § 1305 of this title.

21 (c) The units for low-income students are covered under the 98% rule as defined in § 1704(4) of this title and
22 returned to the buildings that generate them.

23 (f) The dollar value of a unit for low-income students, when applied to the employment of a full-time person, shall
24 be as provided in this title, but, when applied as herein authorized for other services, shall be the number of dollars set in
25 the state-supported salary schedule for a teacher holding a master's degree with 10 years of experience and employed for 10
26 months. The calculation of this funding shall be for the current school year. Expenditures on behalf of this unit when used
27 for the purchase of services shall be up to, but not in excess of, the amount herein authorized.

SYNOPSIS

This Act will create a funding source for students enrolled in Delaware public schools who are determined as low-income according to the Department of Education. This funding source will be in addition to the normal enrollment based funding provided to school districts and charter schools. The low-income unit will provide one unit of funding for every 250 low-income students in grades K-12 where the funding can be used for such purposes as providing additional teachers and paraprofessionals for classroom instruction; additional counselors, school psychologists, social workers, and intervention specialists; Response to Intervention Services; and before and after school programs providing homework assistance, and for support for English language learners. To ensure the low-income resources reach the schools where they are most needed, this Act requires that at least 98% of the units be directed towards the schools that generate the funding unless otherwise waived by a local board of education during a public meeting.



SPONSOR: Rep. Heffernan

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
148th GENERAL ASSEMBLY

HOUSE AMENDMENT NO. 1
TO
HOUSE BILL NO. 117

1 AMEND House Bill No. 117 on line 7 by inserting "based on federal guidance," after "status" and before "used"
2 therein.

3 FURTHER AMEND House Bill No. 117 after line 27 by inserting the following:

4 "(g) State appropriations made under this section must require a local district contribution. Any school district that
5 receives State funds under this section may use § 1902(b) of this title to provide for the local district contribution required
6 by this subsection."

SYNOPSIS

This Amendment clarifies that the Department of Education's definition of a low-income student must be based on federal guidance.

In addition, this Amendment provides that appropriations made for units for low-income students must require a local district contribution and allows a school district to use a match tax in accordance with § 1902(b) of Title 14 to assist in meeting the local district contribution.

Appendix B



Christina School District Interim Framework for Planning for the Implementation of the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission Recommendations

**To view this appendix, visit
www.solutionsfordelawareschools.com/resources/**

Appendix C



Red Clay Consolidated School District Interim Framework for the Implementation of the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission Recommendations

**To view this appendix, visit
www.solutionsfordelawareschools.com/resources/**

Appendix D



Resources for Funding Student Success

To view this appendix, visit

www.solutionsfordelawareschools.com/resources/

Appendix E



Research Support Documents

To view this appendix, visit

www.solutionsfordelawareschools.com/resources/

Appendix F



Commission, Committee, and Community Outreach Meeting List

Community Outreach Meeting List

This table outlines the meetings held on behalf of the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission (WEIC) with the community, between August 24, 2015 and December 9, 2015.

Timeline of Outreach Meetings	
Date	Group and Location
August 24, 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Redistricting Co-chair Meeting 182 Graham Hall WEIC Community Meeting Thomas McKean High School
August 25, 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WEIC Meeting
August 26, 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting the Needs of Students In Poverty Committee Co-chair Meeting United Way, 625 North Orange Street #3 Wilmington, DE 19801
August 27, 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding Student Success Co-Chair Meeting Parent, Teacher, and Community Engagement Co-chair Meeting
September 1, 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting with Red Clay WEIC Town Hall Cab Calloway School of the Arts
September 8, 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Colonial School Board Meeting
September 10, 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Redistricting Committee Meeting Christina Town Hall Sarah Pyle Academy
September 15, 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding Student Success Committee Meeting William Penn High School WEIC Meeting William Penn High School Parent, Teacher, and Community Engagement Meeting William Penn High School
September 16, 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student Success 2025 Red Clay School Board Meeting
September 17, 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delaware State Board of Education WEIC presentation

Timeline of Outreach Meetings	
Date	Group and Location
September 21, 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brandywine School Board Meeting
September 22, 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding Student Success Committee Meeting Red Clay Consolidated School District Office
September 23, 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WEIC staff call with Christina and Red Clay School District Staff • Charter and District Collaboration Meeting Community Education Building
September 24, 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redistricting Committee Meeting 111 Academy Street-Graham Hall Room 185 Newark, DE
September 28, 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting the Needs of Students in Poverty Committee Meeting United Way of Delaware
September 29, 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation to the Forum for Executive Women • Presentation to the Delaware State Education Association • Parent, Educator, and Community Engagement Meeting • Christina Town Hall Eden Support Services Center
September 30, 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WEIC staff call with Christina and Red Clay School District Staff
October 5, 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Red Clay Town Hall Meeting Warner Elementary School 801 W 18th St, Wilmington, DE 19802
October 6, 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding Student Success Committee Meeting • Cathedral Choir School Board Meeting
October 7, 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WEIC staff call with Christina and Red Clay School District Staff

Timeline of Outreach Meetings	
Date	Group and Location
October 8, 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation to the Rotary Club, Wilmington • Redistricting Committee Meeting Red Clay Consolidated School District Office, Board Room • Presentation to the Delaware State Education Association
October 13, 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent, Educator and Community Engagement Committee
October 14, 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christina Town Hall Stubbs Elementary School
October 15, 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delaware State Board of Education Presentation
October 20, 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Castle County School-Business Partnership Meeting Presentation • WEIC Meeting Sarah Pyle Academy Gymnasium
October 21, 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Red Clay School Board Meeting Conrad Schools of Science 201 Jackson Ave, Wilmington, DE 19804
October 22, 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2015 Latino Summit Presentation • Colonial Town Hall George Read
October 26, 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting the Needs of Students in Poverty Meeting United Way of Delaware • Christina Town Hall Pulaski Elementary School
October 27, 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding Student Success Committee Meeting Red Clay Consolidated School District Office, Room 239 • Parent, Educator, and Community Engagement Committee Meeting

Timeline of Outreach Meetings	
Date	Group and Location
October 28, 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student Success 2025 Conference Clayton Hall Charter and District Collaboration Committee Meeting Bayard Middle School
October 29, 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Redistricting Committee Meeting 111 Academy Street-Graham Hall Room 185 Newark, DE
November 3, 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brandywine Town Hall Meeting Harlan Elementary School
November 4, 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Redistricting Committee Meeting Red Clay Consolidated School District Office
November 5, 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delaware State Board of Education Retreat Dewey Beach, DE 19971
November 9, 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Town Hall Meeting EastSide Charter School
November 10, 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding Student Success Committee Meeting Red Clay Consolidated School District Office, Room 239
November 11, 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation to Wilmington City Council Joint Education, Youth, & Families Committee and Committee of the Whole Meeting
November 12, 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Redistricting Committee Meeting Red Clay Consolidated School District Office, Board Room
November 16, 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation to the AAUW League of Women Voters Kirkwood Library Meeting the Needs of Students in Poverty Committee Meeting United Way, 625 N Orange St # 3 Wilmington, DE 19801

Timeline of Outreach Meetings	
Date	Group and Location
November 17, 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WEIC Meeting P.S. duPont Middle School Library Parent, Teacher, and Community Engagement Meeting P.S. duPont Middle School Library Interim Redistricting Plan Posted for Public Comment
November 18, 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation to the UD School of Education Charter and District Collaboration Committee Meeting Community Education Building Red Clay School Board Meeting Conrad Schools of Science 201 Jackson Ave, Wilmington, DE 19804
November 30, 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brandywine School District Public Hearing P.S. duPont Middle School 701 W 34th St, Wilmington, DE 19802
December 1, 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Colonial School District Public Hearing William Penn High School 713 E. Basin Rd, New Castle, DE 19720
December 2, 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Christina School District Public Hearing Bayard Middle School 200 S Dupont St, Wilmington, DE 19805
December 3, 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Redistricting Committee Meeting Red Clay Consolidated School District Office
December 5, 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commission and Committee Co-chair Retreat Community Education Building
December 7, 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Red Clay Consolidated School District Public Hearing Brandywine Springs School 2916 Duncan Rd, Wilmington, DE 19808
December 8, 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Red Clay Consolidated School District Public Hearing Warner Elementary School 801 W 18th St, Wilmington, DE 19802

Timeline of Outreach Meetings	
Date	Group and Location
December 9, 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Wilmington Education Improvement Commission Meeting Red Clay Consolidated School District Office
December 14, 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none">City of Wilmington Public Hearing Wilmington City Council Chambers Redding City County Building 800 North French St, Wilmington, DE 19801
December 15, 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Wilmington Education Improvement Commission Meeting Sarah Pyle Academy

Appendix G

Public Transmittal

Wilmington Education
Advisory Committee

Thursday, June 18, 2015

All,

Today was a good day.

While you have all seen the [Wilmington Education Advisory Committee's 2015 Legislative Priorities](#), there were two items that we believed had to get done by the end of this legislative session.

- **HB 148:** A proposed bill to establish the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission in Delaware code with specific function to implement the short- and longer-term recommendations outlined in the Advisory Committee's final report, "Strengthening Wilmington Education: An Action Agenda".
- **SB 122:** Enabling legislation affording provisional authority to the State Board of Education to redraw district lines in accordance with a resource, transition and implementation plan developed by the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission under a specific and limited timetable and subject to confirmation by the General Assembly and the Governor.

This afternoon final action was taken on both pieces of legislation. After having been approved in the House last week, the Senate voted 20 Yays, 1 Non-Voting in favor HB 148. Senator Blevins attached an amendment to the bill that improved on it and ensured that there was adequate representation from both the City of Wilmington and suburban New Castle County. HB 148 will go back to House to affirm the amendment, but all are expecting quick passage. On SB 122, the House voted 36 Yays, 3 Non-Voting and 2 Absent. Having already been approved by Senate, this piece of legislation now awaits the Governor's signature.

Both actions by the General Assembly represent historic movement and support our fundamental thesis: After sixty years of inertia, THE TIME TO ACT IS NOW. And the General Assembly has led the way. There are many in Legislative Hall to be applauded, but I want to call out several who led the way including Senators Henry, Blevins, Sokola, McDowell, Townsend, Poore and Lopez; Representatives Jaques, Keeley, Potter, Williams, Bolden, Milro, Longhurst; Speaker Schwartzkopf, and the entire Wilmington Delegation.

Now is where the real work begins. As we have said many times, simply redrawing district lines without consideration of a comprehensive package for school reform is of no value in ensuring quality education for all kids. To be clear, that includes funding, parent and community engagement, wraparound services and statewide, and strategic resource allocation for low-income students and their families.

Thanks to all of you for your incredible support. The momentum continues. Don't let up.

Onward,



Tony Allen, Ph.D., Chairman, Wilmington Education Advisory Committee

Email: tonyallen@comcast.net Phone: 302.290.1445

Wilmington Education
Improvement Commission
Solutions for Delaware Schools

August 18, 2015

Formation and Membership of the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission

Dear Parents, Students, Educators, Community Residents and Leaders, and Friends:

On the heels of Governor Markell's [historic signing](#) of House Bill 148 and Senate Bill 122 on the steps of the historic **Hockessin Colored School 107C**, we are pleased to announce the formation and membership of the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission.

The new Commission is a community-based council with 23 members from Wilmington and New Castle County, including elected officials, community leaders, school district and charter representatives, teachers, parents, and students. A list of the Commission's members and committee co-chairs is included on the following pages. Elizabeth Lockman, a Wilmington parent and education advocate, Kenny Rivera, President of the Red Clay School Board and a teacher at Brandywine High School, and I will be leading the Commission. Dan Rich, professor and former University of Delaware provost, will serve as policy director. The work of the Commission and its committees will be supported by the Institute for Public Administration at the University of Delaware.

The Commission is charged with implementing the recommendations outlined in the final report of the Wilmington Education Advisory Committee, [Strengthening Wilmington Education: An Action Agenda](#). While many of those recommendations focus on improvements in the quality and availability of pre-K through grade 12 education in Wilmington and New Castle County, much of the Commission's mandate is statewide. This is particularly relevant to schools throughout Delaware with high concentrations of children living in poverty and English language learners. By Delaware law, the Commission sunsets in 2021. In the near term, much of the Commission's work will be to provide the State Board of Education with a plan for transition, resources, and implementation required for effective redistricting in New Castle County in a manner consistent with the school governance recommendations outlined in the final report of the Wilmington Education Advisory Committee. A summary of the Commission's roles and responsibilities is included on the following pages.

Our work will be built on transparency, candor, debate, and deliberate action, and—most importantly—with students, parents, and families at the center of everything we do. The time to act is now.

We look forward to you joining us and welcome your input and feedback. You can learn more about the work of the Commission, the schedule of meetings (all of which are public), and how you can help, at our website that will be launched by September 1: www.solutionsfordelawareschools.com.

Sincerely,



Tony Allen, Ph.D., Chairman, Wilmington Education Advisory Committee

www.solutionsfordelawareschools.com
email: solutionsfordelawareschools@gmail.com voice/text: 302.385.6206

Wilmington Education Improvement Commission Fact Sheet

Wilmington Education Improvement Commission (WEIC)

- Established by state law HB148 to advise the Governor and General Assembly on:
 - Improvements to the quality and availability of education for children in Pre-K through grade 12 in the City of Wilmington and New Castle County (NCC);
 - Actions to address the needs of all Delaware schools with high concentrations of children living in poverty and English language learners (ELLs);
 - Recommended policies and actions to promote the continuous improvement of public education.
- A community-based council outside of state agencies, mandated to work across all governmental units, educational entities, and private and nonprofit institutions to support the implementation of all recommended changes from the final report of the Wilmington Education Advisory Committee (WEAC), *Strengthening Wilmington Education: An Action Agenda*.
- Will submit an annual report to the Governor and General Assembly and will sunset on June 30, 2021.

Commission membership

- Limited to 23 members from Wilmington and NCC, most designated by position.
- Includes district, charter, parent, teacher, student, and community representatives.

Commission leadership

- Appointed by Governor Markell: Chairperson Tony Allen (banking executive, Wilmington resident); Vice-Chairperson Elizabeth Lockman (parent and education advocate); and Vice-Chairperson Kenneth Rivera (President of Red Clay Consolidated School Board and Brandywine teacher).
- Policy Director Dan Rich (University of Delaware)
- Administrative support is provided by the University of Delaware's Institute for Public Administration.

Commission committees

- Will prepare recommendations to the Commission and will include non-commission members.
- The initial committees include: 1) redistricting; 2) charter and district collaboration; 3) meeting the needs of students in poverty; 4) funding; and 5) parent, educator, and community engagement.

Commission redistricting responsibilities

- SB122 authorizes the State Board of Education to alter boundaries of school districts in NCC in a manner consistent with the recommendations made in the final WEAC report.
- The State Board's action must be based on a transition, resource, and implementation plan prepared by WEIC.
- The General Assembly must pass, and the Governor sign, a Joint Resolution supporting the proposed changes.

The redistricting plan shall include and provide for

- Orderly and minimally disruptive reassignment of students affected by the boundary change and the reassignment of governance responsibilities;
- Implications for educators, administrators, and other personnel that may lead to equitable adjustments to local collective bargaining agreements;
- Funding resources to support the redistricting transition and provide effective education for all affected students, and for the support of schools with high concentrations of low income students and ELLs,
- Student transportation;
- Distribution of capital assets; and
- Engagement of educators, staff, parents, district personnel, and community members.
- Students to continue their attendance at the school they attended prior to the boundary change, with tuition payments by the sending district, until such time as the pupils complete the grade levels offered in that school.

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email: solutionsfordelawareschools@gmail.com voice/text: 302.385.6206

Wilmington Education Improvement Commission Membership

Tony Allen, Ph.D., Chairperson Wilmington resident and senior executive with Bank of America	Joseph T. Laws President Colonial School Board
Kenny Rivera, Vice-Chairperson President, Red Clay School Board, and Teacher, Brandywine High School	Margie Lopez Waite Head of School, L'Aspira Academy Charter School
Elizabeth Lockman, Vice-Chairperson Wilmington Parent, Education Advocate and Public Allies Alumna	Aretha Miller Executive Director, Community Education Building
Eve Buckley Parent and Education Advocate, Christina School District	Harrie Ellen Minnehan President, Christina School Board
The Honorable Nnamdi Chukwuocha Chair, Education, Youth & Families Committee, Wilmington City Council	Joe Pika, Ph.D. Former President of State Board of Education
Rosa Colon-Kolacko, Ph.D., Chief of Diversity Officer, Christiana Care	Chandra Pitts Parent and Executive Director, One Village Alliance
Karen Eller Teacher, Christina School District/WEAC	The Honorable Charles Potter Representative, Delaware General Assembly
Reverend Meredith Griffin Chairperson, Education Committee Interdenominational Ministers Action Council	Vicki Seifried Teacher, H.B. duPont Middle School, Red Clay School District
Frederika Jenner President, Delaware State Education Association	John Skrobot President, Brandywine School Board
Yvonne Johnson Parent and Education Advocate, Red Clay School District	The Honorable David Sokola Senator, Delaware General Assembly
	Michelle Taylor President, United Way of Delaware
	High School Student, Red Clay School District
	High School Student, Colonial School District

Wilmington Education Improvement Commission Support

Provided by the University of Delaware's Institute for Public Administration

Dan Rich, Ph.D., Policy Director
Kelly Sherretz, Project Manager
Elizabeth Burland, Administrative Coordinator
Jerome Lewis, Ph.D., IPA Director and Senior Policy Advisor
Ed Free, Senior Policy Advisor
Liz Farley-Ripple, Policy Advisor
Neil Kirschling, Policy Advisor
Sarah Pragg, Communications Advisor

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Wilmington Education Improvement Commission Committee Chairs

Redistricting Committee

Joe Pika, Ph.D. Former President of State Board of Education
Henry Harper, Ph.D., Former Superintendent of Appoquinimink School District

Charter and District Collaboration Committee

Eve Buckley, Parent and Education Advocate, Christina School District
Aretha Miller, Executive Director, Community Education Building

Meeting the Needs of Students in Poverty Committee

The Honorable Chandlee Kuhn, Former Chief Judge, Family Court
Michelle Taylor, President, United Way of Delaware
Jackie Jenkins, Ed.D., Education Advisor, Office of the Mayor of the City of Wilmington

Funding Student Success

Jill Floore, Chief Financial Officer, Red Clay Consolidated School District
Mike Jackson, Deputy Comptroller-General, State of Delaware

Parent, Educator, and Community Engagement Committee

Yvonne Johnson, Parent and Education Advocate, Red Clay School District
Chandra Pitts, Parent and Executive Director, One Village Alliance

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Wilmington Education
Improvement Commission
Solutions for Delaware Schools

September 9, 2015

Committees and Members of Wilmington Education Improvement Commission

Dear Parents, Students, Educators, Community Residents and Leaders, and Friends:

The Wilmington Education Improvement Commission has named the initial members of its five committees. See the listings on the following pages. Two high school students have been appointed to the Commission: Breyonna Williams, William Penn High School; and Johnny Means, Delaware Military Academy.

With input from the public at the open meetings, these committees include members of the Commission, community advocates, educators and other stakeholders, and experts. As the work of the Commission proceeds, members may be added. These committees will make recommendations on carrying out the Commission's responsibilities over the next five years and will sunset with the Commission in 2021.

Redistricting: On Thursday, September 17, a schedule and draft outline of the redistricting plan will be presented to the State Board of Education and we expect to have a draft plan to be ready for public review by Thanksgiving.

Charter and District Collaboration: This committee will support the development of a state plan, promote shared capacity and collaboration, and recommend the adoption of national best practices.

Meeting the Needs of Students in Poverty: This team will help develop policies and practices across all sectors that integrate and strengthen services for low-income children and families and for schools with high concentrations of poverty. The proposals will cover children from birth through college and the workforce by revitalizing the existing policy infrastructure.

Funding Student Success: This committee will concentrate on how to improve the state and local revenue base for public education, and how to better support schools with high concentrations of students in poverty and English-language learners. It will also recommend the funding needed to support the success of the redistricting process.

Parent, Educator, and Community Engagement: These committee members will recommend policies to promote greater engagement, participation, and community voice in public education among parents, educators, community residents, and allies.

All Commission and committee meetings are open to the public, and we value your thoughts, suggestions, perspectives, and, most of all, your involvement. The next meeting of the Commission is Tuesday, September 15, at 4 p.m. at William Penn High School. The October and November Commission meetings will be held at Sarah Pyle Academy and P.S. duPont Middle School, respectively. Please visit www.solutionsfordelawareschools.com for our complete schedule of Commission and committee meetings and join us. The time to act is now.

Best regards,



Elizabeth Lockman
Vice Chair



Kenny Rivera
Vice Chair

Cc: Tony Allen, Ph.D.
Chairman

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Redistricting Committee

Joseph Pika, Ph.D., Co-Chair

Former President, State Board of Education

Henry Harper, Ph.D., Co-Chair

Former Superintendent, Appoquinimink School District

Robert Andrzejewski, Ed.D.

Interim Superintendent, Christina School District

Ted Ammann

Assistant Superintendent, Red Clay Consolidated School District

Dusty Blakey, Ed.D.

Superintendent, Colonial School District

Mervin Daugherty, Ed.D.

Superintendent, Red Clay Consolidated School District

Leah Davis

Retired Teacher, Red Clay Consolidated School District

Jill Floore

Chief Financial Officer, Red Clay Consolidated School District Co-Chair, WEIC Funding Committee

Vicki Gehrt, Ed.D.

Superintendent, New Castle County Vocational Technical School District

Mark Holodick, Ed.D.

Superintendent, Brandywine School District

Mike Jackson

Deputy Comptroller-General, State of Delaware
Co-Chair, WEIC Funding Committee

Joseph T. Laws

President, Colonial School Board

Harrie E. Minnehan

President, Christina School Board

Kelli Racca

Senior Director, Christina School District

Kenny Rivera

President, Red Clay Consolidated School Board

John Skrobot

President, Brandywine School Board

Jeff Taschner

Executive Director, Delaware State Education Association

Charter and District Collaboration Committee

Membership for this committee is being confirmed, additional members will be added.

Eve Buckley, Ph.D., Co-Chair

Parent and Education Advocate, Christina School District

Aretha Miller, Co-Chair

Executive Director, Community Education Building

Ariadna Castaneda

Principal, Lewis Dual Language Elementary School,
Red Clay Consolidated School District

David Davis

UnivServe Director, Delaware State Education
Association and Former Teacher Christina School
District

Bill Doolittle

Red Clay Consolidated School District Parent Teacher
Association

Gloria Grantham

Retired Educators for Academic Development

Shannon Griffin

Coalition for Fair and Equitable Schools, American Civil
Liberties Union

Margie Lopez Waite

Head of School, L'Aspira Academy Charter School

Byron Murphy

Principal, Dickinson High School, Red Clay Consolidated
School District

Cora Scott

Director of Elementary Education, Brandywine School
District

Vicki Seifred

Teacher, H.B. duPont Middle School, Red Clay
Consolidated School District

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page 3

Meeting the Needs of Students in Poverty Committee

The Honorable Chandlee Kuhn, Co-Chair

Former Chief Judge, Family Court

Jackie Jenkins, Ed.D., Co-Chair

Education Advisor, Office of the Mayor of the City of Wilmington

Michelle Taylor, Co-Chair

President, United Way of Delaware

Madeleine Bayard

Co-Chair, Delaware Early Childhood Council and Rodel Foundation of Delaware

Adriana Bohm, Ph.D.

Red Clay Consolidated School District School Board, Parent Expert, Wilmington Education Advisory Committee

Vi Cade, Ed.D.

Senior Director, Secondary Education, Christina School District

Nikki Castle, Ph.D.

Wilmington Education Advisory Committee

Rosa Colon-Kolacko, Ph.D.

Chief Diversity Officer, Christiana Care

Karen Eller

Teacher, Bancroft Elementary School, Christina School District

Kia Ervin

Regional Director, Communities in Schools

Devon Hynson

Executive Director, Education Voices, Inc.

Jacqueline Paradee Matte, Esquire

Education Demonstration Project, Casey Family Programs

Mary Kate Mouser

Executive Director, Nemours Health and Prevention and Chair, Delaware Early Childhood Council

Terrance Newton, Ed.D.

Assistant Principal, H.B. duPont Middle School, Red Clay Consolidated School District

Kenny Oates

Academic Dean, Shortlidge Academy

Susan Perry-Manning

Director, Delaware Office of Early Learning

Gwendolyn Sanders

Chair, Wilmington Early Learning Council

Cara Sawyer, J.D.

Deputy Principal Assistant, Office of the Secretary, Delaware Department of Services for Children, Youth, and Their Families

Michael Simmonds

Title I Coordinator, Red Clay Consolidated School District

Deb Stevens

Director of Instructional Advocacy, Delaware State Education Association

The Honorable Jea Street

Executive Director, Hilltop Lutheran Neighborhood Center

Monique Taylor-Gibbs

Teacher, Warner Elementary School, Red Clay Consolidated School District

Burtie Watson

District and School Services, Red Clay Consolidated School District

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Funding Student Success Committee

Jill Floore, Co-Chair

Chief Financial Officer, Red Clay Consolidated School District

Mike Jackson, Co-Chair

Deputy Comptroller-General, State of Delaware

Susan Bunting, Ed.D.

Superintendent, Indian River School District

Kristin Dwyer

Director of Legislation and Political Organizing, Delaware State Education Association

Emily Falcon

Director, Division of Business, Colonial School District

Ed Freel

Policy Scientist, University of Delaware's Institute for Public Administration

Jason Hale, Ed.D.

Director of Business, New Castle County Vocational Technical School District

Scott Kessel

Chief Financial Officer, Brandywine School District

Elizabeth Lewis

Office of Management and Budget, State of Delaware

Tizzy Lockman

Vice-Chair, Wilmington Education Improvement Commission, Red Clay Parent

Mike Matthews

President, Red Clay Education Association

Mike Piccio

Red Clay Consolidated School District School Board

Ed Ratledge

Director, Center for Applied Demography and Survey Research, University of Delaware

Robert Silber

Chief Financial Officer, Christina School District

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Parent, Educator, and Community Engagement

Yvonne Johnson, Co-Chair

Parent and Education Advocate, Red Clay Consolidated School District

Chandra Pitts, Co-Chair

Parent and Executive Director, One Village Alliance

Monty Alderman

Teacher, Dickinson High School, Red Clay Consolidated School District

Alexis Andrianopoulos

Information Officer, Brandywine School District

Ted Boyer

Principal, A.I. duPont Middle School, Red Clay Consolidated School District

The Honorable Nnamdi Chukwuocha

Member, Wilmington Education Advisory Committee and Chair, Education, Youth & Families Committee, Wilmington City Council

The Honorable Ernest "Trippi" Congo, II

Wilmington City Council

Kevin Dolan

Parent, Red Clay Consolidated School District

Meredith Griffin

Member, Wilmington Education Advisory Committee, and Education Committee Chair, Interdenominational Ministers Action Council

Frederika Jenner

President, Delaware State Education Association

Evelyn Keating

Program Manager, Delaware Office of Early Learning and Parent, Red Clay Consolidated School District

Wendy Lapham

Information Officer, Christina School District

Cheris Locket

Youth Ambassador, One Village Alliance

Pati Nash

Communications, Red Clay Consolidated School District

Aaron Selekmán

Principal, H.B. duPont, Red Clay Consolidated School District

Nicole Williams

Student, Charter School of Wilmington

Lauren Wilson

Information Officer, Colonial School District

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Dear Delawareans,

The Wilmington Education Improvement Commission has issued an interim plan for Redistricting in the City of Wilmington and New Castle County. It can be found at www.solutionsfordelawareschools.com. The Commission invites formal public comment on the interim plan beginning on November 17, 2015 and continuing through January 14, 2016. This public comment will be a part of the public record which will be submitted to the State Board of Education to be reviewed as they vote on the Redistricting Plan.

All public comment received by the Commission before December 9, 2015 will be reviewed by the Commission consideration for the final plan to be submitted to the State Board of Education on December 15, 2015.

Forms of correspondence to be included in the public record are as follows:

1. Correspondence with WEIC from the public, including written and electronic comments from the public during the notice period (November 17-January 14). These should be posted publicly on the WEIC website and submitted as electronic pdf files to the State Board of Education for posting on the Board website. Written and electronic comments will only be accepted through the following mechanisms:
 - a. By mail to:
Wilmington Education Improvement Commission
C/O The Institute for Public Administration
111 Academy Street
Newark, DE 19716
 - b. By email to: solutionsfordelawareschools@gmail.com
 - c. Through the website's "contact us" option: www.solutionsfordelawareschools.com/contact-us/
 - d. Facebook is NOT an acceptable form of public comment.
2. A record of the public hearings from which a verbatim transcript is prepared for presentation to the Board and posting on the Board website. The public hearings are held on the following dates:
 - a. **Brandywine School District:** Monday, November 30, 2015 at 6:30 p.m.
at *P.S. duPont Middle School*, 701 W. 34th Street, Wilmington, DE 19802.
 - b. **Colonial School District:** Tuesday, December 1, 2015 at 6:30 p.m.
at *William Penn High School*, 713 E. Basin Rd, New Castle, DE 19720.
 - c. **Christina School District:** Wednesday, December 2, 2015 at 6:30 p.m.
at *Bayard Middle School*, 200 S. Dupont Street, Wilmington, DE 19805.
 - d. **Red Clay Consolidated School District:** Monday, December 7, 2015 at 6:30 p.m.
at *Brandywine Springs School*, 2916 Duncan Rd, Wilmington, DE 19808.
 - e. **Red Clay Consolidated School District:** Tuesday, December 8, 2015 at 6:30 p.m.
at *Warner Elementary School*, 801 W. 18th Street, Wilmington, DE 19802.
3. Exhibits, documents, and testimony presented at the public hearing.
These will be posted and submitted to the Board in conjunction with the Hearing transcript.

Although no questions are not permitted to be answered at the public hearings, questions may be submitted through email (solutionsfordelawareschools@gmail.com), phone (302-385-6206), or mail to the address listed above.

We hope you will read the interim plan and provide feedback to help inform the writing, and comment to inform the decision of the State Board of Education.

**Wilmington Education
Improvement Commission**
Solutions for Delaware Schools

December 17, 2015

Dr. Teri Quinn Gray
Delaware State Board of Education
John G Townsend Building
401 Federal Street, Suite 2
Dover, DE 19901

Dear Dr. Gray and Members of the Board:

On behalf of the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission (the Commission), please accept our final submission of Redistricting in the City of Wilmington and New Castle County: A Transition, Resource, and Implementation Plan. Last April, the Wilmington Education Advisory Committee (WEAC), our predecessor group wrote the following:

Today thousands of Wilmington children, most of them poor, black, or Latino, still do not have access to high-quality public education. Judged on most outcomes—test scores, truancy, graduation rates, college attendance, socio-emotional well-being, drug use, homelessness, arrests, and unemployment—these children have become data points for a system of failure.

Strengthening Wilmington Education: An Action Agenda, April 2015

For nearly three generations, state government leaders have not acted to strengthen public education in Delaware's largest and only metropolitan city. Instead, our leaders waited for the federal courts to impose remedies, and then they acted to dilute the impact of those remedies. The remedies have not worked. The school reforms driven by No Child Left Behind and Race to the Top, for the most part, also have not worked. Last week, the U.S. Congress essentially repealed No Child Left Behind, returning to the states the responsibility for initiatives to improve public education. The persistent failures of more than a half-century of reform have come at great cost to City of Wilmington students and these failures continue to limit the quality of public education across the entire state.

Over the last 16 months, a community group of parents, students, teachers, district and charter representatives, and community leaders has worked passionately to chart a viable path for strengthening Wilmington education. The group completed a comprehensive analysis of the conditions of Wilmington public education and how those conditions affect student outcomes. One conclusion is indisputable. Consistently, on virtually all outcomes, middle and upper-middle class students—regardless of geography, race, or school district—do better than those who are low-income, and those who are low-income do significantly better than those who are low-income and live in the City of Wilmington.

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The Debate

There are many debates as to why these realities persist. More often than not, one group blames another and demands greater accountability. That said, there are three recurrent and competing themes about the cause of poor outcomes for Wilmington students. Each theme points to a different issue and a different solution. The first position focuses on problems Wilmington students may face at home and in their neighborhoods, problems that many believe cannot be overcome in the classroom. Some advocates of this view regard school-based interventions as misguided and doomed to failure. Others, however, call for greater attention to helping schools meet the needs of students in poverty. The second position is that government leaders have never accepted responsibility for addressing the problems of poverty and are not committed to providing the resources educators need to make a difference for all students at risk. Advocates of this view believe more political will and funding are needed. The third position is that the fragmented nature of our current governing structure (e.g., too many districts and charters with far too little collaboration) prevents any action to strengthen public education as a whole. This view focuses on streamlining governance and consolidating responsibility for education improvements. It has become clear that all three of these positions present significant challenges that must be addressed. It also is clear that none of these challenges can be effectively addressed with piecemeal reforms, holding one group accountable to another, or introducing patchworks in public education funding. Simply put, a comprehensive effort is essential.

The Plan

For the first time in decades, a comprehensive action agenda to strengthen Wilmington schools has a broad base of support: **Strengthening Wilmington Education: An Action Agenda**. This report served as the basis for legislation to establish the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission. The Commission has the mandate to carry out the recommendations outlined in the report and also to advise state leaders on how best to support the increasing number of schools throughout Delaware with high concentrations of low-income students, English language learners and other children at risk, including young children with special education needs. Separate legislation authorized the State Board of Education to alter district boundaries in northern New Castle County in a manner consistent with the WEAC recommendations and based on a comprehensive transition, resource, and implementation plan developed by the Commission.

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As you know, if approved, the implementation of the plan will be subject to confirmation by a joint resolution of the General Assembly that must be signed by the Governor. The plan calls for the movement of City of Wilmington students and schools out of the Christina School District and into the Red Clay Consolidated School District at the beginning of the 2018–19 school year. If this happens, governance will become more coherent. One district, Red Clay, will have responsibility for the majority of the public school students in the City of Wilmington.

The Commission has been very clear that simply changing district boundaries will not in itself change student outcomes. Redistricting must be accompanied by the allocation of additional resources to support the needs of low-income students, English language learners, and other students at risk. This investment should begin in Wilmington and then extend across Delaware. Currently, Delaware is one of only fifteen states that does not allocate funding for low-income students even though at least half of Delaware students are low-income. Delaware is one of four states that does not allocate additional funding for English language learners even though these students are the fastest growing segment of our student population. The necessary additional funding can be provided over a number of years, starting with the schools and districts affected by redistricting and then expanding statewide. Over time, the Commission's plan calls for a new weighted-student-funding allocation system that can more effectively and efficiently address the diverse needs of all Delaware students. While additional funding is needed, the burden of support should not fall on local taxpayers in the districts affected by redistricting. No Red Clay or Christina taxpayer should bear any undue tax burden because of redistricting. The needed funding must be addressed predominantly as a state obligation.

Redistricting and additional targeted funds are essential, but much more will be needed. The components of the full action agenda are identified in the chart: **An Action Agenda for Improved Wilmington Student Outcomes**. Three streams of action are required: creating responsive governance, funding student success, and meeting the full-range of Wilmington student needs in-school and out-of-school. Progress on all three streams is needed to support higher-quality schools, attract and retain high-quality teachers, improve instruction and learning, and generate improved student outcomes.

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The Commission's proposal is not a quick fix. It is a solid and achievable plan borne of the most transparent process our community has ever seen. It builds upon proposals that have been made by earlier task forces to improve Wilmington education. It is based upon extensive research about what is needed and what works to end the cycle of poverty and to provide educators in our schools with the resources to better support student learning. It addresses key state priorities, from investing in early childhood education to eliminating the school-to-prison pipeline. It has the support of a broad and growing coalition of parents, educators, community and business leaders, student advocates, and government officials.

Doing Nothing

Some have argued that we just can't afford to do what is needed and that we already spend too much on public education. As in the past, we could decide to do nothing. But you can be assured that if we do "nothing," the costs to our state and its taxpayers will surely rise to levels that are unsustainable; low-income students across the state will continue to struggle; rates of incarceration and recidivism will reach unprecedented levels; and Delaware, and its central city, will be increasingly less attractive to employers, large and small. All of this is substantiated by the recently released report from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Elevated Rates of Urban Firearm Violence and Opportunities for Prevention.

The time is over for putting off action, waiting for a better plan, screaming no money, or blaming the students, their parents or their teachers for a system that is unable to meet student needs. The time to act is now. Johnny Means, a high school student who serves on the Commission, has summed it up, "[State leaders] need to do something. They need to say they agree or not. They need to say what needs to be done, what they like or not like. Something has to be done."

Sincerely,



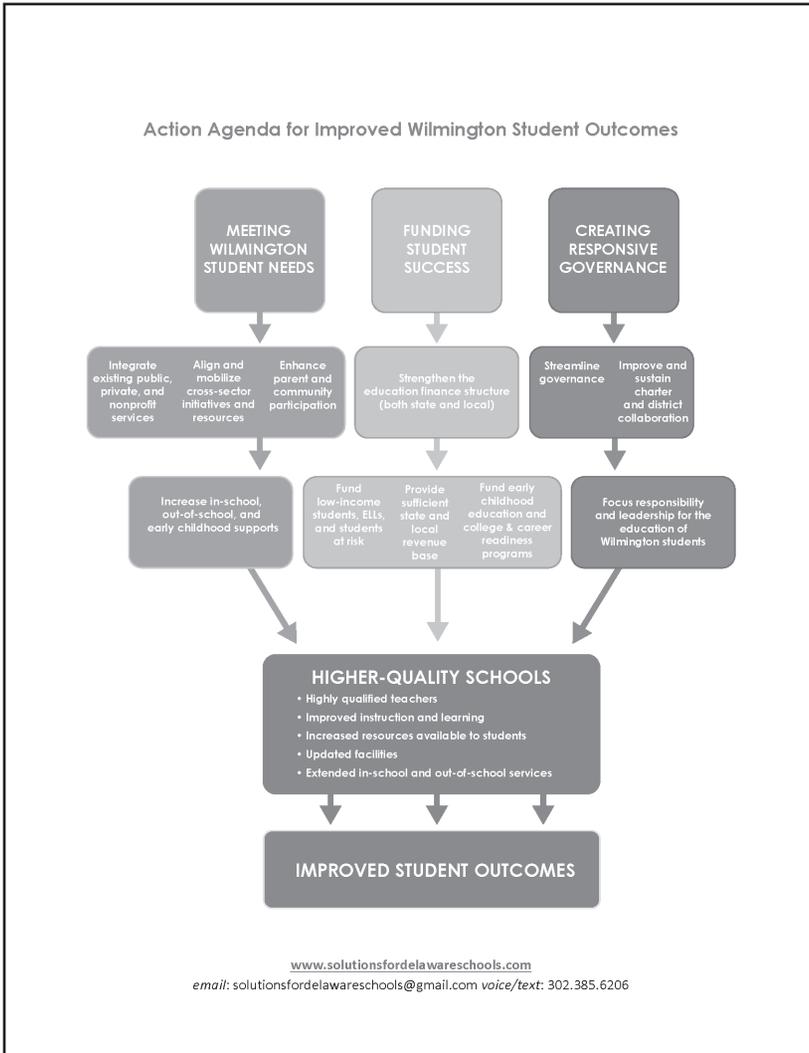
Tony Allen, Ph.D.
Chairman



Dan Rich, Ph.D.
Policy Director

cc: Donna Johnson
Executive Director, Delaware State Board of Education

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STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
 THE TOWNSEND BUILDING 401
 FEDERAL STREET, SUITE 2
 DOVER, DE 19901

January 31, 2016

Dear Dr. Allen:

On January 21, 2016, the State Board of Education (Board) took action on the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission (WEIC) submitted plan, "Redistricting in the City of Wilmington and New Castle County: A Transition, Resource, and Implementation Plan." The Board voted to return the plan to WEIC and send a letter detailing reasons and outstanding concerns with the proposal. In returning the plan, this allows the Commission to resubmit the plan for reconsideration within 60 days.

Reasons for returning the plan as expressed by the Board are outlined below:

- A clear connection was not sufficiently established that identified how shifting district boundary lines would lead to improved student outcomes.
- There are not commitments to evidence based programs and best practices to address instruction, student learning outcomes, and support services for all Wilmington students now and throughout the proposed implementation timeline.
- The proposed weighted funding recommendations are not broad enough for meaningful city-wide change. The proposed timeline and distribution for funding does not provide an equitable impact for all students in the City of Wilmington.
- There is not an executive summary or concise overview that outlines all associated costs with appropriate categorization mapped to implementation milestones.
- Without milestones connecting the work of other WEIC committees, it is unclear how essential services and supports will integrate with redistricting efforts to allow meaningful impact on student outcomes.
- There is not a clear and concise summary of required components for the redistricting transition, resource, and implementation as it relates to the overall timeline. It is difficult to differentiate what's required immediately versus the broader recommendations within the full report.
- A lack of milestones related to relevant work to be done by the Department of Elections.

- The Board does not support all components within the "Board Resolution" and does not support the inclusion of a "Board Resolution" within the WEIC proposal.
- The Board expressed concerns with the proposed approach around suspension of the implementation timetable and expiration of the plan.
- It is not clear how broad and sufficient community/stakeholder support for this proposal will be sustained throughout the duration of the implementation timeline and beyond.
- Potential for duplicative actions and additional levels of bureaucracy among WEIC and other entities (IRMC, Office of Early Learning, P-20, Delaware Charter Schools Network, etc.) are referenced in the proposal.

We thank all members of WEIC and their subcommittees for their hard work and steadfast commitment to this important work. We share your passion around improving educational opportunities for our children in the City of Wilmington, and the desire to embrace this unique opportunity to take action toward that end.

We look forward to your response. Please copy Ms. Donna Johnson, SBE Executive Director, and direct all questions to donna.johnson@sbe.k12.de.us or 302-735-4010.

Sincerely,



TERI QUINN GRAY, PH.D.
PRESIDENT

Cc: Members of the Delaware State Board of Education
Ilona Kirshon, DAG
S. Elizabeth Lockman, WEIC Vice Chair
Kenneth Rivera, WEIC Vice Chair
Dan Rich, Policy Director

Wilmington Education
Improvement Commission
Solutions for Delaware Schools

February 1, 2016

Dear Dr. Gray and members of the Delaware State Board of Education:

Thank you for your letter, dated January 31, 2016 outlining the Delaware State Board of Education's reasons for returning our plan. It is my intention to share this letter with the full Wilmington Education Improvement Commission and to discuss it at our meeting on Tuesday, February 2, 2016. We will then prepare a response that addresses your concerns and will submit a summary addendum to our plan, no later than Thursday, February 11, 2016.

The addendum will respond to each of the issues raised in your letter. We will also include our full plan and the 50 questions from the State Board that we have responded to previously as references to our summary document. At that point, I would respectfully request that the State Board vote on our plan at your February 18, 2016 meeting.

As I indicated in my January 21, 2016 communication to all of you, "You [Delaware State Board of Education] have taken great care in exercising due diligence in considering the important and limited power of the State Board of Education to redraw the lines for the first time in 40 years. You have asked hard, thoughtful questions, pressed us on the impact on student achievement that will result from this initial step, affirmed your commitment to Delaware children, and grounded your inquiry and deliberations in fact-finding and evidence."

In that spirit, we continue to believe that all of this has made our plan comprehensive, measurable, and tempered in the very real notion that this is one important step in series of concerted and deliberate actions to be taken through 2021 to improve academic outcomes for City of Wilmington children. However, we are committed to doing more; in fact, we will do whatever it takes to move this plan forward and to begin true Wilmington education reform.

Per your instruction, should we have any clarifying questions in response to your letter, our Policy Director Dr. Dan Rich (drich@udel.edu or 302-831-6835) will reach out to Ms. Johnson on the Commission's behalf. Should you or any Board members wish to speak directly to me, I can be reached by email at tonyallen@comcast.net or by phone at (302) 290-1445. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Tony Allen, Ph.D., Chairman, Wilmington Education Improvement Commission

Cc: S. Elizabeth Lockman, Vice-Chair
Kenneth Rivera, Vice-Chair
Dan Rich, Ph.D., Policy Director
Wilmington Education Improvement Commission

Wilmington Education
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February 11, 2016

Dr. Gray and members of the Delaware State Board of Education:

The attached addendum to the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission's Redistricting Plan is in response to the letter received on January 31, 2016 listing the State Board's reasons for returning the plan. The addendum provides direct and concise responses to each of the listed reasons. The addendum also includes the following additional documentation:

- A compendium that includes additional details related to those responses;
- An integrated timeline that summarizes action steps, milestones, and funding at each stage of implementation;
- Letters solicited by the Commission from each of the Wilmington school districts specifically responding to issues raised by the State Board;
- Links to additional documentation provided by the Red Clay and Christina School Districts in response to the Commission's request (now posted at the Commission's website, <http://www.solutionsfordelawareschools.com> and available for State Board review); and,
- Copies of the answers provided by the Commission on December 18, 2015 and January 15, 2016 to earlier questions raised by the State Board.

On February 2, 2016, the Commission met to discuss the issues raised by the State Board and to consider its responses. While all of my fellow Commissioners agreed to respond to these concerns, we also felt compelled to express our own concerns about the process followed by the State Board in its deliberations on the Commission's plan. There have been too many instances in which the State Board and the Commission's representatives have failed to communicate effectively.

We assume our fair share of the responsibility, but we also believe there have been a number of occasions where the State Board failed to take advantage of opportunities for dialogue with the Commission and its spokespersons, which limited your ability to effectively evaluate the Commission's plan and exercise your statutory obligations as defined in Senate Bill 122. We will not elaborate on these concerns at this time. Rather, as Dr. Gray has articulated, the focus of both the Commission and the State Board must be on "embracing this unique opportunity [and taking] action toward that end."

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Improvement Commission
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Dr. Gray and members of the Delaware State Board of Education
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In that spirit, we are now submitting this addendum to further clarify our approach and address the concerns raised by the State Board in January 31, 2016 letter. This response is in addition to the Commission's plan and the predecessor report, [Strengthening Wilmington Education: An Action Agenda](#), the many hundreds of pages of support documentation provided in the appendices and posted on the Commission's website, the accumulated public record, and the 43 Questions & Answer we have earlier provided in response to issues raised previously by the State Board. In sum, what has been provided is comprehensive, fully responsive, thoroughly documented, replete with milestones for assessment and refinement, and, by any reasonable standard, complete.

We call upon the State Board to approve the submitted plan, recognizing that this is one step in a series of concerted and important actions to be taken through 2021 to improve academic outcomes for City of Wilmington children.

We look forward to the vote on February 18th

Sincerely



Tony Allen, Ph.D.
Chairman

cc: Wilmington Education Improvement Commission
Dan Rich, Ph.D., Policy Director
Steven Godowsky, Secretary, Delaware Department of Education
Donna Johnson, Executive Director, State Board of Education



STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
THE TOWNSEND BUILDING 401
FEDERAL STREET, SUITE 2
DOVER, DE 19901

February 23, 2016

Dear Dr. Allen:

On February 18, 2016, the State Board of Education (Board) took action deciding whether to approve the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission (WEIC) submitted plan, "Redistricting in the City of Wilmington and New Castle County: A Transition, Resource, and Implementation Plan", or to return the plan to the Commission with reasons it could not be approved at this time. The Board voted 3 - 4 on the motion to approve the plan as presented.

Reasons the Board was not able to approve the WEIC proposal in its current form are listed below:

- Members of the Board indicated that there were not sufficient details within the plans regarding how the funding would be utilized once received.
- Concerns remained about whether a sufficient connection was established for how shifting district boundary lines would lead to improved student outcomes.
- While letters were received from all NCC districts with regard to implementation and services to address student learning for Wilmington students to begin now and extend throughout the implementation timeline, it was noted that all of the letters received referenced programs and initiatives already underway at districts and did not bring new programs or supports to students. Additionally, one district's letter was presented as contingent upon action by their school board which was scheduled to take place at a future date, thus was not yet approved.
- The Board does not support all components as written within the "Board Resolution" drafted by WEIC and included within the WEIC plan. It does not support the inclusion of a "Board Resolution" being within the WEIC plan.

Sincerely,

TERI QUINN GRAY, PH.D.
PRESIDENT

Cc: Members of the Delaware State Board of Education
Ilona Kirshon, DAG
S. Elizabeth Lockman, WEIC Vice Chair
Kenneth Rivera, WEIC Vice Chair
Dan Rich, Policy Director



STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
THE TOWNSEND BUILDING 401 FEDERAL
STREET, SUITE 2
DOVER, DE 19901

February 23, 2016

Dear Dr. Allen:

On February 18, 2016, the State Board of Education (Board) took action deciding whether to approve the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission (WEIC) submitted plan, "Redistricting in the City of Wilmington and New Castle County: A Transition, Resource, and Implementation Plan", or to return the plan to the Commission with reasons it could not be approved at this time. The Board voted to approve the plan with conditions.

The conditions outlined by the Board in their approval are as follows:

- **Approval by the Delaware Department of Education of priority school plans submitted by Christina School District.**
- **Change of the word "shall" to "may" in item #2 of the resolution within the plan.**
"Shall" would commit the Board to a mandated action without the deliberation and review of the funding and supports in collaboration with the commission and the districts; and the current Board should not preclude a future Board the ability to take action after a review of all information.

The Board has absolutely no desire or intent for redistricting to become an unfunded mandate. Additionally, within the resolution's existing language, the ultimate decision rests with WEIC in consultation with the affected districts regarding expiration of the plan.

We fully believe and are committed to redistricting not being implemented with anything less than necessary and sufficient funding and supports. We look forward to an opportunity to discuss these items with WEIC and hope that together can move one step further on this path toward improving opportunities and access to high quality education for each and every child.

Sincerely,

TERI QUINN GRAY, PH.D. PRESIDENT

Cc: Members of the Delaware State Board of Education
Ilona Kirshon, DAG
S. Elizabeth Lockman, WEIC Vice Chair
Kenneth Rivera, WEIC Vice Chair
Dan Rich, Policy Director

Wilmington Education
Improvement Commission
Solutions for Delaware Schools

March 1, 2016

Dr. Gray and members of the Delaware State Board of Education,

The Wilmington Education Improvement Commission met on Wednesday, February 24, 2016, to consider the two conditions stipulated by the State Board in its approval of the Commission's Redistricting plan, "Redistricting in the City of Wilmington and New Castle County: A Transition, Resource and Implementation Plan." In your letter of February 23, 2016, you outlined those two conditions:

- Approval by the Delaware Department of Education of priority school plans submitted by the Christina School District.
- Change of the word "shall" to "may" in item #2 of the resolution within the plan.

On February 24, the Redistricting Committee of the Commission and the Commission itself reviewed these conditions in detail. We were fortunate to have Dr. Gray and Secretary Godowsky at the Commission meeting, both whom offered comments and fielded questions prior to the Commission's deliberations. Dr. Gray in particular was quite forthcoming and candid about the State Board position on the aforementioned conditions and the desire to work with the Commission to move this plan to the General Assembly. We are grateful to both of them for their presence. A summary of the discussion surrounding the conditions are as follows:

Condition #1: Approval by the Delaware Department of Education of priority school plans submitted by the Christina School District

Harrie Ellen Minnehan, President of the Christina School Board, confirmed that the memorandum of understanding regarding priority schools remains active and ready for Secretary Godowsky's signature. That MOU was negotiated by the Delaware Department Education, the Governor's Office and the Christina School District. To put a fine point on its commitment on Tuesday, February 23, the Christina School Board voted (7-0) to submit sub-grant proposals to implement the priority schools plans. At the Commission meeting, Secretary Godowsky indicated that he plans to meet with Christina School District officials to consider any modifications needed; once satisfied, Secretary Godowsky will then approve and sign the plans. As such, we believe that the Commission's responsibility with respect to this condition has been fulfilled.

Condition #2: Change of the word "shall" to "may" in item #2 of the resolution within the plan.

Prior to the Commission meeting, the Redistricting Committee met to discuss this condition. The Redistricting Committee, which includes the presidents and the superintendents of the four traditional schools districts, found this condition unacceptable since it would contravene the accords reached after months of deliberations on how best to insure that redistricting would not become an unfunded mandate. The members of the Redistricting Committee were unanimous in their judgement that the change of the word "shall" to "may" opens the possibility that redistricting will proceed even if the necessary and sufficient funds to support its success are not provided, thereby putting the entire process at risk. The Redistricting Committee voted 12-0, with one abstention to recommend to the Commission that it not accept this condition and resubmit the Commission's plan for State Board approval without this condition.

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After hearing the presentation from State Board President Gray and engaging in a brief discussion with her and Secretary Godowsky, the Commission members deliberated about the implications of accepting the second condition stipulated by the State Board. The Commission voted, 15 yes, 6 no, 2 absent, not to accept this condition and to resubmit to the State Board, the Redistricting Plan in its entirety. This includes the plan and appendices submitted on December 17, 2015, the addendum submitted to the State Board of Education on February 11, 2016, question and answer communications, and the complete public record including six public hearings, every Wilmington Education Improvement Commission meeting since its inception and State Board of Education meetings on December 17, 2015, January 21, 2016, and February 18, 2016.

In taking this action and resubmitting the plan as previously submitted, the Commission recognizes that the State Board "has absolutely no desire or intent for redistricting to become an unfunded mandate" and that "the ultimate decision rests with WEIC in consultation with the affected districts regarding the expiration of the plan." Both were clearly communicated in your February 23rd letter and Dr. Gray's presentation. However, we firmly believe that the requested change of the word "shall" to "may" would give the State Board and future State Boards the option of continuing with the redistricting plan timetable even if the Commission and the affected districts confirmed that the necessary and sufficient resources have not been provided.

In addressing the Commission, Dr. Gray affirmed that the State Board and the Commission share a common purpose and that we should proceed as partners. **To be clear and unequivocal, we strongly agree.** In our view, those shared commitments include the following:

- Improve the educational success of Wilmington students;
- Strengthen the quality of schools serving Wilmington students;
- Provide the resources and supports to enable Wilmington students to fully achieve their academic potential.
- Apply measures of success to track student progress and hold ourselves accountable; and
- Advance student improvements at the most rapid pace possible.

There was also considerable discussion with Dr. Gray about the need to rebuild trust between the State Board and the Wilmington education community. To strengthen that trust and enhance our partnership, we reaffirm the following steps.

- The Commission's leadership is committed to meet with the State Board of Education **at every stage of the implementation process** to evaluate educational improvements and to discuss whether the necessary and sufficient resources have been provided to support implementation. The Commission will take no action without such discussion.
- The Commission maintains an open invitation for the State Board to attend and participate in the meetings of the Commission and its' committees. The Commission will accept all invitations from the State Board to discuss any matters related to the implementation of the redistricting plan and the improvement of education for Wilmington students.

Wilmington Education
Improvement Commission
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- The Commission will update the State Board semi-annually on the progress of the Commission's efforts to meet student needs, build and sustain community supports, and expand charter/district collaboration.
- The Commission will provide an annual analysis of the *state of Wilmington education* based on data collected by the Delaware Department of Education and other sources sanctioned by DDOE, and discuss this analysis with the State Board of Education and the Secretary of Education.

We all know that the time for action is running short. In that spirit, we are asking that the State Board schedule a special meeting in the City of Wilmington to reconsider our final submission. Our recommendation is that the meeting be held Council Chambers of the City of Wilmington which would enable attendance by Wilmington parents, students and community leaders.

If there are any other considerations that the State Board would like the Commission to consider prior to the special meeting of the Board, please inform us in writing. If needed, I will consider convening the Commission as promptly as possible.

For your review, the link to the plan and the full record can be found at www.solutionsfordelawareschools.com. We respectfully request that you approve unconditionally and without further delay.

Sincerely



Tony Allen, Ph.D.
Chairman

cc: Wilmington Education Improvement Commission
Dan Rich, Ph.D., Policy Director
Steven Godowsky, Ed.D. Secretary of Education



DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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Steven H. Godowsky
Secretary of Education
Voice: (302) 735-4000
FAX: (302) 739-4654

March 8, 2016

Mr. Tony Allen
Chairman
Wilmington Education Improvement Commission
2305 Baynard Blvd.
Wilmington, DE 19802

RE: Christina Priority Schools

Dear Mr. Allen:

On March 4, 2016 the Christina School District and the Department of Education entered into an agreement for the District's three designated Priority Schools. The three schools include: Bancroft Elementary, Stubbs Elementary and Bayard Middle.

After a thorough review, I approved the Statement of Agreement signed by Acting Superintendent Andrzejewski and expect that funding for those schools will be made available shortly, consistent with provisions outlined in Delaware Code and conditions set forth in ESEA regulations.

Do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions regarding the Statement of Agreement addressing Christina's three Priority Schools.

Sincerely,



Steven H. Godowsky
Secretary of Education
DE Department of Education

Cc: Teri Quinn Gray
Jorge Melendez
Gregory Coverdale, Jr.
Patrick Heffernan
Nina Lou Bunting
Barbara Rutt
Terry Whittaker
Donna Johnson



STATE OF DELAWARE
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
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WILLIAM PENN STREET, DOVER, DE 19901

JACK A. MARKELL
GOVERNOR

PHONE: 302-744-4101
FAX: 302-739-2775

March 9, 2016

Tony Allen, Ph.D.
Chairperson
Wilmington Education Improvement Commission

Dr. Allen:

Thank you for your continued commitment to improve educational opportunities for Wilmington schoolchildren. This process has not been an easy one, but the Commission's work represents the efforts and input of thousands of Delawareans who care deeply about urban education. It is the best opportunity Delaware has had in decades to improve the education of Wilmington schoolchildren by increasing district cohesiveness while not imposing any undue burden on participating districts and giving districts additional resources to serve children appropriately.

At its most recent meeting, the State Board of Education was adamant that WEIC's plan must not only provide for student success upon redistricting, but should also ensure that Wilmington schoolchildren today benefit from our efforts. To that end, the State Board conditioned its approval of WEIC's plan on the execution of an agreement between the Department of Education and the Christina School District to implement strong plans to improve outcomes at Christina's Priority Schools. I know that the Commission already has played a key role in facilitating such agreement and I am pleased to confirm that Secretary Godowsky and Acting Superintendent Bob Andrzejewski have now confirmed agreement to fund those plans. Thanks to their efforts and the work of the Commission and the State Board, the approved plans will ensure an additional \$1 million in funding annually for three Christina schools in the City of Wilmington.

The State Board of Education has also conditioned its approval on a wording change relating to the process for suspending the timetable for implementation of redistricting in the absence of "necessary and sufficient funding and transition supports." I recognize that the proposed change was not supported by the Commission.

In our discussions last week, we discussed alternative language for the redistricting resolution. The following alternative language under items #2 of the redistricting resolution removes the State Board from formal approval of suspension of the timetable and ensures that the Commission, after consulting with the affected districts, shall have the authority to suspend the timetable for implementation of the plan until such time as the necessary and sufficient resources and supports are provided.

If the necessary and sufficient funding and transition supports, as laid out in the compendium dated February 11, 2016, are not provided by the conclusion of each stage and in the manner proposed, the Commission, after consulting with the affected districts, shall suspend the timetable for implementation until the resources and supports are provided.

I am asking that you call a meeting of the Commission to review and vote on the proposed alternative language and resubmit the Commission's plan to the State Board for action at their March 17th meeting.

As outlined in your submission to the State Board last week, the Commission has agreed to meet with the State Board at every stage of the implementation process to discuss education improvement and resources, and to take no action without such discussions. The Commission has also agreed to meet semi-annually with the State Board on these subjects, and continue a high level of engagement on all of WEIC's work. Those commitments, coupled with the language change, address both parties' concerns.

I want to reaffirm my support for the work of the Commission. I was pleased to include funding for this work in my proposed Fiscal Year 2017 budget, and I look forward to continuing to work with the Commission, the State Board, the affected districts, the General Assembly and others to see that sufficient resources are dedicated to this plan.

Thank you for your continued commitment to the schoolchildren of Delaware, and I look forward to continuing to work with you and the members of the Commission.

Sincerely,

Jack A. Markell

CC: Dr. Steven H. Godowsky, Secretary of Education
Teri Gray, Ph. D., President, State Board of Education
Kenny Rivera, Chairperson, School Board of the Red Clay Consolidated School District
Harrie Ellen Minnehan, Chairperson, School Board of the Christina School District
Dan Rich, Ph. D., Policy Director, WEIC

Wilmington Education
Improvement Commission
Solutions for Delaware Schools

March 9, 2016

Dear Commission Members,

On March 1, I resubmitted the Commission's plan to the State Board of Education as approved by the Commission on February 24th. On Thursday, March 3, 2016, Governor Markell convened a meeting to discuss a path forward for the Commission's redistricting plan. The meeting was called because the Governor was concerned that we had reached an impasse between the State Board and the Commission, and because time is running out to overcome that impasse.

In attendance were Dr. Teri Gray, President of the Delaware State Board of Education; Kenny Rivera, President of the Red Clay School Board; Harrie Ellen Minnehan, President of the Christina School Board; Dr. Steven Godowsky, Secretary of Education; Elizabeth Lockman, Commission Vice-chair; Dr. Dan Rich, Commission Policy Director; and myself along with the Governor's chief of staff, Mike Barlow and his newly appointed education advisor, Meghan Wallace.

Harrie Ellen Minnehan and Secretary Godowsky confirmed that the Christina School District and the Department of Education were in agreement on the arrangements for funding the district's priority schools plan. Yesterday, Dr. Godowsky sent me confirmation that he had signed the statement of agreement that will initiate funding. This means that the first condition stipulated by the State Board for approval of the Commission's plan has been met.

With regard to the second condition, after some discussion it was clear that the Commission's plan as resubmitted on February 24th was unlikely to be approved, since the language in the Redistricting Resolution was not changed as requested by the State Board. The Commission's leadership reaffirmed that the language change requested by the State Board is unacceptable. The Governor led the consideration of alternative language for the Redistricting Resolution that might be satisfactory to all parties.

The attached letter from the Governor requests that the Commission consider the alternative language. The alternative language would remove any role for the State Board of Education in the suspension of the timetable for implementation of redistricting, further strengthening the Commission's and the districts' control over the implementation process, or its suspension. The alternative language is below.

If the necessary and sufficient funding and transition supports, as laid out in the compendium dated February 11, 2016, are not provided by the conclusion of each stage and in the manner proposed, the Commission after consulting with the affected districts, shall suspend the timetable for implementation until the resources and supports are provided.

The alternative language ensures that the Commission in consultation with the districts shall have the authority and obligation to suspend the timetable for implementation if the necessary and sufficient funding and transitions support are not provided. It also clarifies that the necessary and sufficient resources are those specified in the compendium to the Commission's plan submitted on February 11, 2016. I believe that the alternative language strengthens the assurances needed to move forward with the redistricting process.

In response to Governor's request, I am calling an emergency meeting of the Commission on Monday, March, 14, 2016 at 5:30 p.m. at the Warner School library to take action on this language in time for consideration by the State Board of Education at their meeting on March 17, 2016.

Wilmington Education
Improvement Commission
Solutions for Delaware Schools

Prior to voting on the alternative language for the resolution, I anticipate several resolutions which would clarify how the Commission and the affected districts would work together on determining if a suspension of the timetable is necessary and what such a suspension of the timetable would mean in terms of the overall implementation of redistricting. This will further strengthen our collaboration in carrying out the redistricting plan.

Our Monday meeting is of critical importance to the success of our efforts. I hope you will make every effort to join us.

Sincerely,



Tony Allen, Ph.D.
Chairman

cc: Wilmington Education Improvement Commission
Jack Markell, Governor
Teri Gray, President, State Board of Education

Attachments: Governor Markell's Letter of March 9, 2016
Secretary Godowsky's Letter of March 8, 2016 on Christina Priority Schools Approval



DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Townsend Building
401 Federal Street, Suite 2
Dover, Delaware 19901-3639
DOE WEBSITE: <http://www.doe.k12.de.us>

Steven H. Godowsky
Secretary of Education
Voice: (302) 735-4000
FAX: (302) 739-4654

March 8, 2016

Mr. Tony Allen
Chairman
Wilmington Education Improvement Commission
2305 Baynard Blvd.
Wilmington, DE 19802

RE: Christina Priority Schools

Dear Mr. Allen:

On March 4, 2016 the Christina School District and the Department of Education entered into an agreement for the District's three designated Priority Schools. The three schools include: Bancroft Elementary, Stubbs Elementary and Bayard Middle.

After a thorough review, I approved the Statement of Agreement signed by Acting Superintendent Andrzejewski and expect that funding for those schools will be made available shortly, consistent with provisions outlined in Delaware Code and conditions set forth in ESEA regulations.

Do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions regarding the Statement of Agreement addressing Christina's three Priority Schools.

Sincerely,

Steven H. Godowsky
Secretary of Education
DE Department of Education

Cc: Teri Quinn Gray
Jorge Melendez
Gregory Coverdale, Jr.
Patrick Heffernan
Nina Lou Bunting
Barbara Rutt
Terry Whittaker
Donna Johnson

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March 15, 2016

Dr. Teri Gray
President
Delaware State Board of Education

Dear Dr. Gray and members of the Delaware State Board of Education:

On March 14, 2016, the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission ("the Commission") approved the alternative language recommended by Governor Markell for inclusion under item #2 of the Redistricting Resolution in the Commission's Plan, "Redistricting in the City of Wilmington and New Castle County: A Transition, Resource and Implementation Plan." I have attached a copy of the Governor's letter recommending the alternative language and have included the language below:

"If the necessary and sufficient funding and transition supports, as laid out in the Compendium dated February 11, 2016, are not provided by the conclusion of each stage and in the manner proposed, the Commission, after consulting with the affected districts, shall suspend the timetable for implementation until the resources and supports are provided."

The Commission voted 20 Yes, 1 No, and 2 Absent to resubmit the Redistricting Plan with the alternative language to the State Board of Education. As such, we have updated the Redistricting Plan with the alternative language and it is now posted at this link:
<http://sites.udel.edu/cas-weic/weic-draft-31416-sm/>

As per my March 1 letter, we are also reaffirming our desire to work with the State Board to ensure that we mutually commit to advance student improvement at the most rapid pace possible, apply measures of success to track student progress, and hold ourselves accountable to strengthen the quality of Wilmington schools. Our expression of that commitment is also outlined in our March 1 letter, but we have taken the liberty of noting it again below.

- The Commission's leadership is committed to meet with the State Board of Education **at every stage of the implementation process** to evaluate educational improvements and to discuss whether the necessary and sufficient resources have been provided to support implementation. The Commission will take no action without such discussion.
- The Commission maintains an open invitation for the State Board to attend and participate in the meetings of the Commission and its committees. The Commission will accept all invitations from the State Board to discuss any matters related to the implementation of the redistricting plan and the improvement of education for Wilmington students.
- The Commission will update the State Board semi-annually on the progress of the Commission's efforts to meet student needs, build and sustain community supports, and expand charter/district collaboration.

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Dr. Gray and members of Delaware State Board of Education:
Page Two
March 15, 2016

- The Commission will provide an annual analysis of the *state of Wilmington education* based on data collected by the Delaware Department of Education and other sources sanctioned by DD OE, and discuss this analysis with the State Board of Education and the Secretary of Education.

While the discussion of redistricting has taken up much of the public discourse over the past six months, the Commission has maintained that the change in district boundaries is only one step in a comprehensive path for school reform. We must also provide funding for low-income students, English Language Learners, basic special education, K-3; strengthen early childhood education and both in-school and after-school programs to meet the needs of Wilmington students; and mobilize active parent and community engagement in support of schools. Our committed purpose continues to be improved outcomes for Wilmington students specifically, and for low-income students throughout the state generally. That is the goal of the Commission through 2021.

We look forward to your action on the resubmitted Redistricting Plan at your meeting on Thursday, March 17. Because of family obligations, I will not be able to attend, but others from the Commission will be present. We look forward to your support. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Tony Allen, Ph.D., Chairman

cc: Wilmington Education Improvement Commission
Dan Rich, Ph.D., Policy Director
The Honorable Steven Godowsky, Ed.D. Delaware Secretary of Education

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Appendix H

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Actions by School Districts and Responses

**Christina School District Board of Education Resolution on the
Wilmington Education Advisory Council (WEAC) Interim
Recommendations issued 26 January 2015**

Whereas, the Christina School District serves 2 non-contiguous portions of New Castle County including 5 schools and 2 programs in the City of Wilmington, Delaware; and

Whereas, the Christina School District Board of Education recognizes that the court ordered assignment of Wilmington's schools to 4 districts in New Castle County is now suboptimal and antithetical to the local control of the City of Wilmington, Delaware by the City of Wilmington, Delaware; and

Whereas, the Christina School District Board of Education recognizes the inherently appropriate benefits of local control in allowing a community to serve its own youth and that such local control is clearly in line with Delaware laws regarding neighborhood schools; therefore,

Be it resolved that the Christina School District Board of Education hereby supports the preliminary findings of the WEAC and pledges our full support to assuring the realization the aspirational goals of the citizens and stakeholders of Wilmington, Delaware to exercise self-determination, fiscal independence, and the exercise of selecting which LEAs are best suited to control and deliver responsive schools to its communities within the City of Wilmington, Delaware.



Frederick Polaski
President-Christina School District Board of Education



Harrie-Ellen Minnehan
Vice President-Christina School District Board of Education

CSD Board Approved - 2/10/2015

**Resolution: Proposed Changes to the Boundaries of the Christina and Red Clay Consolidated
School Districts**

Subject: Legislative Action for Realignment of School District in the City of Wilmington

WHEREAS, the Red Clay Consolidated School District Board of Education recognizes the importance of the Wilmington Educational Advisory Committee Report to realign student assignments by eliminating Christina and Colonial School Districts from within the City of Wilmington and to assign these students to Red Clay Consolidated School District;

WHEREAS, the funding allocation and unit count realignment to address high need student groups is essential to the WEAC plan to move forward. Additional funding must be established prior to any realignment agreement. All sources of funding must be explored including tax pool, equalization, federal funding as well as reassessment and the method of local funding;

WHEREAS, the funding allocation for building maintenance and renovations must be adjusted to ensure facilities are able to meet the educational needs of students and staff before the transition occurs;

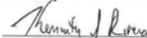
WHEREAS, the realignment of the school district attendance zones must occur in a lengthy and thoughtful manner to allow for appropriate planning with feeder patterns, staffing and hiring procedures, transportation, nutrition, unit counts, student transitions, etc.;

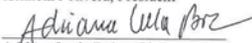
WHEREAS, the realignment of the school districts into Red Clay will give the school district authority (from outside agencies) for the planning and operations of the schools within the school board policy, district guidelines and framework of the plan.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT, we respectfully request that representatives of Red Clay Consolidated School District be represented on the proposed Wilmington Education Improvement Commission (WEIC) so that we can work, inclusive of other stakeholders, on a thoughtful and comprehensive long-term solution which will encourage the success of all students involved with the implementation of the WEAC recommendations.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the Red Clay Consolidated School District endorses the WEAC recommendations with the (1) provision of funding, (2) Red Clay involvement in WEIC, and (3) adequate time to implement any and all necessary changes.

Submitted by:
Red Clay Consolidated School District Board of Education


Kenneth J. Rivera, President


Adriana Leela Bohm, Ph.D.

Catherine H Thompson, Esquire


Kenneth R Woods


Michael Piccio, Vice President


Faith R. Newton, Ed.D.


Martin A. Wilson, Sr.

Action: RCCSD Board of Education Meeting
Date: April 15, 2015

**Wilmington Education
Advisory Committee**

April 17, 2015

All:

On Wednesday, April 15th, the Red Clay Consolidated School Board passed a resolution supporting the recommendations outlined in the Wilmington Education Advisory Committee's Final Report. In offering that support, the school board called for three things:

- A clear funding path and commitment before any such recommendations are implemented;
- Participation from the Red Clay School community in any transition efforts needed to move forward, including formal roles in the proposed Commission charged with the implementing the recommendations; and
- "Adequate time to implement any and all necessary changes."

To be clear and unequivocal, WE AGREE!

The Wilmington Education Advisory Committee has always been of the opinion that our recommendations should be taken as a package. Simply redrawing lines without consideration of a comprehensive path for school reform that included funding, parent and community engagement, wraparound services and statewide, strategic resource allocation for low-income students and their families is of no value to ensuring quality education for all kids. This resolution supports our view in full.

As you might recall, the Christina School District issued a resolution in late February endorsing the interim recommendations. Taken together, we believe the case for action remains strong and continue to call upon the General Assembly and the Governor to act and to do so now.

Onward,



Tony Allen, Ph.D.
Chairman
Wilmington Education Advisory Committee

Email: tonyallen@comcast.net Phone: 302.290.1445

**Wilmington Education
Improvement Commission**
Solutions for Delaware Schools

October 13, 2015

Christina School District
Board of Education
600 North Lombard Street
Wilmington, DE 19801

Dear Board Members:

Thank you for continuing to engage with us on the work of the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission (WEIC). The executive teams in the district and your board president have both been of tremendous value to our efforts. We have also been very engaged in reaching out to residents in the district and have developed a multi-media campaign that includes town halls, open committee and commission meetings, a continuing presence with social media, and ongoing interviews in print, radio, and TV. If you have not done so already, I would encourage you to visit www.solutionsfordelawareschools.com

In all these efforts, we have attempted to keep our messaging clear and consistent. I want to reiterate those points here.

- The state of public education in the City of Wilmington in particular – and in Delaware more broadly – is fractured and both under-equipped and under-resourced to meet the educational needs of low-income students.
- The current condition of public education governance in the City of Wilmington, with 18 different governing units responsible for providing educational options to 11,500 children with no unified plan is inefficient and ineffective.
- The first step to more coherent and responsive governance is to reducing the number of school districts attempting to serve these children. In that vein, the WEAC final report calls for the Christina and Colonial School Districts to no longer serve City of Wilmington students and for the Red Clay Consolidated School District and the Brandywine School District to continue to serve City of Wilmington students. Red Clay would take responsibility for the students and schools currently served by Christina.
- There should be no undue tax burden on any of the affected districts. If such were required, the Commission would not recommend moving forward.
- Our transition, resource and implementation plan is due to the State Board of Education on December 31, 2015. We are preparing those plans in concert with all affected districts and will present our proposal as a package. To be clear, by law, that package can only be voted up or down by the State Board of Education and cannot be amended in anyway.

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In April, we wrote a response to the Board resolution supporting the recommendations outlined in the Wilmington Education Advisory Committee's report, "Strengthening Wilmington Schools: An Action Agenda." I have included the critical portion of that response below.

The Wilmington Education Advisory Committee has always been of the opinion that our recommendations should be taken as a package. Simply redrawing lines without consideration of a comprehensive path for school reform that included funding, parent and community engagement, wraparound services and statewide, strategic resource allocation for low-income students and their families is of no value to ensuring quality education for all kids."

This position remains unchanged and it will be reaffirmed in the plan we submit to the State Board of Education.

We look forward to continued discussions and would be pleased to talk with you individually or as a group. Thank you again for your continued support.

Sincerely,



Tony Allen, Ph.D., Chair an, Wilmington Education Improvement Commission

Cc. Elizabeth Lockman
Kenneth Rivera
Dan Rich
Joe Pika
Henry Harper

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www.colonial.k12.de.us

Every Student College and Career Ready

D. DUSTY BLAKEY, Ed.D.
Superintendent
dblakey@colonial.k12.de.us
p. 302.323.2710
f. 302.323.2748

THIS RESOLUTION BY THE COLONIAL SCHOOL BOARD, NEW CASTLE, DELAWARE, IS IN RECOGNITION OF THE WILMINGTON EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPORT AND FOR ITS INVOLVEMENT IN THE WILMINGTON EDUCATION IMPROVEMENT COMMISSION PLANS TO IMPLEMENT ACTIVITIES AND TASKS OUTLINED IN THE REPORT.

WHEREAS, the Colonial School District Board of Education recognizes the Wilmington Education Advisory Committee (WEAC) report and supports the ongoing work of the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission (WEIC) in developing a plan to address the issues outlined in the WEAC report, including the consolidation of the portion of the Christina School District located in the City of Wilmington into the Red Clay Consolidated School District;

WHEREAS, the Colonial Board of Education has previously resolved that the current boundaries of the Colonial School District should remain unchanged, and all students living within those boundaries will attend schools within the Colonial School District unless the parents or legal guardians so choose to enter those students into a School Choice Program, a private educational facility, or an authorized charter school, as defined under current statute;

WHEREAS, the Colonial Board of Education will agree to discuss further the possibility of expanding the services of the Colonial School District into the City of Wilmington, provided that funding is awarded and sustained to fully support the expansion of those services, including operational and capital costs. The Colonial School District will have the authority to develop the plan and the operation of the additional services, under the guidelines of the Colonial School District. Adequate time and resources are to be provided to develop the plan;

WHEREAS, the Colonial Board of Education and district representatives will continue to collaborate with the members of WEIC in regards to the impact and future authorization of any additional charter schools, as is our current practice; and

BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED that the Colonial School District will support the WEIC recommendations with the stipulations that: 1) the current Colonial boundaries remain unchanged, 2) adequate funding is provided and sustained, should additional services be expanded into the City of Wilmington, 3) multiple data sources will be used to address and/or resolve city governance concerns to maximize student success for all low income residents, and 4) the Colonial School District continues to be represented on the commission and included in all discussions of the "plan."

The Colonial School District is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate or deny services on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, handicap, or age.

**Wilmington Education
Improvement Commission**
Solutions for Delaware Schools

October 23, 2015

Joseph T. Laws III
President, Board of Education
Colonial School District
318 E. Basin Road
New Castle, Delaware 19720

Dear Ted,

We are following up on the conversations at and after the Commission meeting yesterday concerning the Colonial Board of Education vote at its October 13th meeting to retain City of Wilmington students in your district. As communicated to us earlier by Superintendent Blakey, and as he announced at the October 14, 2015 meeting of the State Board of Education, the action was taken after an analysis of 2013 DCAS test scores for low-income students revealed that Colonial outperformed other districts in northern New Castle County. A copy of the PowerPoint slides summarizing that data is attached.

We appreciate the Colonial School Board's affirmation of its desire to continue to serve Wilmington students living in the district. Most importantly, we agree with you that what is best for students should be the key factor in any recommendation and decision about district responsibilities. In that regard, however, while the Colonial School Board has affirmed its desire to continue to serve Wilmington students, the district has not provided a compelling case as to why that is in the best long-term interest of Wilmington students. That case should be made to the Redistricting Committee of the Commission, of which you are a member. Until then, the recommendation in the WEAC final report that the Colonial School District should no longer serve Wilmington students remains the baseline for the Committee's and Commission's consideration. It would be up to the Redistricting Committee to propose an alternative recommendation to the Commission.

As you consider the case to be made, please consider the following factors. The action of the Colonial Board does not address the basis for the recommendation in the WEAC final report. Further, the analysis which was the basis for the Colonial Board's action does not address the full dimensions of Colonial's performance in regard to the education of Wilmington students. The key concerns are described below.

1. If the Colonial School District continues to serve Wilmington students, the fragmented structure of public education in the city will continue. Since 2001, four separate task forces have concluded that long-term, sustained educational achievement requires a more coherent, responsive governance system. The WEAC recommendation that the Colonial School District no longer should serve Wilmington students was based on this need for coherent governance and not based on student test scores. The Colonial School District has no schools in the city of Wilmington and it serves fewer than 200 Wilmington students. While the Board has affirmed its desire to "keep its kids," the district actually has a minimal role and commitment to the city-wide education of Wilmington students and it has done nothing to

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expand that role or commitment. Indeed, the actual presence of the Colonial School District in the education of Wilmington students has been shrinking as students choose to attend non-district schools.

What is the justification for the continuing role of the Colonial School District in the governance of Wilmington public education? What actions does the Colonial Board anticipate to strengthen that role and to develop a real presence in the City of Wilmington? What consideration has or will the Colonial School Board give to expanding its boundaries to serve Wilmington students that live in areas that are directly contiguous to current Colonial School District feeder patterns?

2. About half of all Wilmington students in the Colonial School District, including more than half of the elementary school students, already choose out to public schools outside of Colonial. Although the Colonial School District occupies a large geographic area Wilmington students in the district live in a small area of the City that is closer to schools in the three other districts and to public charter schools than to any school in the Colonial School District. Indeed, the nearest Colonial school is outside of Wilmington and six miles from where these students live.

Does the Colonial School District intend to address the condition that a majority of the district's Wilmington elementary school students are now attending schools out of the district, specifically schools that are much closer to where those students live? How does the Colonial School District intend to address the fragmentation of governance responsibilities for Wilmington students in its own district?

3. An analysis of 2013 and 2014 DCAS test scores for low-income students residing in Wilmington leads to the conclusion that none of the four school districts has been effective in supporting the success of most of their low-income Wilmington students. Attached is this more detailed analysis of the DCAS data for 2013 and 2014 for the four Wilmington districts that splits out assessment of Wilmington students and low-income Wilmington students. This data demonstrates that low-income Wilmington students have test scores below those for all four districts as a whole, and also below those for all low-income students in all four districts. With one exception, test scores in all subject areas in all districts in both years document that less than 50% of low-income Wilmington students are proficient. In some cases Colonial test scores for Wilmington students are above those of other districts. These indicate important progress. Even so, less than 50% of Colonial low-income Wilmington students are proficient on all tests.

If the Colonial School Board believes that it is better prepared to educate low-income Wilmington students than other districts, what steps is it planning to take to change this situation? How would those plans relate to the role of the Colonial district in strengthening educational opportunities and performance for other Wilmington students in areas adjacent to the district's current boundaries? This is the real test of doing what is best for students.

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We would be pleased to discuss these concerns with you and encourage you to share your responses to these concerns with the Redistricting Committee as soon as possible.

Thank you.



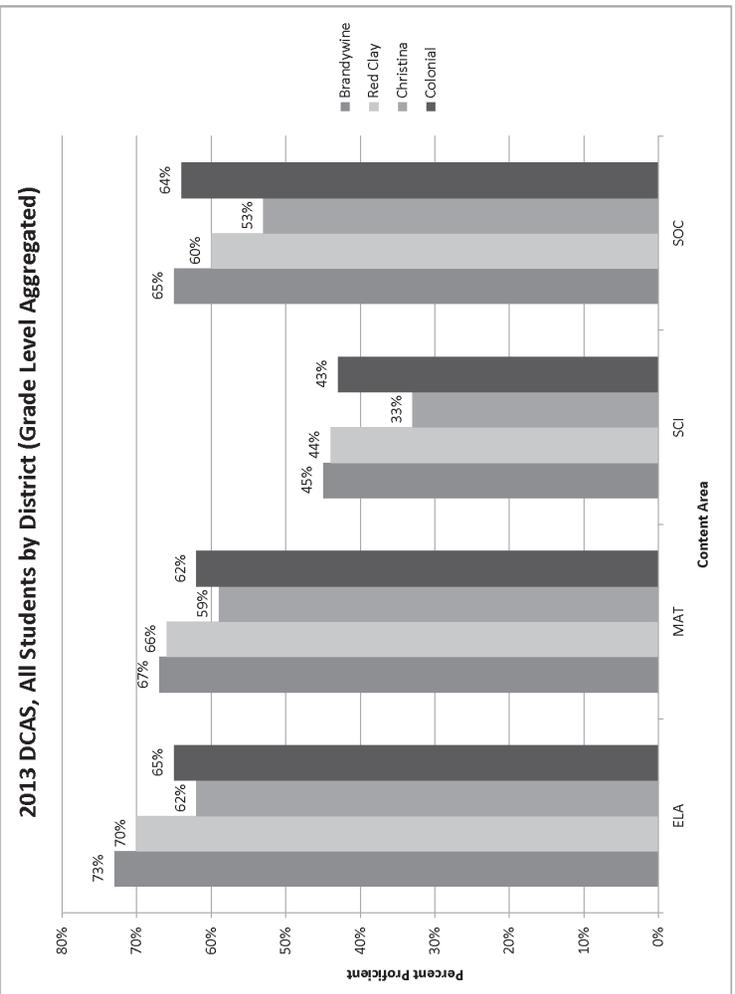
Joe Pika, Co-Chair, Redistricting Committee, WEIC

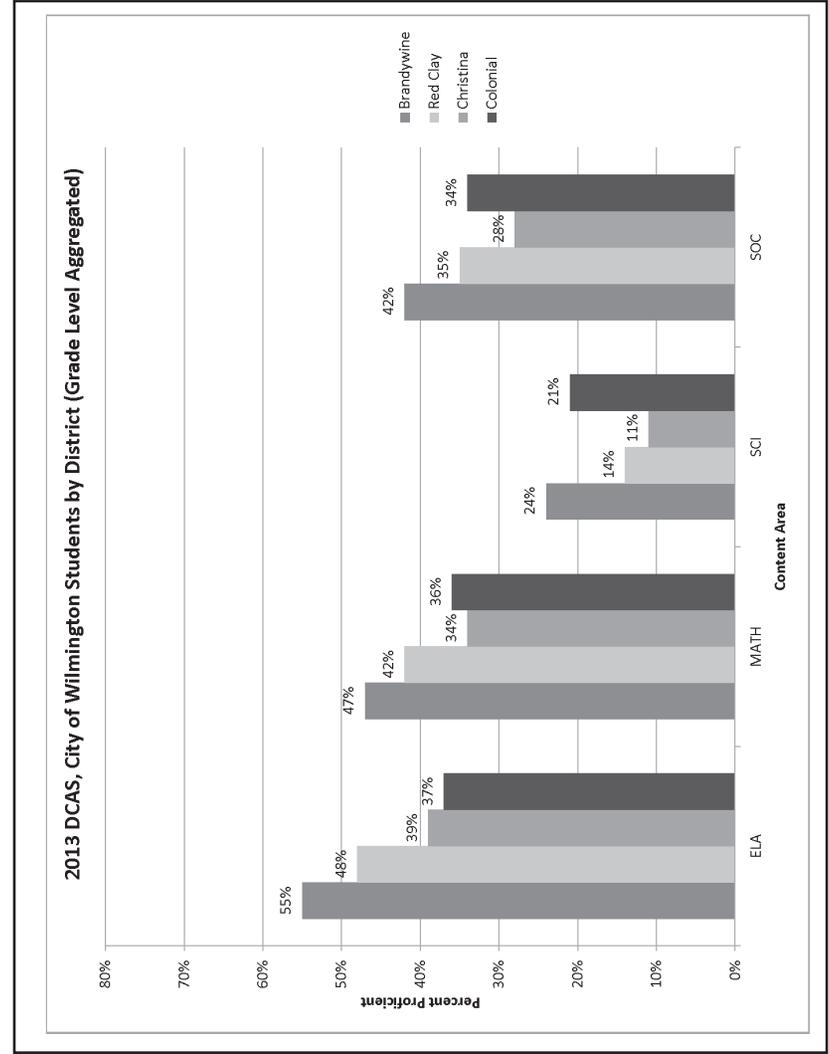
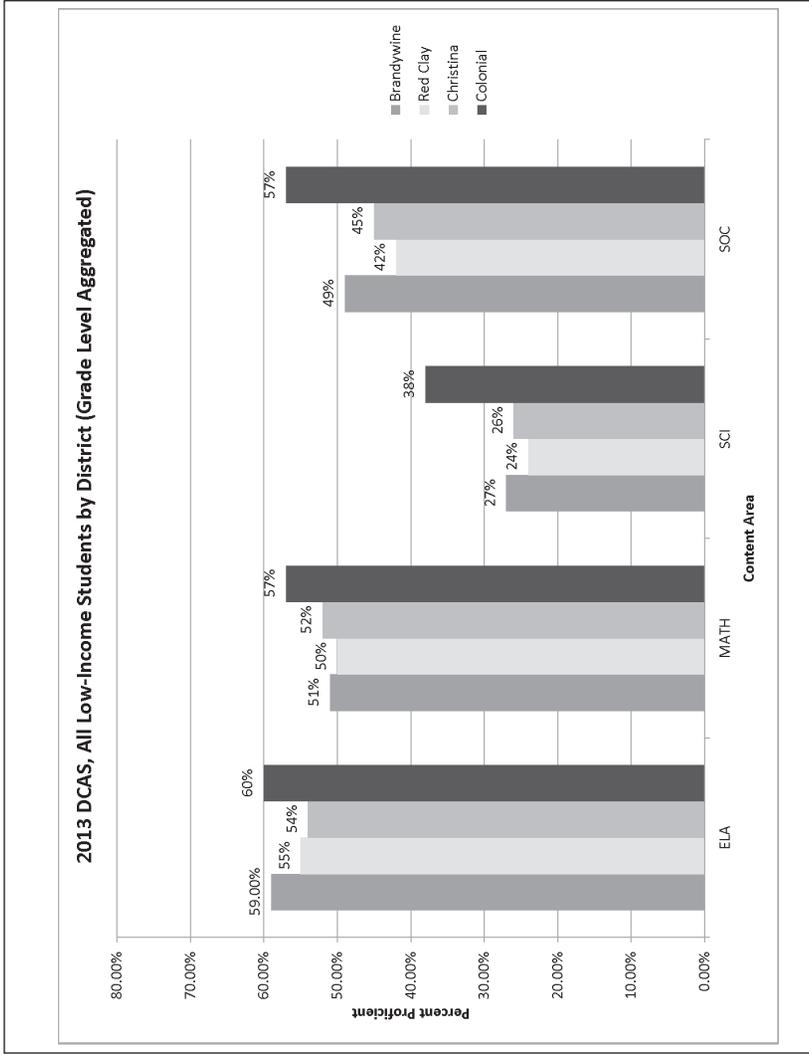


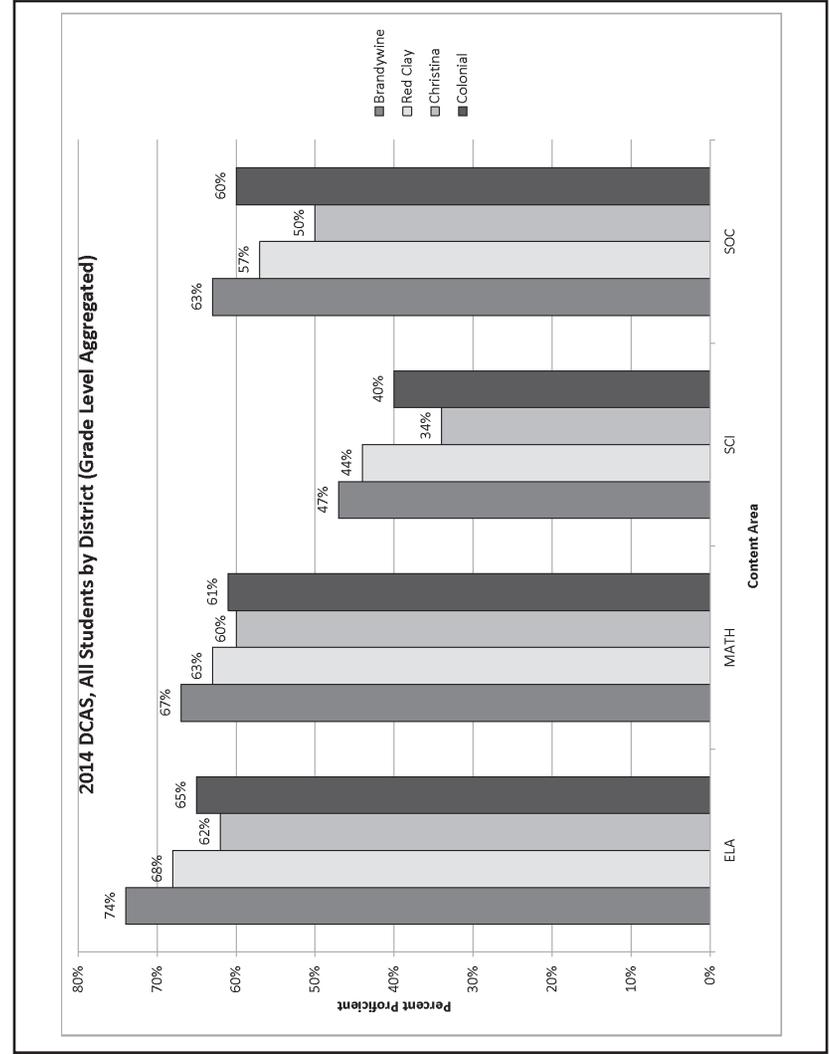
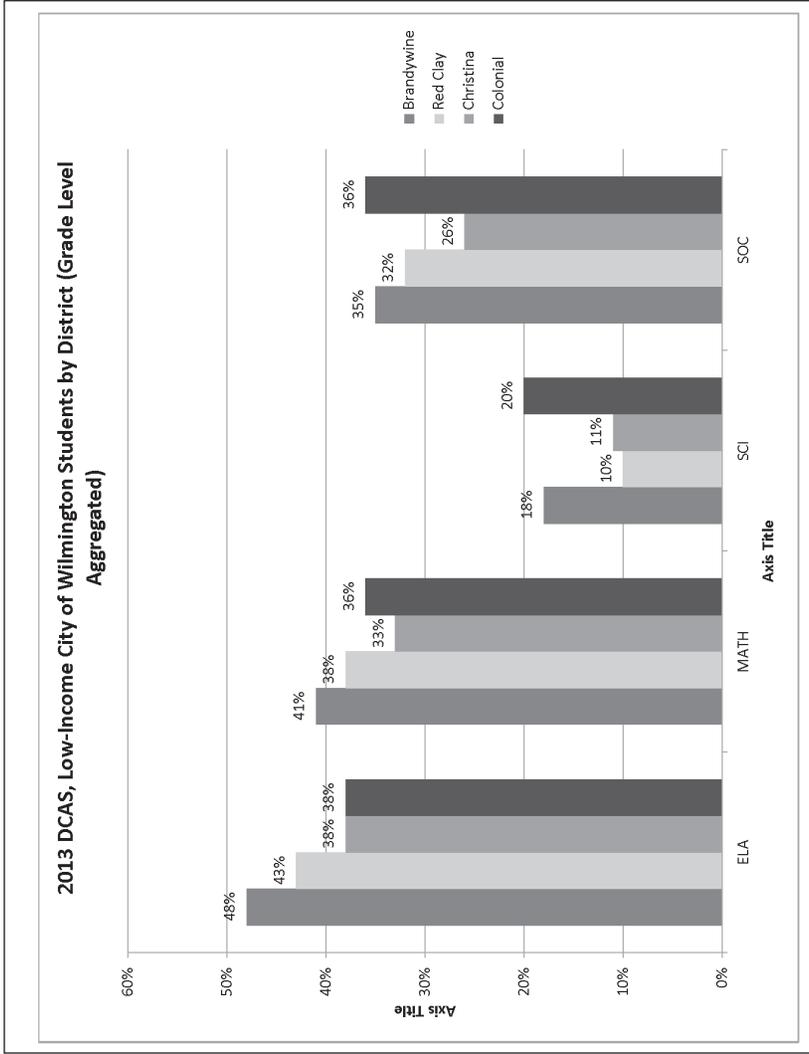
Dan Rich, Policy Director, WEIC

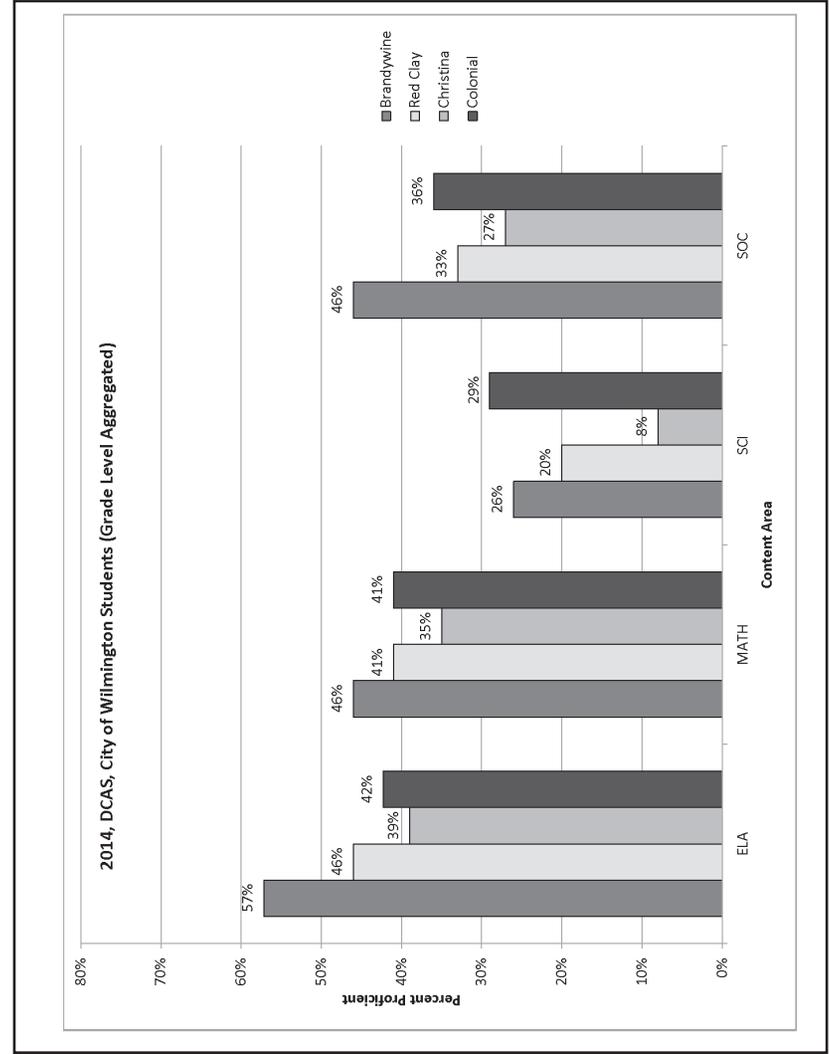
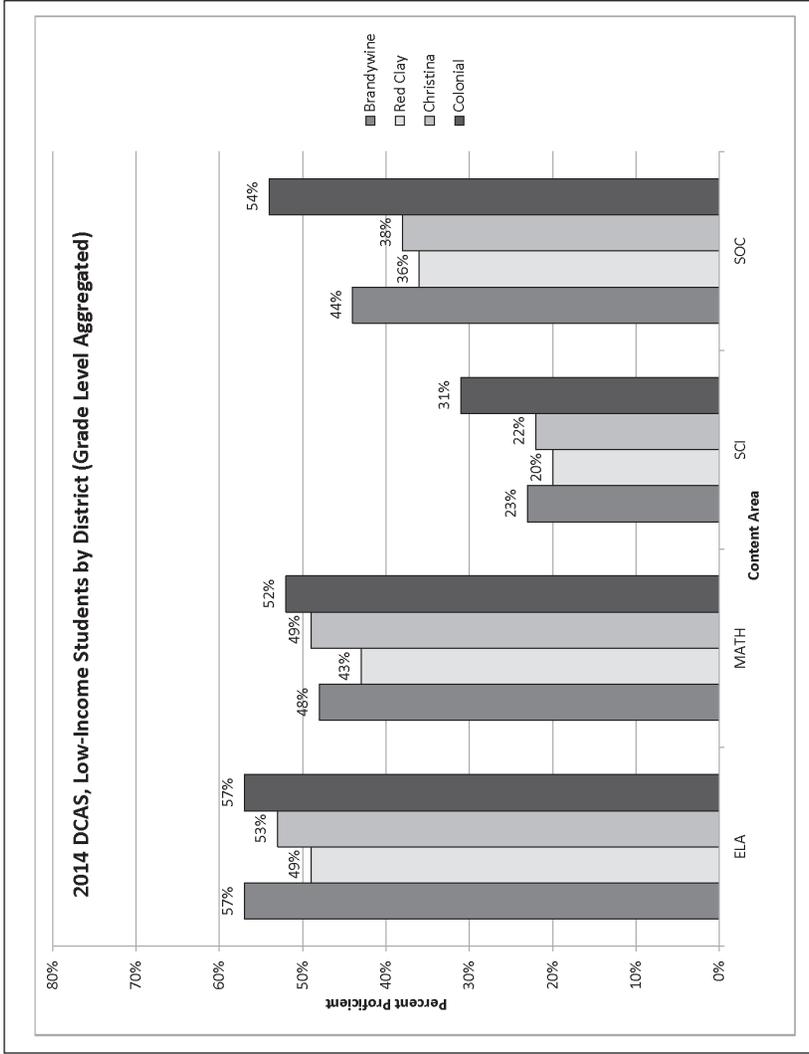
- cc. Tony Allen, Chair, Wilmington Education Improvement Commission
- Elizabeth Lockman, Vice-Chair
- Kenneth Rivera, Vice-Chair
- Members of the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission
- Members of the WEIC Redistricting Committee
- Co-chairs of the WEIC Committees
- Members of the Colonial School District Board of Education
- Dr. Dusty Blakey, Superintendent, Colonial School District

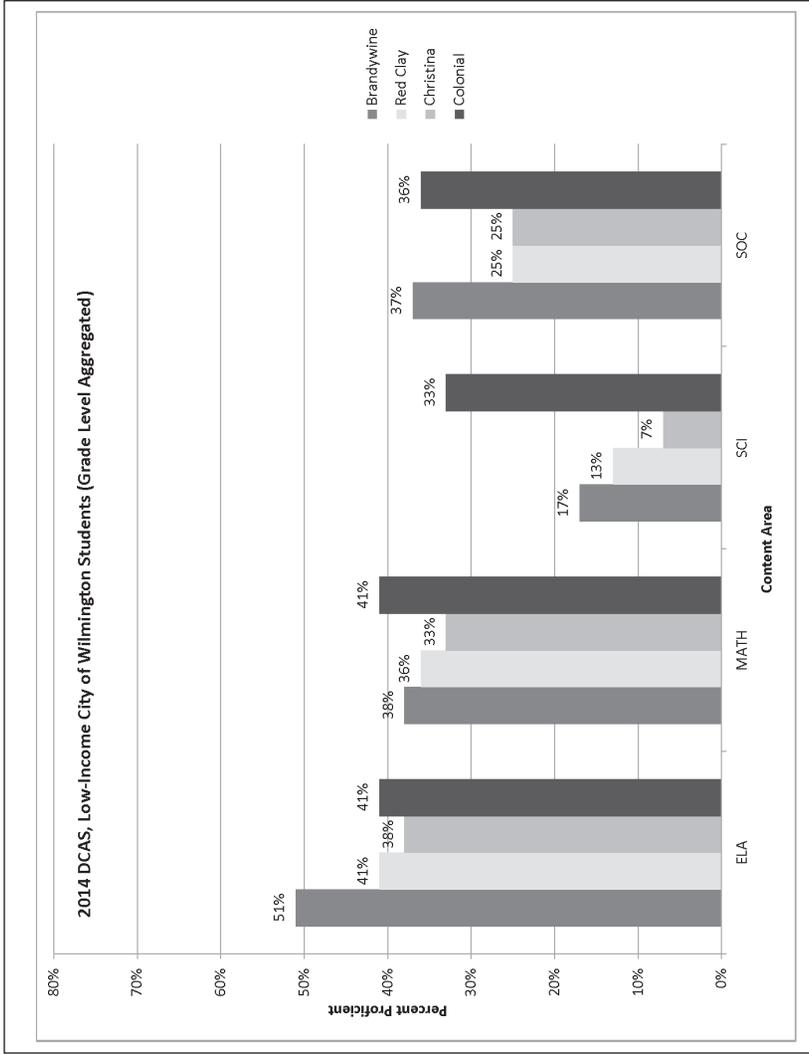
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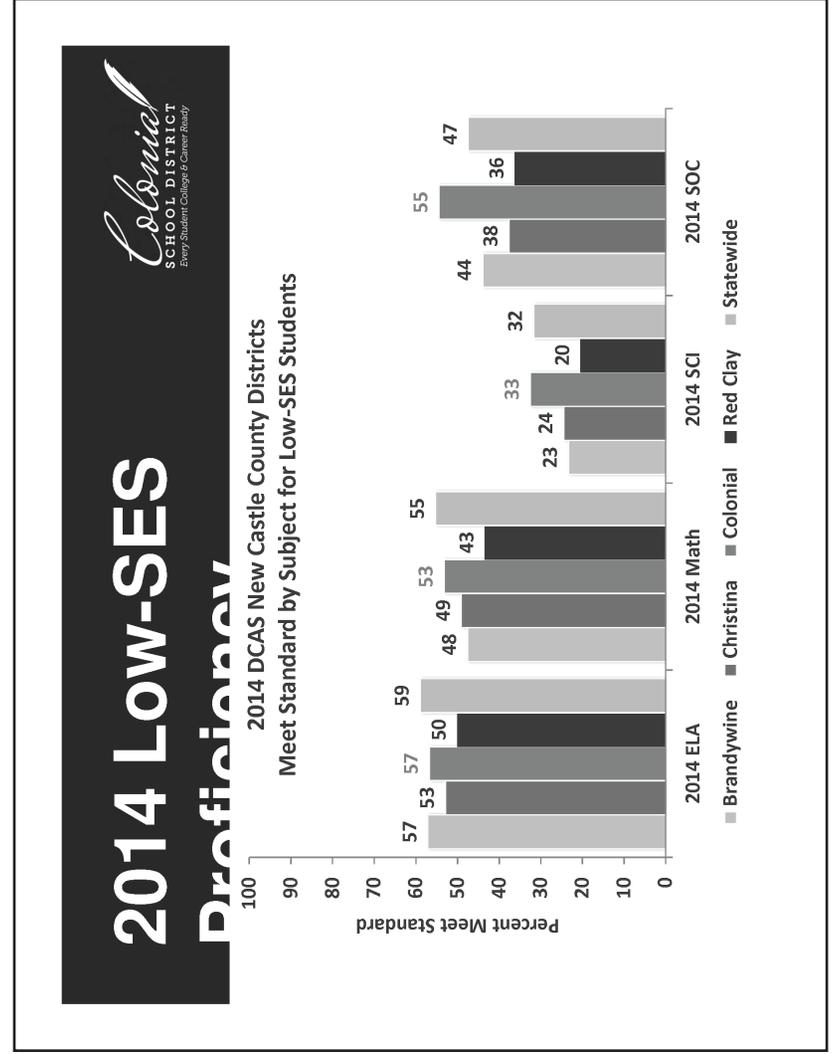
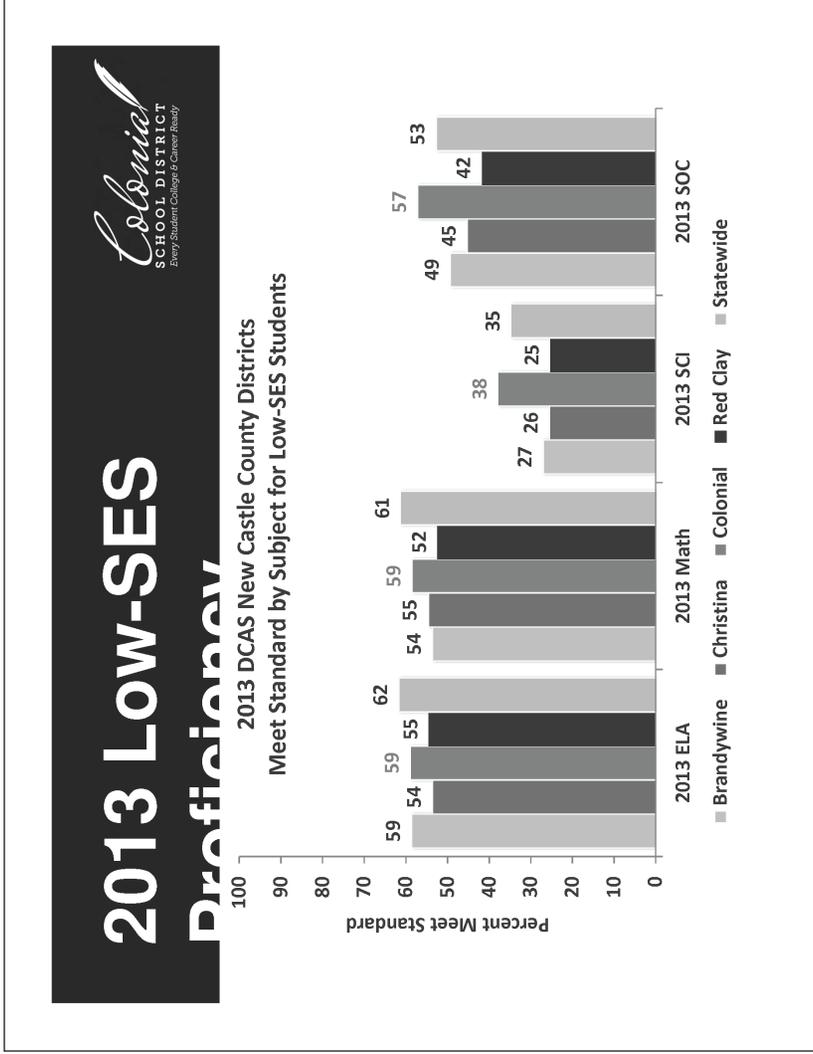


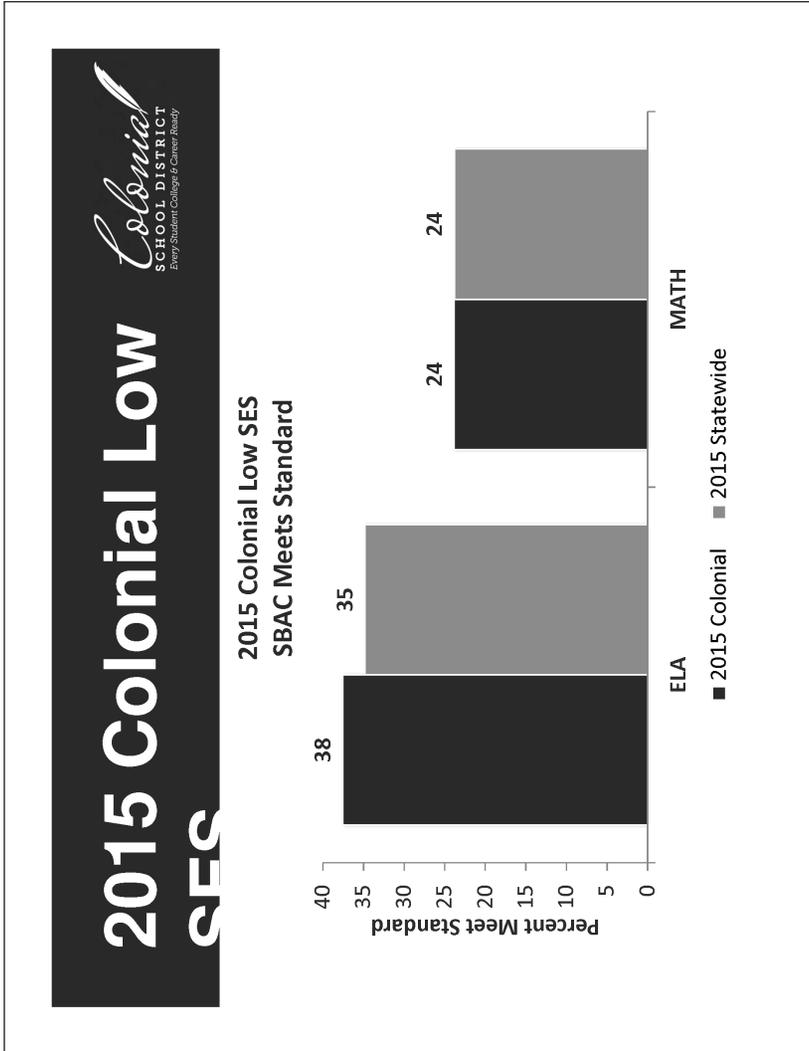


Colonial
SCHOOL DISTRICT
Every Student College & Career Ready

Low SES
Data

2013-2015 Proficiency
Data





Wilmington Education Improvement Commission
Solutions for Delaware Schools

November 17, 2015

Mr. Joseph T. Laws, III
President, Colonial School District Board of Education
PO Box 346
St Georges, DE 19733

Dear Mr. Laws:

I am in receipt of the Colonial School District's November 10, 2015 board resolution reaffirming its support for the work of the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission (the Commission) and its intention to continue serving City of Wilmington children within the current Colonial School District boundaries.

In that resolution, you expressed openness to expanding the District's service area in the City of Wilmington, provided the funding is "awarded and sustained," both with respect to operational and capital expenses as well as willingness to continue to work with the Commission as we address the many recommendations outlined in previous Advisory Committee's report, *Strengthening Wilmington Education: An Action Agenda*.

Although I am disappointed with the district's decision to opt out of the recommendation concerning Colonial School District's participation in the redistricting process, I am quite pleased you, Superintendent Blakey and the Colonial team are willing to stay involved and remain open to the Colonial district doing more with the noted caveats you outline in the resolution.

In that spirit and consistent with our discussion a few weeks ago, I look forward to the District's plan of action with respect to City of Wilmington children. We hope to include your plan in our final report to the State Board of Education. As you know, we believe there are currently 18 to 23 governing units who have some responsibility for providing 11,500 city children access to a quality of education and quite literally, no unified plan for so doing. That in and of itself is a disheartening fact, but when coupled with the performance of these students, particularly those who are low-income, it is at best benign neglect and at worst, something much more deleterious.

With its limited population of City children, in perhaps the most isolated community in its district, Colonial's city plan can be a model for others and potentially spur the kind of collaboration necessary to significantly enhance the educational outcomes for these students. We look forward to receiving your plan and following your progress in implementing it.

As a last point, I know these conversations and related decisions are difficult and sometimes uncomfortable, but that makes them no less necessary. For 40 years, no traditional district or charter school in northern New Castle County has developed a sustained solution for addressing the needs of this population of children, specifically low-income, largely black and brown, Wilmington students. In the only metropolitan City in the second smallest state in the union, the results should stir us all.

I look forward to continuing to work toward a better solution.

Sincerely,

Tony Allen, Ph.D.

cc: D. Dusty Blakey, Ed.D., Superintendent, Colonial School District
Colonial School District Board of Education members

www.solutionsfordelawareschools.com
email: solutionsfordelawareschools@gmail.com voice/text: 302.385.6206

Colonial School District is committed to providing all students with access to quality educational programming in a nurturing environment that leads to long-term opportunities and real-world experiences that support college and career readiness. Our focus is to provide all students and families with access to early education options (Pre-K programming), unique innovative programs with a personalized or blended approach to learning, social-emotional and wellness care, and building partnerships with local businesses and industry to expand student and family access to resources that support the educational and holistic needs of children and families.

To achieve these goals, Colonial School District supports students' nutritional needs by providing all students with access to a free breakfast and utilizes the Universal Lunch Program to provide a free lunch to all students in 12 of our 14 schools. Additionally, Colonial has a unique summer feeding program that provides meals at three schools in designated areas of high-need. The district has also become the first in Delaware to employ two mobile vans that go out into additional limited income areas in the community to provide lunch to our families in the summer. We have also recently begun serving dinner at several of our schools to feed students a nutritious meal after school while they participate in one of our many after school programs.

Colonial School District is committed to an expanded Pre-K program. Its goal is to serve all Pre-K students in the district by expanding the number of students served. Not only will it continue its focus on serving Pre-K students with identified disabilities, but it has also expanded its overall access to Pre-K services by enrolling in the Delaware STARS Program and Purchase of Care to support families with limited incomes. Our Pre-K coordinator has focused on establishing deeper partnerships with local daycare providers and has intentionally targeted underserved communities to educate and inform parents about the importance and affordability of early education programs in the district.

Colonial School District has partnered with Reading Assist to develop a unique approach to intervention with struggling early elementary school readers. Students identified with severe reading deficits receive daily one-on-one reading assistance with trained Reading Assist AmeriCorp members. This program is the only such program in Delaware and is designed to support struggling readers with the highest need. Additionally, the district has trained many teachers in the Reading Assist reading strategies program and has allocated Reading and math support specialists in every building.

Colonial School District has also developed partnerships with Nemours and The Life Health Center to provide pilot programs with tele-medicine services and an elementary wellness center at two schools with diverse populations serving students with limited incomes and unique needs and disabilities. These pilots are designed to service students with severe medical needs and/or students and families with unmet medical and social-emotional needs. Each pilot partnership is designed to provide in-school medical access to a healthcare provider. The

significant difference between the two programs is that the elementary wellness center provides onsite medical and social-emotional health services to students and families by licensed medical professionals that include a nurse practitioner and Licensed Clinical Social Workers (LCSWs), as well as case managers to help uninsured families obtain insurance for their children and families. Conversely, the tele-medicine pilot provides only medical consultations between the school nurse and the medical professional through the use of technology. Both pilot programs are the only such programs being piloted in Delaware.

In addition to the two pilots mentioned, the district supports the social-emotional needs throughout the district by its partnership with the State of Delaware through the use of behavioral health consultants in the middle schools. The district also employs licensed therapeutic personnel that float throughout our schools to support our counselors, students, and families. Family Crisis Therapists (FCTs) are also present in every elementary school. FCTs that are also licensed therapists are placed in our elementary schools that have the most significant needs.

Addressing the whole child and whole family are important elements in the academic success of our students. Access to early education, health and wellness care, mentoring and early intervention programs are just a few highlights of the plan for success for all students in Colonial. We believe that the district vision, in partnership with families and the community, will support the academic success and overall personal growth of all of our students.



BRANDYWINE SCHOOL DISTRICT
1311 Brandywine Boulevard
Wilmington, DE 19809-2306

(302) 793-5000
www.brandywineschools.org

MARK A. HOLDICK, Ed.D.
Superintendent

JOHN A. SKROBOT, JR.
President, Board of Education

RALPH ACKERMAN
Vice President, Board of Education

Resolution on Proposed Changes to the Student Feeder Pattern as the Result of the Recommendations of the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission

Whereas, the Brandywine School District believes that the participation and input of our community is a cornerstone of our district; and

Whereas, the children and taxpayers are the primary groups that the Board of Education must put first; and

Whereas, the staff and facilities are under the stewardship of the Board of Education; and

Whereas, our community consists of a long-standing portion of the City of Wilmington and other areas that make geographical sense; and

Whereas, the original WEAC report recommended that Christina and Colonial students who reside in the City of Wilmington be absorbed by the Red Clay Consolidated School District; and

Whereas, we did not begin conversations with our community during the initial phases of the WEAC report and at no time expressed an interest in changing our boundary lines; and

Whereas, the Brandywine School District faces an upcoming operating and capital referendum that is essential to the continued success of our students and well-being of our community; and

Whereas, the estimated cost to Brandywine is in excess of an additional \$5 million tax dollars to absorb the Colonial portion of the City of Wilmington.

Now, be it therefore resolved this 16th day of November, 2015, that the Brandywine School District Board of Education supports the redistricting recommendations in the WEAC final report that affirm the continued role of the Brandywine School District in serving City of Wilmington students within its existing boundaries.

Wilmington Education
Improvement Commission
Solutions for Delaware Schools

November, 17, 2015

Mr. Ralph Ackerman
Interim President, Brandywine School District Board
1311 Brandywine Boulevard
Wilmington, DE 19809

Dear Mr. Ackerman:

I am in receipt of the Brandywine School District's board resolution reaffirming the work of Wilmington Education Improvement Commission (the Commission) as well as the district's intention to maintain its current students and boundaries in the City of Wilmington.

As you know, we had hoped Brandywine would express some interest in doing more, particularly as it relates to the approximately 178 city students in Colonial who live in a neighborhood contiguous to the Brandywine School district. However, we recognize that you have been consistent in your position to retain your current district boundaries ever since the release of the Advisory Committee's interim report last January.

As a member of the Commission, I hope that Brandywine continues to recognize the challenging nature of the current landscape with respect to Wilmington education: a landscape that is fragmented and fraught with inefficiencies, particularly as it relates to the 11,500 city students who have 18 to 23 governing units responsible for serving them, with no unified plan for so doing. To be clear, the performance of a single school district or charter school is irrelevant to the prospects for most Wilmington students if the sum of performance across all districts and charters is not greater than the parts. Such is the case in Wilmington education today, a point on which we all must be held accountable.

In that spirit, I would request the same thing I am requesting from Colonial School District, which as you know has also issued a similar resolution to retain its current boundaries. In our final report to the State Board of Education, we would like to include a Brandywine District plan of action with respect to City of Wilmington children. Perhaps such a plan could be a model for others and potentially spur the kind of sustained collaboration necessary to significantly enhance the educational outcomes for all Wilmington students. If Brandywine already has a plan for City of Wilmington students, please forward that plan as your response to my request. We look forward to reviewing your plan and following your progress in implementing it.

As a last point, I know these conversations and related decisions are difficult and sometimes uncomfortable, but that makes them no less necessary. For 40 years, no traditional district or charter school in northern New Castle County has developed a sustained solution for addressing the needs of this population of children, specifically low-income, largely black and brown, Wilmington students. In the only metropolitan City in the second smallest state in the union, the results should stir us all.

I look forward to continuing to work toward a better solution.

Sincerely,

Tony Allen, Ph.D.

cc: Mark Holdick, Ed.D., Superintendent, Brandywine School District
Brandywine School District Board members

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BRANDYWINE SCHOOL DISTRICT

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MARK A. HOLODICK, Ed.D.
Superintendent

JOHN A. SKROBOT, JR.
President, Board of Education

RALPH ACKERMAN
Vice President, Board of Education

December 15, 2015

Dr. Tony Allen, Dr. Dan Rich, and the members of the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission:

At its November 2015 regularly scheduled public session, the Brandywine School District voted to affirm its support of the original WEAC proposal in which the Brandywine School District would continue its commitment of providing high quality academic, social, and emotional programming for students residing in City of Wilmington jurisdictions that are already defined as being a valued part of the Brandywine School District. In response, the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission requested information about the District's plan to educate its students who reside in the City of Wilmington. For the District, that plan is wrapped into its existing promise to advance its equity initiative and focus to ensure access and opportunities for all students.

For Brandywine, such a request draws attention to our current work surrounding equity and reaffirms the wisdom, vision, commitment, and value that Brandywine boldly placed on diversity in its 2001 Neighborhood Schools Plan – a plan favored by a two to one margin by Brandywine stakeholders. Six years later, as the District underwent a reconfiguration effort to better serve students and demonstrate fiscal stewardship, the District's actions cemented its commitment and value of diversity as it adjusted all feeder patterns in Kindergarten through twelfth grade. Diversity not defined by race or racial composition of schools, but factors that research shows must be considered and strategically managed to create and maintain positive and productive learning environments for all students. To this end, the District remains diligent in monitoring and adjusting programming and supports based on socio-economic status of students, special education requirements, DeSSA proficiency scores, Response to Intervention data, and absentee and tardiness rates for all students, regardless of race or geographic location of residence. As focused magnet and charter schools become more prominent throughout the state, the District takes great pride in being a comprehensive, traditional school district with a mission of serving all students who walk through our doors. Unlike many smaller, more targeted schools, the Brandywine School District continues to serve a diverse and complex student body.

How will the District keep its schools diverse and ensure equitable educational opportunities for all students? Fortunately, Brandywine is, and has been, very forward thinking in its plan to ensure all students receive the best education possible, especially those who have the highest need, as evidenced by Brandywine's recently published District Success Plan. It reflects active attention to the same core belief, the strength and value of diversity, which has continued to guide the direction of Brandywine since the stance taken in its 2001 Neighborhood School Plan, a focus that has not only guided the development of several District Success Plans and scores of annual School Success Plans, but was the cornerstone of the District's Race to the Top Plan. From the inception of Race to the Top, the district ensured that Brandywine's RtT Plan was aligned to and accentuated the vision and mission of the Brandywine School District and its ongoing commitment to provide high quality educational experiences so that all students graduate college- and career-ready and adequately prepared to meet the challenging and complex demands of an ever-flattening global economy. In fact, the District has experienced high single digit and double digit percentage gains in proficiency over four years of DeSSA assessments for all students as well as steady incremental growth with a focus on significantly closing the achievement gap. The District's gap closure during the four years of RtT is dramatically higher than any other period of time since such data has been collected – evidence that this hallmark is embraced and productive at all levels of the organization.

The end of Race to the Top signaled the need to create the next iteration of the District Success Plan not only to continue the work resulting in the increased student achievement, but to push forward in how to better meet the needs of today's 21st century student, using technology that not only prepares them for tomorrow's workforce but engages them in rigorous and relevant learning opportunities delivered in a way to allow anytime, anywhere access and allows students to take greater ownership of their learning path based on individual need and/or preference. Guided by input provided by ten different stakeholder groups that included students, parents, community members, non-instructional staff, teachers, administrators, and Board of Education members, the 2015-2019 District Success Plan was created. Key components of the plan include:

- Revision of all curricula to ensure a rigorous and relevant 21st century learning experience for all students
- Implementation of Programs of Study that complement existing pathways and capitalize on students' interests as discovered through Student Success Plan completion
- Expansion and strengthening of an already dynamic STEM program to increase relevance through multi-disciplinary connections
- Increase dual enrollment opportunities for students prior to graduation
- Implementation of a World Language Immersion Program
- Deepened focus on Response to Intervention (RtI) to ensure all students are receiving targeted assistance through evidence-based programs in the critical areas of Reading/Writing and Mathematics
- Implementation of Standards-Based IEPs to ensure key prerequisite skills are identified and focused on to support access to Common Core State Standards
- Ensuring an articulated continuum of services is provided based on the needs of students with special needs
- Expansion of AVID, Freshman Seminar, SAT Prep, and courses to support students in rigorous academic programs, preparing them to graduate college- and career-ready.
- Deepened focus on supports and services for English Language Learners (ELL) through implementation of Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP)
- Implementation of the Parallel Curriculum to provide rich learning for students in the Gifted Program and other advanced learners across the District
- Provide personalized learning through strategically designed blended learning opportunities that balance face-to-face direct instruction, online learning, and collaborative interaction through project-based learning activities
- Adoption of the NETS standards for students, teachers and administrators to ensure that students have the technological understanding and skills identified as essential for today's 21st century learner
- Implement proactive, restorative discipline programs such as No Bully System, Positive Behavior Interventions and Support (PBIS), and Responsive Classroom to ensure the social and emotional needs of students are being met
- Implement a Compassionate School model in all sixteen buildings to provide additional support and wrap-around services for identified students
- Develop a rigorous employee hiring process with a focused effort on hiring a diverse workforce.

The complete and detailed 2015-2019 District Success Plan can be found on the District website or by visiting brandywineschools.weebly.com.

While the 2015-2019 District Success Plan provides a holistic view of key programmatic initiatives, it does not contain a comprehensive list of all programs and initiatives strategically designed

and implemented to address specific student needs across the District. Listed below are a few such programming initiatives, specifically tailored to address identified student needs unique to a select group of students or building.

- Pre-Kindergarten programming at P.S. duPont's Early Childhood Assistance Program for income-eligible students (STARS accredited)
- Pre-Kindergarten programming at the Bush Early Learning Center for students with disabilities (in the process of becoming STARS accredited)
- Formalized Response to Intervention Program for students working below established benchmarks to provide targeted intervention support, inclusive of students with disabilities.
- Specific professional development on research-based intervention strategies used for RtI including: Differentiated Reading Strategies – Walpole, Reading Assist, PALS, Do the Math, It Makes Sense, and Ten Marks.
- Universal breakfast programs at several school sites (Maple Lane, Harlan, Carrcroft, Claymont)
- Pilot "Teacher Leader" positions for the 2015.16 school year based on multiple indicators of need (Brandywine High and Harlan Elementary School)
- Specialized Summer Programming at Harlan Elementary designed to strengthen identified skill deficiencies, reduce summer learning loss, and promote a positive student-staff-school relationship to foster greater academic achievement
- Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) to support 1st generation college students, providing strategies for immediate and long-range academic success (e.g., study habits, note taking, mentor support from AVID teacher)
- SAT Prep in all three high schools for 11th grade students. Prior to implementing this program during the school day, BSD offered SAT prep to students living within the City after hours at P.S. duPont Middle School.
- Lower than the District average class sizes at Harlan Elementary School
- Reading Specialists provided to all elementary and middle schools
- Instructional leadership in the form of an Assistant Principal in all buildings, including those not earning the position based on student enrollment and the State allocations protocols (Claymont's 2nd AP, Forwood, Harlan, Maple Lane, Springer's 2nd AP, Brandywine's 2nd AP, Mt. Pleasant High's 3rd AP)

The bulleted list above is not intended to be all inclusive, but to demonstrate the additional supports provided to specific buildings and programs based on identified need that are commonly provided, outside and in addition to the scope of work detailed in the formal District Success Plan.

While the Brandywine School District continues to demonstrate its commitment to ensuring diversity, it is important to note that navigating and reacting to factors beyond the District's control create formidable challenges in maintaining stable diversity. One such example is the rapidly changing demographics of today's public school students. According to the U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), Delaware's public school enrollment has increased by 13% between 2000 and 2011, compared to surrounding states at 2.5% and 4.3% nationally. Cited as reasons for this increased growth were the strength of Delaware's economy, Wilmington's prominence in the US credit card industry, and Wilmington's reputation as a sanctuary for corporate charters. Recent news of major corporate mergers, companies choosing to relocate outside of Delaware, and public perception of safety of living and working in the City of Wilmington will all continue to have real and lasting implications on any district's ability to maintain diversity.

As we as a District continue the work detailed above with a heightened focus on equity, it is important to note that the WEIC outcomes, especially as they relate to school funding and potential

redistricting, will play a part in future decision making and planning for all districts. Brandywine appreciates the hard work of all those involved who have given a great deal of time and energy to address this very important topic and agenda. The District believes that the plan provides opportunities for improvement. The process alone has pulled together stakeholders working collaboratively, even at times spiritedly, to improve the education system and ultimately the outcomes for children who reside in Wilmington. As the work and planning continues, Brandywine remains prepared and willing to work to support our Wilmington families and students.

Respectfully submitted,
Brandywine School District

**Wilmington Education
Improvement Commission**
Solutions for Delaware Schools

October 13, 2015

Red Clay Consolidated School District
Board of Education
1502 Spruce Avenue
Wilmington, DE 19805

Dear Board Members:

Thank you for continuing to engage with us on the work of the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission (WEIC). The executive teams in the district and your board chair have both been of tremendous value to our efforts. We have also been very engaged in reaching out to residents in the district and have developed a multi-media campaign that includes town halls, open committee and commission meetings, a continuing presence with social media, and ongoing interviews in print, radio, and TV. We were fortunate to do a long form interview with Red Clay Public Information Officer Pati Nash, <https://vimeo.com/139368950>.

In all these efforts, we have attempted to keep our messaging clear and consistent. I want to reiterate those points here.

- The state of public education in the City of Wilmington in particular – and in Delaware more broadly – is fractured and both under-equipped and under-resourced to meet the educational needs of low-income students.
- The current condition of public education governance in the City of Wilmington, with 18 different governing units responsible for providing educational options to 11,500 children with no unified plan is inefficient and ineffective.
- The first step to a more coherent and responsive governance is to reducing the number of school districts attempting to serve these children. In that vein, the WEAC final report calls for the Christina and Colonial School Districts to no longer serve City of Wilmington students and for the Red Clay Consolidated School District and the Brandywine School District to continue to serve City of Wilmington students. Red Clay would take responsibility for the students and schools currently served by Christina.
- There should be no undue tax burden on any of the affected districts. If such were required, the Commission would not recommend moving forward.
- Our transition, resource, and implementation plan is due to the State Board of Education on December 31, 2015. We are preparing those plans in concert with all affected districts and will present our proposal as a package. To be clear, by law, that package can only be voted up or down by the State Board of Education and cannot be amended in anyway.

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In April, we wrote a response to the Board resolution supporting the recommendations outlined in the Wilmington Education Advisory Committee's report, "Strengthening Wilmington Schools: An Action Agenda." I have included the critical portion of that response below.

The Wilmington Education Advisory Committee has always been of the opinion that our recommendations should be taken as a package. Simply redrawing lines without consideration of a comprehensive path for school reform that included funding, parent and community engagement, wraparound services and statewide, strategic resource allocation for low-income students and their families is of no value to ensuring quality education for all kids.

This position remains unchanged and it will be reaffirmed in the plan we submit to the State Board of Education.

We look forward to continued discussions and would be pleased to talk with you individually or as a group. Thank you again for your continued support.

Sincerely,



Tony Allen, Ph.D., Chairman, Wilmington Education Improvement Commission

Cc. Elizabeth Lockman
Dan Rich
Joe Pika
Henry Harper

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Resolution – October 21, 2015.

Motion Carried: 7-0

The Red Clay Consolidated School District passed a Resolution in March 2015 endorsing WEAC with three provisions: (1) funding; (2) involvement of Red Clay in WEIC; and (3) adequate time to implement any and all necessary changes. We want to ensure Red Clay is involved in this process and the Board needs to understand the precise nature of that involvement. As such, we resolve that all board members on all WEIC committees provide written reports to the Board on all meetings he/she attends on behalf of Red Clay. This is especially important of our Board President who is co-chair of WEIC. We further resolve that the reports should be sent to the Board via email and should update the Board on all meetings in which Red Clay is discussed. The reports should include (1) all main points discussed; (2) the position taken on the main points; and (3) any dialogue which ensues regarding the main points.



Freeman L. Williams, Ed.D., Superintendent
Robert J. Andrzejewski, Ed.D., Acting Superintendent

Drew Educational Support Center
600 N. Lombard Street
Wilmington, DE 19801
www.christinak12.org

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FAX: (302) 429-3944
TDD Relay Service: (800) 232-5470

October 29, 2015

Dear WEIC Commission Members:

On October 27th, the Christina School District Board of Education approved a draft of a "Framework for Planning" to be included as a part of the proposed WEIC implementation plan. The documentation is attached. We would like to highlight a few important points about the Framework:

- In the event that redistricting of the magnitude proposed in the WEAC report is implemented, the Framework for Planning is designed to identify and address Central Issues affecting the operations of the Christina School District at all levels.
- The Framework was developed during a relatively short time period, and is not intended to be all-inclusive. We anticipate that during the planning year proposed in the WEIC Timeline for Implementation, refinement of all action plans will be executed for all identified Central Issues. We may also find that it is necessary to identify and plan for new issues. As discussions were held and issues were identified, Christina's WEIC Committee prioritized its focus on the following key areas:
 - Minimal disruption for students and families
 - The need to support our employees
 - The coordinated transfer of district assets
- This Framework does not represent an endorsement by the Christina School District Board of Education of the overall WEIC Implementation Plan, since that document does not currently exist.

During the various community meetings Christina has hosted, students, parents, and community members have asked the Commission great questions. While it is true that the Commission and the leadership of the Christina School District have engaged our constituents, neither the Commission nor our District were able to address many of the questions raised, because the answers to many of the questions raised would have to be part of a Plan developed by the Red Clay School District. We are hopeful that should the Plan move forward, the Red Clay School District will fully engage the students, parents, and residents of the City of Wilmington in the process of planning for their schools.

Freeman L. Williams, Ed.D., Superintendent / Robert J. Andrzejewski, Ed.D., Acting Superintendent

The Christina School District is an equal opportunity employer. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, creed, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identification, marital status, disability, age, genetic information or veteran's status in employment or its programs and activities. Inquiries regarding compliance with the above may be directed to the Title IX/Section 504 Coordinator, Christina School District, 600 North Lombard Street, Wilmington, DE 19801. Telephone: (302) 552-2600.

Christina School District
DRAFT – "Framework for Planning"
October 29, 2015
Page Two

There is one additional point we wish to communicate. Should the WEIC plan receive all of the required approvals upon implementation, the property tax base of the Christina School District will decrease by approximately 20%. Christina's expectation is that the tax payers of the "reconfigured" Christina School District should not be negatively impacted. There have been no conversations as of yet on this topic.

In closing, we have participated in the process in good faith that the recommendations and proposed implementation plans are in the best interest of students and their families. Regardless of the outcomes, it is very important for all to know that the Christina School District remains firmly in support of ALL students in ALL of Christina's Schools and that we, as a District, remain committed to supporting student success. Christina's mission and vision have not changed, and should the outcome of this Commission's work change the configuration of the District, Christina will support the transition for students and staff based on a proposal that is in the best interests of students. However, if the outcome of the Commission's work does NOT change the configuration of Christina School District, then the commitment to all schools, including the schools located in Wilmington, will remain strong and uninterrupted.

Thank you for including representatives of Christina in all parts of the conversation around implementation.

Sincerely,



Robert J. Andrzejewski, Ed. D.
Acting Superintendent

Attachments

Freeman L. Williams, Ed.D., Superintendent / Robert J. Andrzejewski, Ed.D., Acting Superintendent

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Agenda Item Details

Meeting

Nov 02, 2015 - Special Public Session of the Board

Category

ACTION ITEM

Subject

WEIC

Type

Action

Recommended Action

It is recommended that the Board of Education approve the WEIC report as presented.

Motion & Voting

View All Motions

It is recommended that the Board of Education approve the WEIC Red Clay Plan Outline Plan as presented. Two board members, Martin Wilson and Kenneth Woods, were absent.

Motion by Adriana L Bohm, second by Faith R Newton.

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

Yes: Kenneth J Rivera, Michael Piccio, Adriana L Bohm, Faith R Newton

No: Catherine H Thompson

Appendix I



Community and Institutional Responses to the Interim Plan

**To view this appendix, visit
www.solutionsfordelawareschools.com/resources/**

Appendix J



Formal Public Record

**To view this appendix, visit
www.solutionsfordelawareschools.com/resources/**

Appendix K



Editorials

In December 2015, *The News Journal* opinion pages featured a series of essays written by members of the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission. These essays are reprinted below.

‘Those kids’ deserve a chance at a successful future, too.

Karen Eller 1:25 p.m. EST December 16, 2015

Each morning, I and hundreds of other educators travel to Wilmington schools to undertake the daunting task of teaching students whose lives reflect all the traumas of deep poverty and the dysfunctions of communities in turmoil. We are routinely asked why we would ever want to work in some of Delaware’s toughest schools where there is a lack of resources in the classrooms, and where violence is prevalent in the surrounding community.

I do it because I believe schools can change lives.

Our students in the inner city deserve to have educators who believe in them. Our students deserve to have their community and their state stand behind them. Our students deserve a fighting chance for rewarding and fulfilling lives and it’s our goal to help them reach their potential. It’s our goal to give them the tools they need to believe in themselves and to keep striving for greatness. We see where our students can go and the endless possibilities they have. When others give up, we keep fighting for them. Schools change lives.

Being an educator in one of our inner city schools is difficult and challenging work. However, it’s this hard work that makes it so rewarding. Educators see firsthand the effects that deep poverty can have on children and families. Some of our children tell us about the gunshots they hear at night. They experience hunger, homelessness, and fear. Some of our students end up being “window children” because it’s not always safe to go outside.

Many inner-city educators face the continuous allegations made against our students and their families by those who do not know them. We have heard our inner-city students referred to as a cancer, with the expectation that if these students move to other schools or districts the cancer would spread. We have heard our inner-city students referred to as “those kids” who are going to end up in prison, or “those kids” who can’t learn, or “those kids” who don’t have parents who care. In my classroom, I refer to my students as scholars. Imagine walking into a classroom and looking into the eyes of each of my scholars knowing some of the individuals in the world and in their own state around them have already given up on them and don’t even want to give them a fighting chance. Sometimes as educators, we are the only advocate and

champion for our students and their families.

My students are not “those kids.” They are kids who were given life circumstances they did not ask for, with odds increasingly stacked against them. They are kids with overwhelming resiliency. They still show up every day, despite those odds, ready to do their best work. If you want to see the face of resiliency, then look at face of every one of my students. They are kids who have dreams like you and me. They are kids who have families doing the very best they can with what they have, and, despite the misconceptions, they have families who are involved and who care.

We have an opportunity to change the future of our Wilmington schools. One of the proposals from the commission is to redraw district boundaries in order to consolidate accountability for student outcomes. Another is to target more dollars to schools with high concentrations of students living in poverty. These are important changes but by the commission’s own admission, they are not the only answers. Comprehensive reform involves many things: improving early childhood education, having culturally competent and highly qualified teachers in our most challenging schools, enhancing instruction and learning by streamlining best practices, updating our facilities, extending in-school and out of schools services, enhancing career and college readiness programming, and developing an effective way to measure the growth and success of our inner city schools and educators. And all of these areas are a part of the commission’s work over the next five years.

A second-grader once told me he would never live to the age of 28. I was curious as to why a young child would say this. He said 28 was old and he would be shot before he ever was that old. Imagine being in second grade with this type of view of your future. We must change. The time is now to make the commission’s vision of the future of Wilmington education a reality and to give our students and families a fighting chance.

Karen Eller is a fourth-grade teacher on the east side of Wilmington. She is a former member of the Wilmington Education Advisory Committee and now serves on the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission.

The importance of a citizen voice in education reform

Tizzy Lockman & Kenny Rivera 1:26 p.m. EST December 16, 2015

In Delaware, we are passionate about education. We understand the powerful link between education and a strong community, our economy, and continued advancements in the 21st century. Some of us are even more aware of what a weak education system means for public safety and quality of life. But for all of our passion, and despite the efforts of devoted educators and dedicated parents, our system has struggled, and generally fails, to meet the needs of those students who have the most at stake in its success. These are students for whom education should be the pathway out of poverty. This has been particularly acute and long-standing in Wilmington, where the consequences have mirrored disastrous outcomes experienced in many American cities.

In the last two decades a number of task forces, most recently the Wilmington Education Advisory Committee (WEAC), have made parallel proposals to strengthen Wilmington public education. Few of these recommendations have been acted upon, until now. Last June, the General Assembly and the Governor approved two pieces of legislation that, if we play our cards right, could go down in the history of public education as a turning point for the most vulnerable students in our state. One was Senate Bill 122 which gave limited power to the State Board of Education to redraw district lines to reflect the recommendations of the WEAC report, Strengthening Wilmington Education: An Action Agenda. The other was House Bill 148, which established the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission (WEIC), a group of city and suburban parents, students, educators, school administrators, community and business leaders who were appointed with a five-year mandate to carry forward WEAC’s bold recommendations until 2021. Each of these bills passed both houses of the General Assembly with broad bipartisan support that amounted to just three “No” votes.

The early work of the commission has concentrated on reforming the antiquated way we fund our schools and students while creating a more responsive structure of school governance for Wilmington students. The governance plan calls for the Christina School District to transfer its schools and students in the City of Wilmington to the Red Clay Consolidated School District beginning in the 2018-2019 school year. It also calls for additional funding needs to be met, phased in statewide for our students most at risk: low-income students, English language learners, and K-3 special education students.

On Tuesday evening, WEIC Commissioners will vote on a transition, re-

source and implementation plan for carrying out these recommendations. For it to move forward, the State Board of Education must approve our full package of recommendations, specifically our requirements that redistricting must come with resources to meet the needs of at-risk students without imposing undue costs on Red Clay families and taxpayers. State Board approval must then be confirmed by a joint resolution of the General Assembly that is signed by the Governor. If this occurs, implementation will proceed on a three-year timeline that balances urgency with the need to engage in a community-based process to consider and implement innovative programs and new school configurations.

Contrary to what word of mouth might lead us to believe redistricting is only the first action step in what will be a five-year effort by the commission to strengthen Wilmington education and improve support statewide for students at risk. We are committed to doing our work in the light of day. Since September 2014, many Delawareans have participated in the most transparent citizen-led process in recent memory. Our efforts have included town halls and forums for concerned families throughout New Castle County, formal public hearings whose comments have informed our final plans, school board meetings, a 2,000 member interactive Facebook page and a website, www.solutionsfordelawareschools.com. Open WEIC Commission and committee meetings have included hundreds of interested citizens. In all of these venues, we have facilitated intense dialogue and debate and welcomed opposing views—and we think this has improved our work.

Before us now lies an unprecedented opportunity to make our public schools launching pads for generations of successful lives. As the WEAC report stated, “The simple and undeniable historical fact is that our entire Delaware community is responsible for the conditions that currently exist,” and “only the entire community, acting together, will change these conditions, and even then it will not be easy”. There is momentum now for this to be the moment in this generation to make meaningful reforms. Regardless of what side you’re on, we hope you will join us.

Tizzy Lockman is a Red Clay parent, Public Allies Alumna and Director of Christina Cultural Arts Center’s Parent Advocacy Council for Education (PACE). Kenny Rivera is a teacher in Brandywine School District and the President of the Red Clay Consolidated School District Board of Education. Both are Vice Chairs of the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission.

Rethink the chaos of school districts in Wilmington

Joseph Pika and Henry Harper 1:31 p.m. EST December 16, 2015

Seventeen independent entities currently deliver public education to 11,500 students within Wilmington’s city limits. This includes four traditional school districts, one vocational-technical school district, and 12 charter schools. In this case, more is not merrier—nor is it coherent or effective in delivering results. Seldom do the traditional districts coordinate or even collaborate on curriculum decisions or instructional policies among themselves. Nor do the charter schools. Collaboration between charters and traditional districts is rare. The result is simple and sad: No one is accountable for the overall improvement of public education in Wilmington, and the children of Wilmington suffer, particularly low-income students and English language learners.

In each of the four traditional school districts, low-income Wilmington students score lower on the state’s standardized tests in Math and English Language Arts than their low-income peers living in the county, and in most instances substantially lower. The same is true in most charter schools enrolling populations from city and county. This achievement gap has been invisible for years because the Wilmington student population is a minority of each district’s enrollment and results are not disaggregated geographically. Wilmington students similarly lag in AP participation and graduation rates but lead in dropout rate.

The Wilmington Education Advisory Committee spent a year studying the problems of Wilmington education and developing solutions. It concluded that one of the principal problems is fragmentation of responsibility—a problem of governance. It proposed that two traditional districts, Christina and Colonial, leave the city, and that their students in the city become part of the Red Clay Consolidated School District. This consolidation of accountability would result in Red Clay serving more than half of the city’s students, thereby reducing some, but not all, of the incoherence produced by having so many education providers in such a small space.

Beyond streamlining governance, the advisory committee called for expanded collaboration among the remaining districts and charter schools and creation of an overall plan for public education, a plan that would be the first of its kind in Delaware.

After spending nearly an additional half-year considering these ideas, the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission has recommended to the

State Board of Education that the Red Clay/Christina consolidation proceed. After much deliberation and debate with Colonial School District, the Commission has agreed to evaluate the performance of the Wilmington students in Colonial and Brandywine, both of whom have reasserted their commitment to Wilmington students. It is worth noting that Colonial School District has no schools in the city and only 180 Wilmington students.

If the required state funding is approved, then detailed transition planning between Christina and Red Clay will begin next year and the actual change of district boundaries would begin with the 2018–19 school year. Christina and Red Clay administrative teams already have developed interim frameworks for how that transition might take place in a way that minimizes disruptions to students, parents, educators, and other school personnel.

Much more needs to be done: design new programs; plan for repurposed facilities; ensure that several specialized programs now operating in Wilmington schools continue to serve all students who need them; and adjust transportation to meet shifting student enrollments. Additional time will ensure better outcomes for students and equitable adjustments for district employees. All students will have the right to remain in the schools and programs in which they are enrolled at the time of redistricting and to remain enrolled through the completion of their programs of study at those schools. Employees will have job options and the opportunity to exercise choice at the earliest practical time during the transition.

There are no quick fixes for Wilmington's education problems, but there are solutions. These solutions must be pursued systematically in multiple steps taken over several years.

As two educators, who have made Delaware public education a central part of our work, no one has convinced us that the path of the last 60 years is sustainable, appropriate, or fair. To change that path, we need to act boldly and without equivocation.

Joseph Pika is a retired University of Delaware political science professor and the former president of the Delaware State Board of Education. Henry Harper is a retired educator and former Superintendent of the Appoquinimink School District. They are co-chairs of the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission's Redistricting Committee.

Pool our resources to improve our schools

Chandlee Johnson Kuhn, Jackie Jenkins and Michelle Taylor 6:33 p.m. EST
December 17, 2015

We are working to help prepare our students to succeed in life by providing them with the knowledge and skills to live and work in the city that we all love. Instead of worrying about what happens if they don't get the resources, education, and support that they deserve—a narrative that too many accept as a reason to do nothing at all—we choose to be active in supporting our students to become great citizens and thereby make our city and state stronger.

As the work of the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission (WEIC) continues, we have identified and are confronting a number of issues. While education has long been recognized as a pathway out of poverty, the playing field in the Wilmington is not level. Seventy percent of students in the City of Wilmington come from low-income families, and over a third of these (34 percent) qualify as children living in poverty. While child poverty is widespread throughout Delaware, the greatest concentration remains in Wilmington. The unique needs of these young learners pose distinct challenges for schools with concentrated and often-rising numbers of low-income students. These students require resources—not just financial—that are far beyond what is typically required for more prosperous students. Yet, Delaware is one of only 15 states that does not provide additional resources for low-income students, and it is one of only a handful of states that does not provide additional funding for English language learners. Gaps also remain in the funding for special education students.

We must change our educational funding and delivery system to provide targeted resources to meet the needs of these students. The recent investments in early learning in Delaware demonstrate the impact that targeted funding can make. Four years ago, Gov. Markell and the General Assembly increased investments in early learning programs to better address the needs of low-income children. As a result, the access for low-income children to higher-quality programs has increased dramatically, from 5 percent then to 58 percent today, with thousands more children in high-quality programs. Indeed, continuing to increase the investment in early learning is critical to the overall success of Delaware's low-income students and to enabling a smooth transition for children from these early learning programs to the K-12 public education system.

Several immediate actions can improve resource support for low-income

students as long-term, systemic changes are developed and implemented. A realistic first step is to align the existing supports and services through solid, collaborative partnerships between the community, nonprofit organizations, youth and family service providers and the schools. The alignment of these services will provide a greater opportunity to maximize existing financial resources currently being provided by public and private sources. We also need to break down the silos that currently fragment efforts and resolve “turf issues” that stand in the way of mobilizing all of our community’s capacity.

When you have organizations like United Way of Delaware or Boys & Girls Clubs of Delaware already connected and engaged with the local community, there is no need to “reinvent the wheel.” United Way, with hundreds of affiliate organizations and a clear mission, has played a central role in the transformation of early learning in Delaware. The Boys & Girls Club can help support in-school learning by providing quality out-of-school and afterschool programs that are directly connected to what’s happening in the classroom and designed to meet the needs of low-income families.

Another important step is to develop a strategy to inform, support, and engage parents and caregivers in the improvement process.

It is clear to us that the status quo will not work. Nelson Mandela said, “education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.” What we need most is the collective will to improve the education of all Delaware children. We need to level the playing field for those low-income students and other students at risk who currently do not have access to the educational opportunities that can and should transform their lives and enrich our community. The future of Wilmington and our state depends upon it.

Chandlee Johnson Kuhn is the former chief judge of the Family Court. Jackie Jenkins is the Educational Policy Advisor for Wilmington Mayor Dennis P. Williams. Michelle Taylor is the president and chief executive officer of the United Way of Delaware. All are Co-Chairs of the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission’s Committee on the Meeting the Needs of Students in Poverty.

Parent engagement matters most for student success

Yvonne Johnson and Chandra Pitts 3:20 p.m. EST December 18, 2015

When parents and families are engaged in their children’s education, the outcomes are significantly better. Virtually all parents and families want to be involved and supportive. The challenge is to put engagement into practice, but that is not always easy. Engagement requires time, effort, and knowledge of how to positively influence the education of your child. For some, engagement means heading up the PTA, baking cookies for the school fundraiser, volunteering during the school day, or chaperoning class trips. Yes, that is engagement.

However, direct engagement means working with your child at home and representing your child’s interest in a very complex public education system. Engagement also means giving a voice to the interests of all children. Engagement is particularly difficult for low-income families in which parents, or a single parent, work several jobs, work overtime, balance competing demands with limited resources, have limited or no transportation to reach their child’s school, and struggle just to keep their family safe and secure.

For all the challenges, nothing that can be more influential in a child’s education or in the overall success of a school than the active engagement of parents and families who give voice to the interests of all children and actively support the efforts of educators.

We have never known a more important time for parents, students, and families to unite and raise their voices in support of the efforts now underway to strengthen Wilmington education. The proposals from the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission need and deserve voices of support from parents and families—not only in the city but also throughout New Castle County and Delaware.

All parents and families have a stake in the success of these efforts. And the stakes are high. The success and failure of public education in Delaware and its largest city is impacting every area of life for our entire community. Test scores do not capture how well our education system is working. Rather, the real indicators are long-term socioeconomic factors that impact us all: High rates of crime, violence, poverty, and drug use are further compounded by the lack of livable-wage employment opportunities. The school drop out rate in Wilmington is 60 percent, and nearly 130 Delaware children are expelled from school annually. These issues are far reaching.

The goal of public education is to make sure that every student has a chance

to excel, both in school and in life. Education is not “the great equalizer” when schools serving low-income students receive fewer resources, face greater difficulties attracting the best teachers and are ill equipped to meet the diversity of student needs.

As parents, family members, and community partners, our role is to speak up to ensure the highest student outcomes possible. We need to raise our voices for children throughout Wilmington and Delaware. A key component of the commission’s proposals for change is focused on strengthening parent and family engagement. We believe that accomplishing this is critical to all other changes. We are committed to reaching out to parents and family members in Wilmington and beyond to help them become more engaged and active agents for the improvement of public education for all Delaware children.

Yvonne Johnson is a resident of the Red Clay Consolidated School District and a parent advocate. Chandra Pitts is a Wilmington parent in the Red Clay Consolidated School District and is president and CEO of One Village Alliance, a grassroots advocacy organization for young men and women throughout the tri-state area. Both are co-chairs of the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission’s Parent, Educator, and Community Engagement Committee

It’s now or never for fixing Wilmington schools

Tony Allen and Dan Rich 3:22 p.m. EST December 18, 2015

For nearly three generations, state government leaders have not acted to strengthen public education in Delaware’s largest and only metropolitan city. Instead, our leaders waited for the federal courts to impose remedies, and then they acted to dilute the impact of those remedies. The remedies have not worked. The school reforms driven by No Child Left Behind and Race to the Top, for the most part, also have not worked. Last week, the U.S. Congress essentially repealed No Child Left Behind, returning to the states the responsibility for initiatives to improve public education. The persistent failures of more than a half-century of reform have come at great cost to City of Wilmington students and these failures continue to limit the quality of public education across the entire state.

Over the last 16 months, a community group of parents, students, teachers, district and charter representatives, and community leaders has worked passionately to chart a viable path for strengthening Wilmington education. The group completed a comprehensive analysis of the conditions of Wilmington public education and how those conditions affect student outcomes. One conclusion is indisputable. Consistently, on virtually all outcomes, middle and upper-middle class students—regardless of geography, race, or school district—do better than those who are low-income, and those who are low-income do significantly better than those who are low-income and live in the City of Wilmington.

The Debate

There are many arguments as to why these realities persist. More often than not, one group blames another and demands greater accountability. That said, there are three recurrent and competing themes about the cause of poor outcomes for Wilmington students. Each theme points to a different issue and a different solution. The first position focuses on problems Wilmington students may face at home and in their neighborhoods, problems that many believe cannot be overcome in the classroom. Some advocates of this view regard school-based interventions as misguided and doomed to failure. Others, however, call for greater attention to helping schools meet the needs of students in poverty. The second position is that government leaders have never accepted responsibility for addressing the problems of poverty and are not committed to providing the resources educators need to make a difference

for all students at risk. Advocates of this view believe more political will and funding are needed. The third position is that the fragmented nature of our current governing structure (e.g., too many districts and charters with far too little collaboration) prevents any action to strengthen public education as a whole. This view focuses on streamlining governance and consolidating responsibility for education improvements. It has become clear that all three of these positions present significant challenges that must be addressed. It also is clear that none of these challenges can be effectively addressed with piecemeal reforms, holding one group accountable to another, or introducing patchworks in public education funding.

Simply put, a comprehensive effort is essential.

The Plan

For the first time in decades, a comprehensive action agenda to strengthen Wilmington schools has a broad base of support. Strengthening Wilmington Education: An Action Agenda served as the basis for legislation to establish the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission. The Commission has the mandate to carry out the recommendations outlined in the report and also to advise state leaders on how best to support the increasing number of schools throughout Delaware with high concentrations of low-income students, English language learners and other children at risk, including young children with special education needs. Separate legislation authorized the State Board of Education to alter district boundaries in northern New Castle County in a manner consistent with the Wilmington Education Advisory Committee recommendations and based on a comprehensive transition, resource, and implementation plan developed by the Commission.

The detailed redistricting plan was submitted to the State Board of Education on Thursday and it is posted at the Commission's website: www.solutionsfordelawareschools.com. The State Board will act on the plan in its entirety on Jan. 21, 2016. If approved, the implementation of the plan will be subject to confirmation by a joint resolution of the General Assembly that must be signed by the governor. The plan calls for the movement of Wilmington students and schools out of the Christina School District and into the Red Clay Consolidated School District at the beginning of the 2018–19 school year. If this happens, governance will become more coherent. One district, Red Clay, will have responsibility for the majority of the public school students in the City of Wilmington.

But changing district boundaries will not in itself change student outcomes.

Redistricting must be accompanied by the allocation of additional resources to support the needs of low-income students, English language learners, and other students at risk. This investment should begin in Wilmington and then extend across Delaware. Currently, Delaware is one of only 15 states that does not allocate funding for low-income students even though at least half of Delaware students are low-income. Delaware is one of four states that does not allocate additional funding for English language learners even though these students are the fastest growing segment of our student population. The necessary additional funding can be provided over a number of years, starting with the schools and districts affected by redistricting and then expanding statewide.

Over time, the commission's plan calls for a new weighted-student-funding allocation system that can more effectively and efficiently address the diverse needs of all Delaware students. While additional funding is needed, the burden of support should not fall on local taxpayers in the districts affected by redistricting. No Red Clay or Christina taxpayer should bear any undue tax burden because of redistricting. The needed funding must be addressed predominantly as a state obligation.

Redistricting and additional targeted funds are essential, but much more will be needed. Three streams of action are required: creating responsive governance, funding student success, and meeting the full range of Wilmington student needs in-school and out-of-school. Progress on all three streams is needed to support higher-quality schools, attract and retain high-quality teachers, improve instruction and learning, and generate improved student outcomes.

The Commission's proposal is not a quick fix. It is a solid and achievable plan borne of the most transparent process our community has ever seen. It builds upon proposals that have been made by earlier task forces to improve Wilmington education. It is based upon extensive research about what is needed and what works to end the cycle of poverty and to provide educators in our schools with the resources to better support student learning. It addresses key state priorities, from investing in early childhood education to eliminating the school-to-prison pipeline. It has the support of a broad and growing coalition of parents, educators, community and business leaders, student advocates, and government officials.

Doing Nothing

Some have argued that we just can't afford to do what is needed and that we already spend too much on public education. As in the past, we could decide to do nothing. But you can be assured that if we do "nothing," the costs to our state and its taxpayers will surely rise to levels that are unsustainable; low-income students across the state will continue to struggle; rates of incarceration and recidivism will reach unprecedented levels; and Delaware, and its central city, will be increasingly less attractive to employers, large and small. All of this is substantiated by the recently released report from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), *Elevated Rates of Urban Firearm Violence and Opportunities for Prevention*.

The time is over for putting off action, waiting for a better plan, screaming no money, or blaming the students, their parents or their teachers for a system that is unable to meet student needs. The time to act is now. Johnny Means, a high school student who serves on the Commission, has summed it up, "[State leaders] need to do something. They need to say they agree or not. They need to say what needs to be done, what they like or not like. Something has to be done."

Tony Allen is the Chairman of the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission (WEIC), a senior executive with Bank of America, and a Whitney M. Young, Jr. Awardee for Advancing Racial Equality, the National Urban League's highest honor. Dan Rich is the Policy Director for WEIC, and University Professor of Public Policy and former Provost at the University of Delaware. He is the architect of the University's Commitment to Delawareans, a program that prepares Delaware high school students for admission to UD and supports them financially.

In February 2016, *The News Journal* opinion page featured the following editorial.

Strengthening Wilmington Education: No More Excuses

Sen. Margaret Rose Henry and Rep. Helene Keeley 10:27 a.m. EST February 18, 2016

We are failing to provide quality public education for most students in the City of Wilmington. It is a simple fact that we must admit outright so that we can begin to seriously address the problem.

Segregation was ruled unconstitutional 60 years ago, but inequality of resources and poor schools are still realities for low-income Wilmington students, most of whom are black or Latino. It is our responsibility as state leaders to stop making excuses and do something. If we fail to act, the costs will continue to mount in lost lives, escalating violence and incarceration, and a failing economy in our state's largest city.

The Wilmington Education Improvement Commission has given us the opportunity to make real progress in strengthening education for Wilmington's children. Implementation of this plan will make important changes to the structure of public education, provide key resources where they are needed most, and create the framework for even greater advancement going forward. This plan is not perfect, but no plan truly is. This plan represents a positive path forward based on strong collaboration, community involvement, and support from all sectors. It is our best option and we must ensure that the resources will be there to support its success. That is our job in the General Assembly.

Redistricting has gotten all of the attention, but this plan is about more than just that. The Commission has been clear in stating that simply changing district boundaries will not solve every problem. Redistricting is merely the first step in a series of important actions. This plan is about equitable resources and meeting the true needs of these students and their families. And it is also about having one district take greater responsibility and leadership for strengthening the education of our Wilmington children—something that has been missing for four decades.

One of the most important aspects of this work has been the strong working partnership between the Commission and the districts serving City of Wilmington students. In order for all Wilmington students to succeed, it will take true coordination and collaboration among all those serving our needi-

est children. It also will take greater parent engagement and improved coordination and delivery of in-school and out-of-school services.

The time for excuses is over. We cannot continue to deny Wilmington's children the justice and fairness that they were promised more than 60 years ago. Until now, every plan that has come forward has been ignored and there have always been excuses. Generations of Wilmington children have waited long enough. Now is the time to do something about the inequities in our system and especially the failure to allocate the resources needed by low-income students and other students with special needs. The investments needed are modest compared to costs of doing nothing; if we don't act now, we will be paying much more through higher levels of incarceration, unemployment, and community decline.

The Delaware State Chamber of Commerce wrote in a letter to the Commission, "We encourage you not to miss this opportunity to make along lasting, fundamental, and critical changes needed to empower the young men and women, especially throughout Wilmington, to succeed in life and hopefully be the future leaders of the businesses throughout the state."

If we do not support this new positive path now, we may lose this chance forever. We have tried with desegregation, neighborhood schools, and school choice. We are still failing our students. This is the last, best chance we have to set this right.

Sen. Margaret Rose Henry is the Majority Whip of the Senate and represents the 2nd Senate District, which includes eastern Wilmington. Rep. Helene Keeley represents the 3rd Representative District, which includes central and southern Wilmington



“Substandard public education anywhere in Delaware is a risk not worth taking and further solidifies the school-to-prison pipeline.

But bold action takes courage. We will know soon if we all—the commission, the districts, the general assembly—have the courage to move forward.”

TONY ALLEN

CHAIR, WILMINGTON EDUCATION IMPROVEMENT COMMISSION