

**Wilmington Education Improvement Commission**

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**REDISTRICTING IN THE CITY OF WILMINGTON  
AND NEW CASTLE COUNTY:  
A TRANSITION, RESOURCE, AND  
IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

**December 15, 2015**

**Revised March 14, 2016**

**Submitted to the  
Delaware State Board of Education**

## Wilmington Education Historical Timeline<sup>1</sup>

|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| <b>1897</b>       | Separate educational system is encoded in 1897 constitution.  |
| <b>1921</b>       | Delaware General Assembly (GA) requires separate but equal schools; 50 separate school districts operate in the state.            |
| <b>1954</b>       | Brown v. Board of Education; desegregation ordered, but compliance is limited.  |
| <b>1956</b>       | Evans v. Buchanan first brought to court; court orders desegregation, but implementation is delayed.                              |
| <b>1957</b>       | U.S. District Court requires Delaware to develop a comprehensive desegregation plan.  |
| <b>1965</b>       | State Board of Education (State Board) adopts resolution to close smaller schools and phase out the last “black school district.” |
| <b>1968</b>       | GA passes Education Advancement Act, consolidates smaller districts (Wilmington excluded), and provides equalization funding.     |
| <b>1971</b>       | Education Advancement Act is challenged in U.S. Supreme Court; Evans v. Buchanan reopened.  |
| <b>1974</b>       | U.S. District Court decides Wilmington schools are segregated; Education Advancement Act declared unconstitutional.               |
| <b>1976</b>       | Evans v. Buchanan; court-mandated inter-district busing upheld through repeated appeals.  |
| <b>1978</b>       | “9–3” busing school-desegregation plan is implemented.  |
| <b>1980–1981</b>  | GA passes law prompting State Board to create four districts in New Castle County; court upholds.                                 |
| <b>1980–1990s</b> | Sustained pressure to desegregate districts in Delaware, but also gradual loosening of desegregation standards nationally.        |
| <b>1993</b>       | State of Delaware requests unitary status for four districts; U.S. District Court assents (1995).                                 |
| <b>1995–1996</b>  | Court-ordered federal supervision of desegregation ends; busing continues largely unchanged.                                      |

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

- 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).
- 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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## **Timetable for the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission and State Board of Education Action**

|                                    |  |
|------------------------------------|--|
| <b>August 2015</b>                 | Wilmington Education Improvement Commission (WEIC, herein referred to as the Commission) is established.                               |
| <b>August–September 2015</b>       | Commission presents to all four school district boards on WEIC and the planning process.   |
| <b>September–November 2015</b>     | Commission conducts town hall meetings in all school districts on WEIC and the redistricting planning process.                         |
| <b>September 15, 2015</b>          | IPA reviews schedule, outline, and analysis plan with the Commission and Redistricting Committee.                                      |
| <b>September 17, 2015</b>          | Commission presents to the State Board of Education (State Board) on WEIC, the redistricting plan schedule outline, and public record. |
| <b>October 15, 2015</b>            | Commission presents to the State Board an update on plan and its development, including the defined public record.                     |
| <b>November 5, 2015</b>            | Commission leadership meets with the State Board at the State Board of Education retreat.  |
| <b>November 17, 2015</b>           | Commission reviews draft plan and makes it available for electronic and written public comment.  |
| <b>November 19, 2015</b>           | Commission delivers draft plan to the State Board.   |
| <b>Nov. 17, 2015–Jan. 14, 2016</b> | State Board receives electronic and written public comment.  |
| <b>Nov. 30, 2015–Dec. 4, 2015</b>  | Six public hearings are convened.  |
| <b>December 9, 2015</b>            | Commission meets to review possible revisions to draft plan.   |
| <b>December 15, 2015</b>           | Commission approves plan for submission to the State Board.  |
| <b>December 17, 2015</b>           | Commission presents and submits final plan to State Board.   |
| <b>January 21, 2016</b>            | Projected date for State Board action on plan as a package.  |
| <b>March 31, 2016</b>              | Commission and State Board authority ends.   |



## **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**

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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 recommendations 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**

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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**

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Addressing the challenges of students in poverty<sup>2</sup> 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

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<sup>2</sup> 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.

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.
- 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-income<sup>3</sup> 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.

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<sup>3</sup> 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.

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 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.

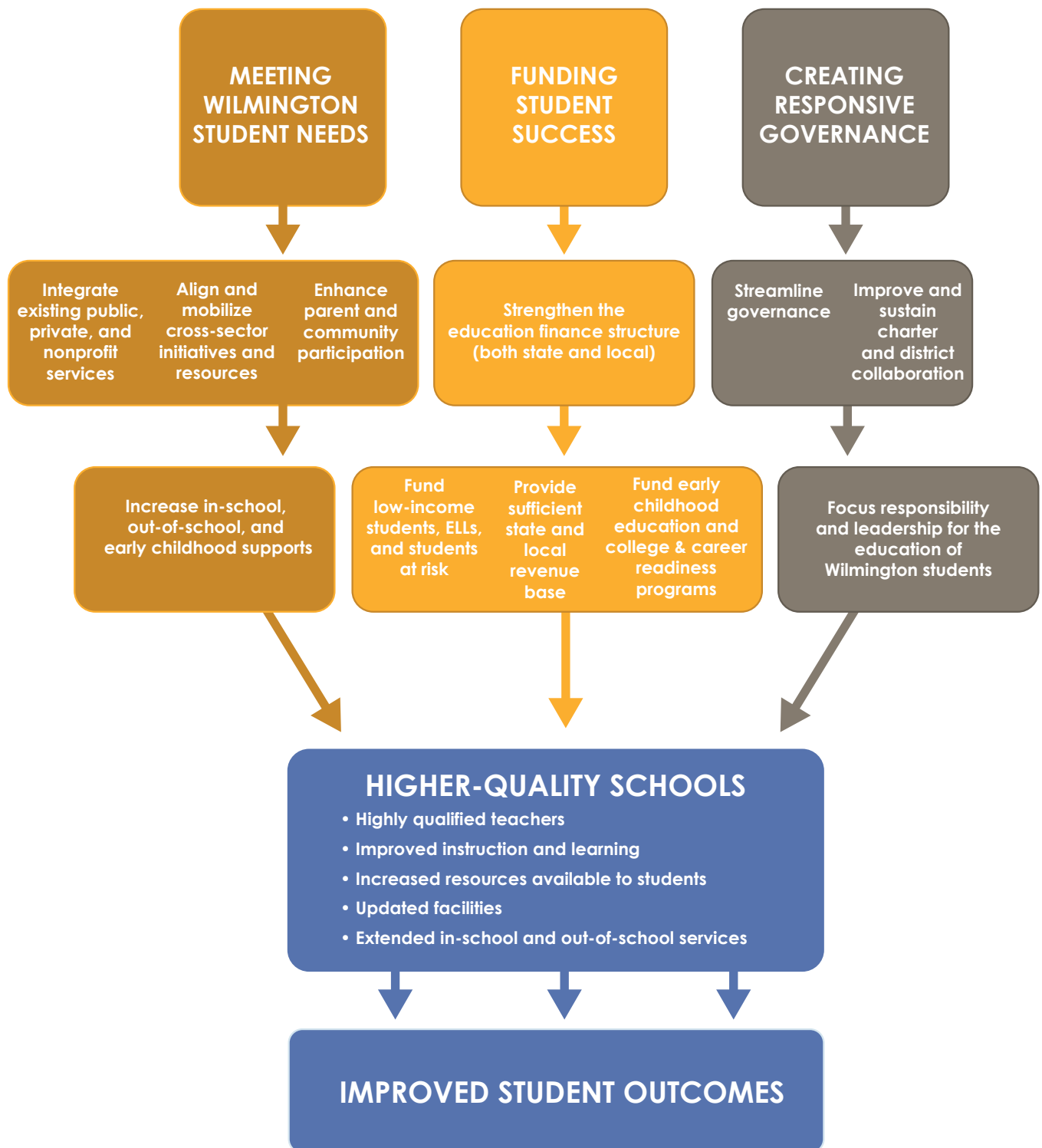
### **Confirming District Boundaries**

- 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<br>(altered district boundaries) | Implementation Stage |

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.

## 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-income<sup>4</sup> 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

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<sup>4</sup> 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 interchangeable throughout this plan.

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.

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.

**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 |            |
| 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 Vo-tech | 9-12        | 2,327         | 76%         | 720        | 71%         | -5%        | 183                           | 63%         | -13%       |

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 |            |
| 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%         |
| Delaware Military Academy                      | 9-12        | 294           | 89%         | 27         | 78%         | -11%       | *                             | *           | *          |
| EastSide Charter School                        | K-8         | 230           | 58%         | 191        | 57%         | -1%        | 153                           | 55%         | -3%        |
| Edison Charter School                          | K-8         | 448           | 58%         | 343        | 54%         | -4%        | 245                           | 51%         | -7%        |
| Family Foundations                             | K-8         | 445           | 72%         | 203        | 66%         | -6%        | 60                            | 62%         | -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%         |
| 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%       |

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 |            |
| <b>Brandywine</b>  | K-12        | 6,552         | 67%         | 2,092      | 48%         | -19%       | 747                           | 38%         | -29%       |
| <b>Red Clay</b>    | K-12        | 10,206        | 63%         | 3,791      | 43%         | -20%       | 1,574                         | 36%         | -27%       |
| <b>Christina</b>   | K-12        | 9,543         | 60%         | 4,274      | 49%         | -11%       | 1,125                         | 33%         | -27%       |
| <b>Colonial</b>    | K-12        | 6,188         | 61%         | 2,679      | 52%         | -9%        | 134                           | 41%         | -20%       |
| <b>NCC Vo-tech</b> | 9-12        | 2,329         | 81%         | 719        | 76%         | -5%        | 183                           | 74%         | -7%        |

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**

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

## **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.

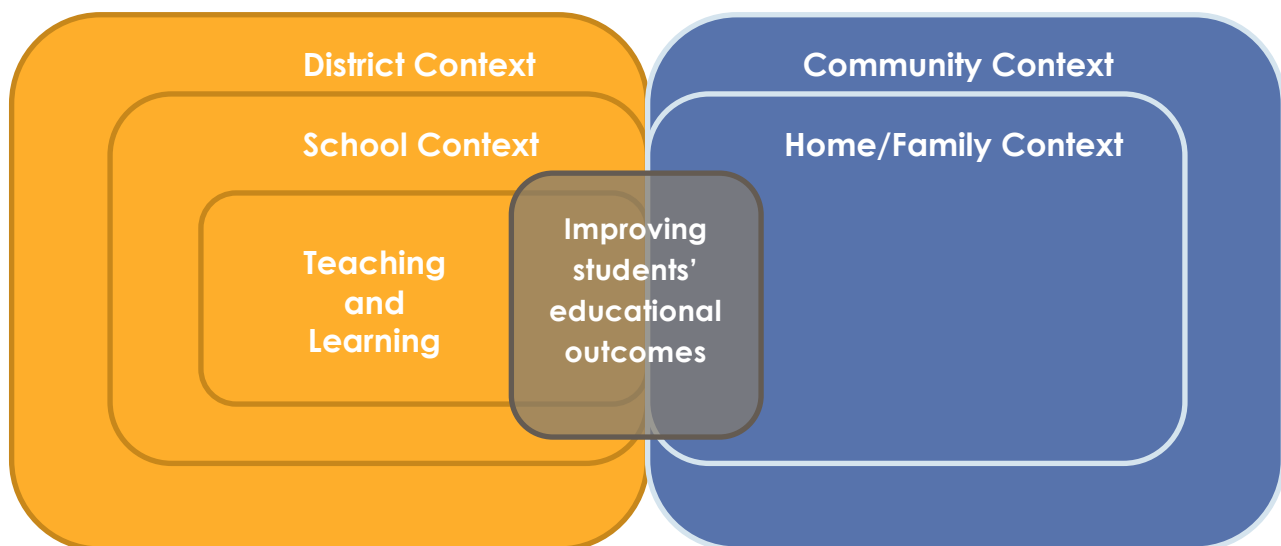
Delaware, City of Wilmington, and New Castle County students would be better off having a rich diversity of educational assets—traditional schools, vo-tech schools, magnet schools, charter schools, and many different programs and options within schools—but much of that potential benefit is being squandered 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, poverty<sup>5</sup>, and opportunities outside of school.

**Figure 1: Multiple Contexts for Student Success**



Significant research has established the importance of school district leadership in supporting and engendering change in education<sup>6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13</sup> and in supporting student

<sup>5</sup> 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 interchangeable throughout this plan.

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

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

<sup>8</sup> 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.

<sup>9</sup> 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.

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

<sup>11</sup> 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.

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

achievement.<sup>14</sup> Districts can contribute to system alignment and instructional coherence<sup>3,15,16,17,18</sup> 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.<sup>2</sup> 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.<sup>19</sup> 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.<sup>20,21</sup> 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

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

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

<sup>15</sup> 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.

<sup>16</sup> 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.

<sup>17</sup> 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

<sup>18</sup> 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](http://education.msu.edu/epc/forms/Thompson_et_al_2008_Coherent_Instructionally_Focused_District_Leadership.pdf).

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

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

<sup>21</sup> 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.

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. 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.

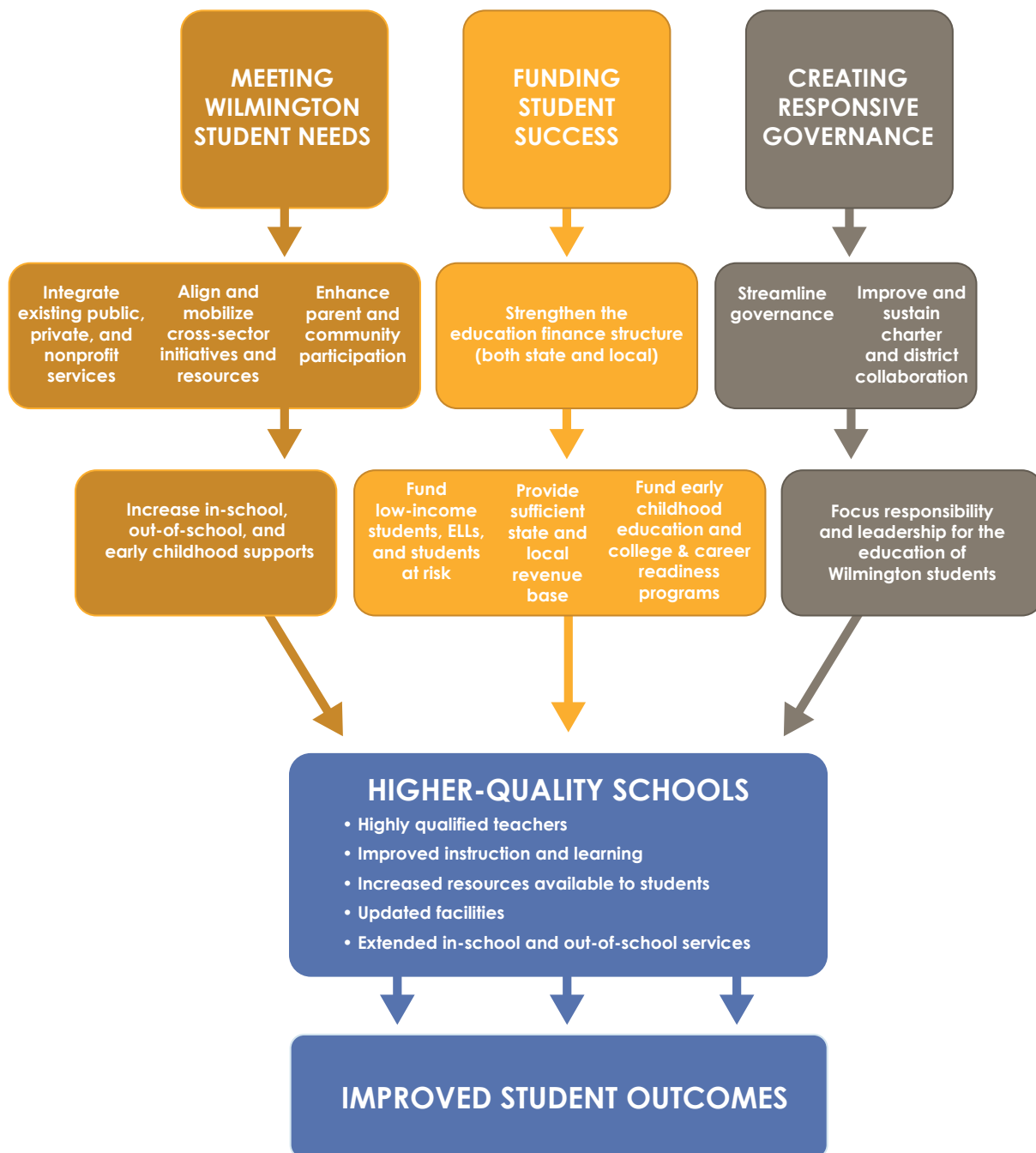
## **The Action Agenda for Improved Wilmington Student Outcomes**

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.

**Figure 2: Action Agenda for Improved Wilmington Student Outcomes**



## **Creating Coherent and Responsive Governance of Wilmington Public Education**

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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**

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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**

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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 concerted 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.

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.

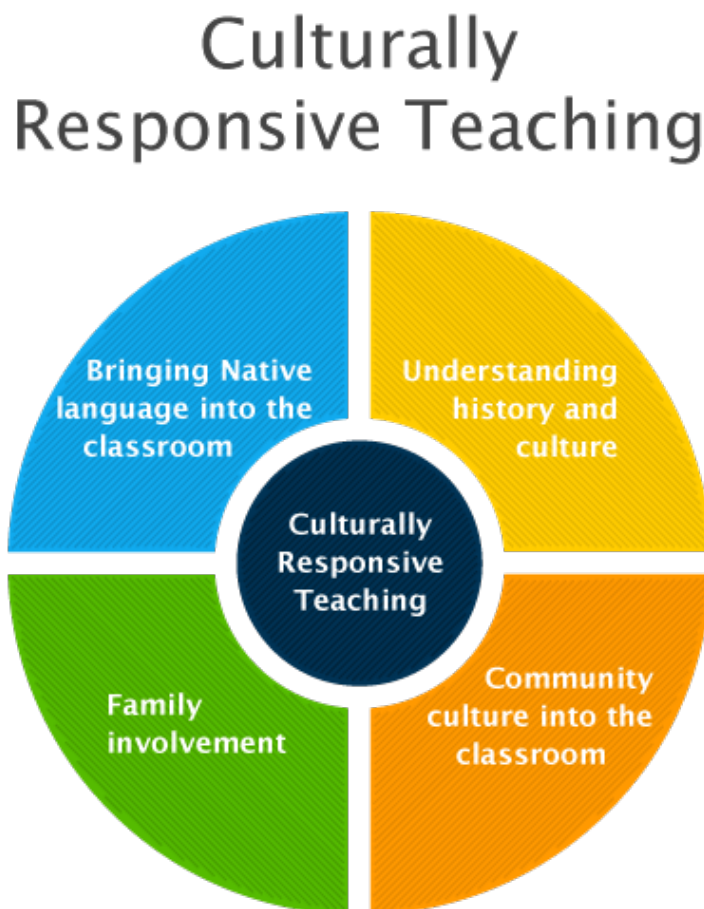
### **Culturally Competent Educators for a Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Student Population**

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.<sup>22</sup>

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.

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

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.

## Part II: The Foundations for State Board of Education Action

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 Education 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**

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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**

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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**

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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**

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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**

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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**

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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](http://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 <sup>23</sup>           |      |
|--|------|
| 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% |

| 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% |

<sup>23</sup> 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.

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**

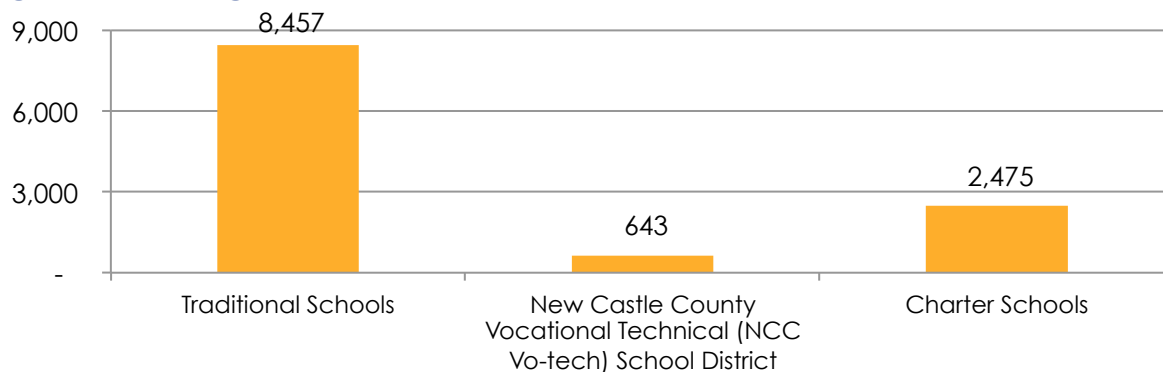
**Wilmington Students in Public Schools, 2014-15: 11,595<sup>24</sup>**

**74% African American, 18% Hispanic, 7% White**

**70% Low-Income**

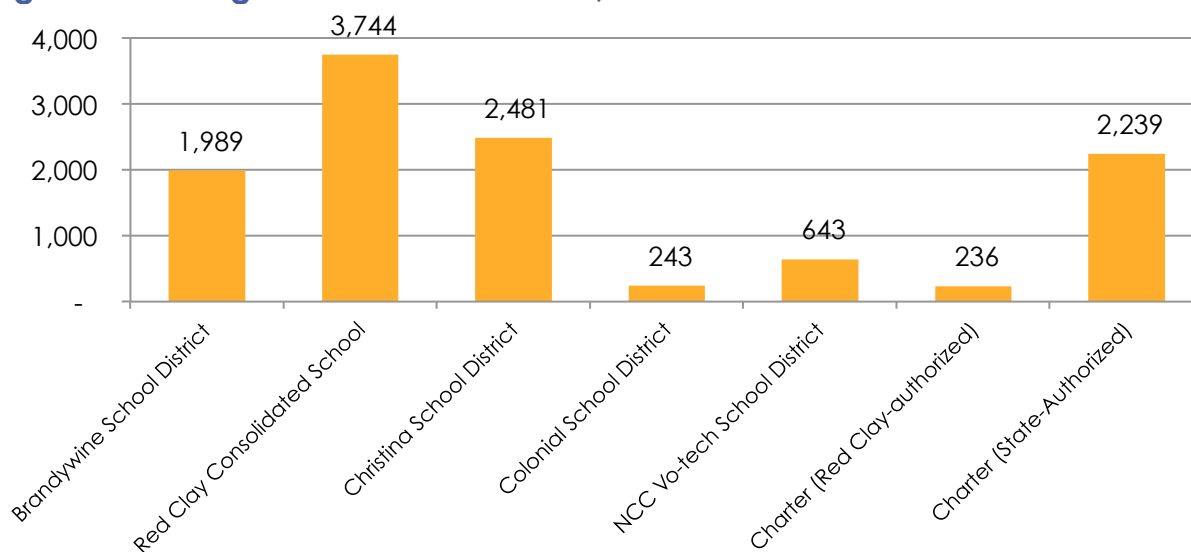
**Students in Public Schools Located in Wilmington, 2014-15: 11,233**

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



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

**Figure 5: Wilmington Student Enrollment, 2014-15 School Year**



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

<sup>24</sup> 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.

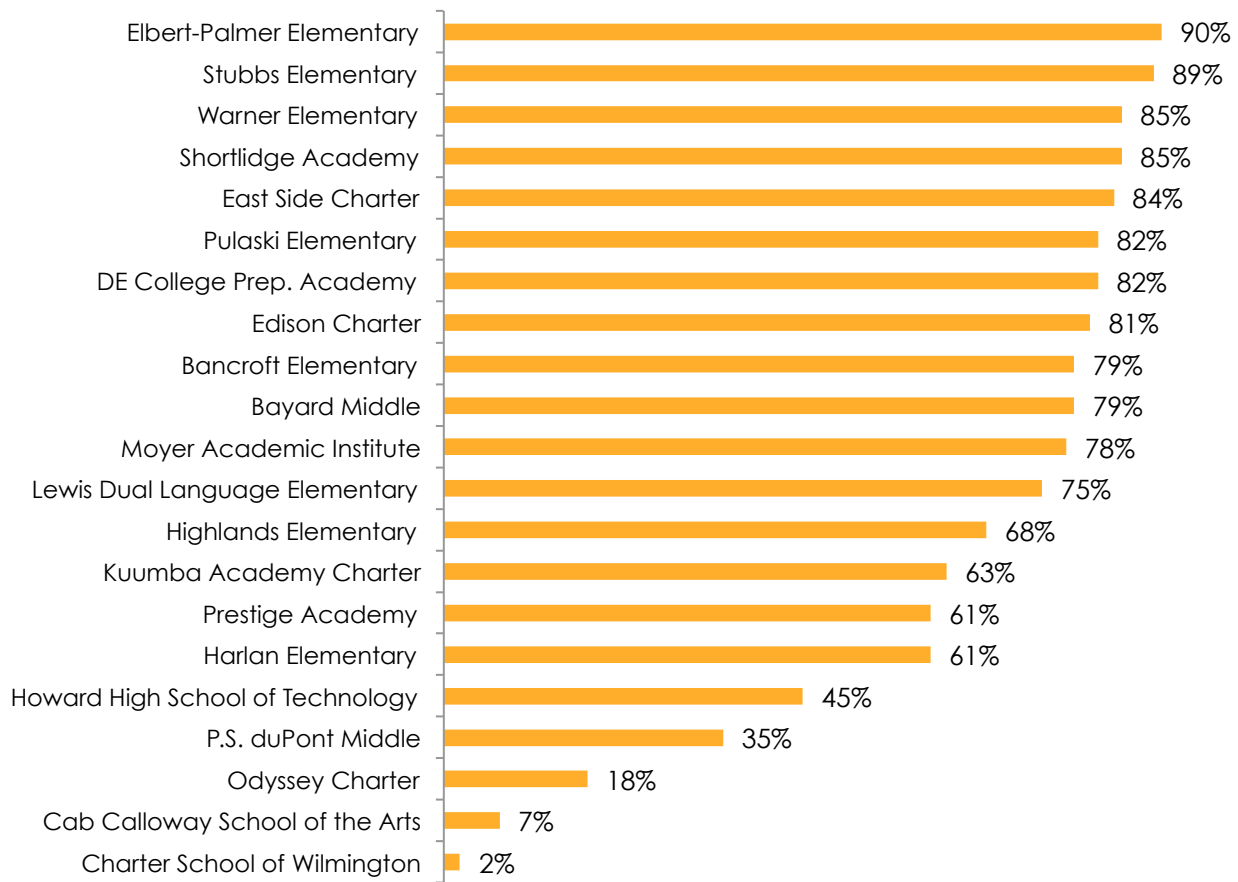
**Table 7: Wilmington Student Enrollment, 2014–15 School Year**

|   |       |
|---|-------|
| 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.

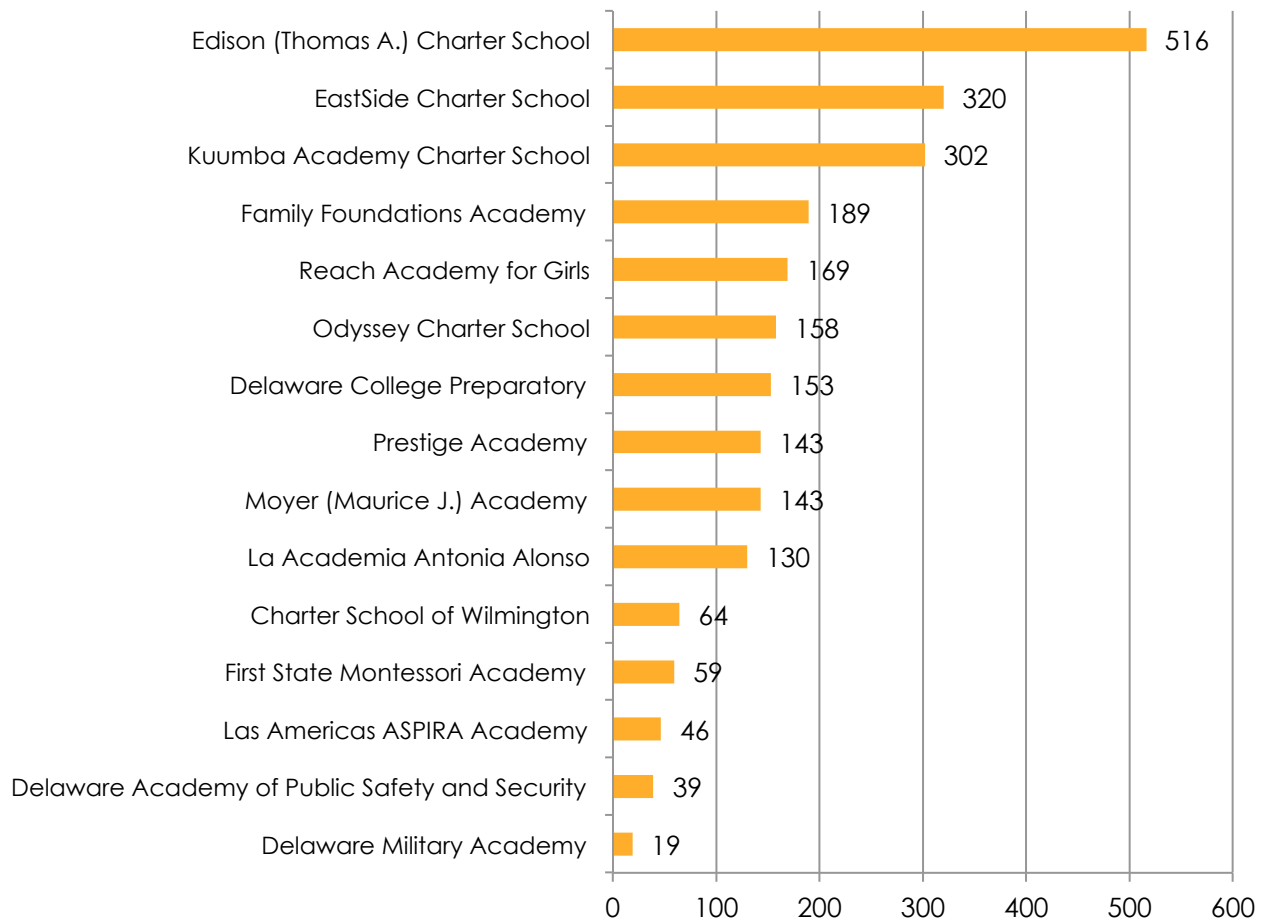
Note: \* Red Clay-authorized charter schools are listed separately.

**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.

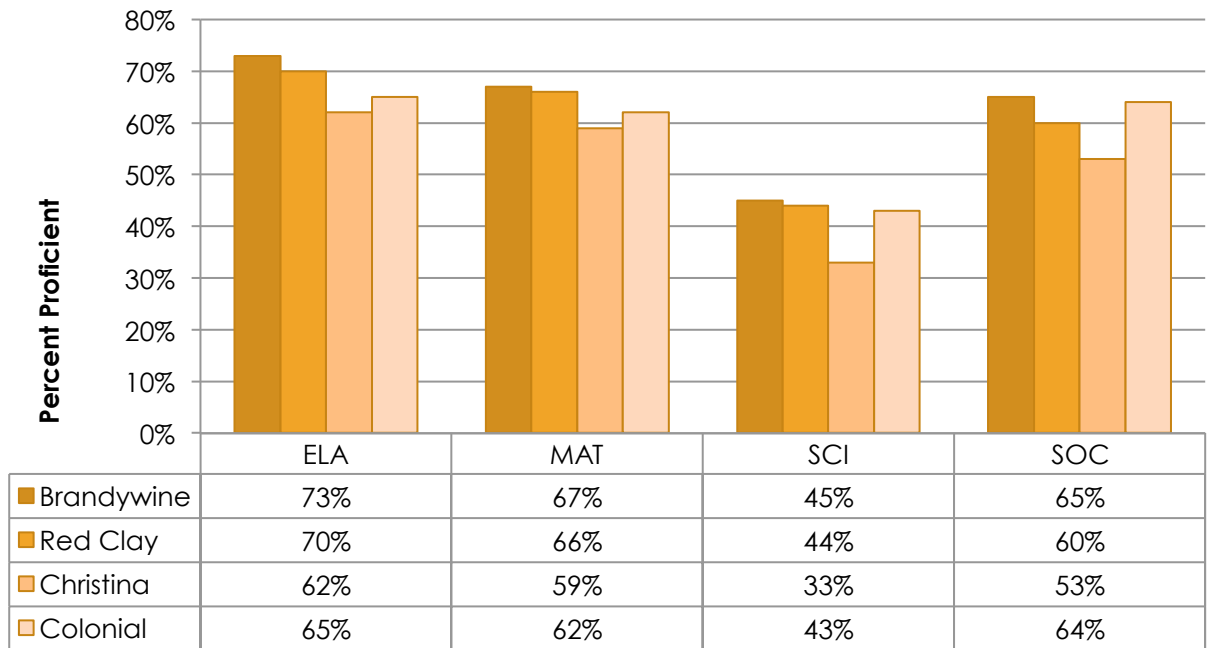
Note: \* Gateway Lab School, Early College High School at DSU, and MOT Charter School were not reported because fewer than 15 students are enrolled at each of these schools.

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

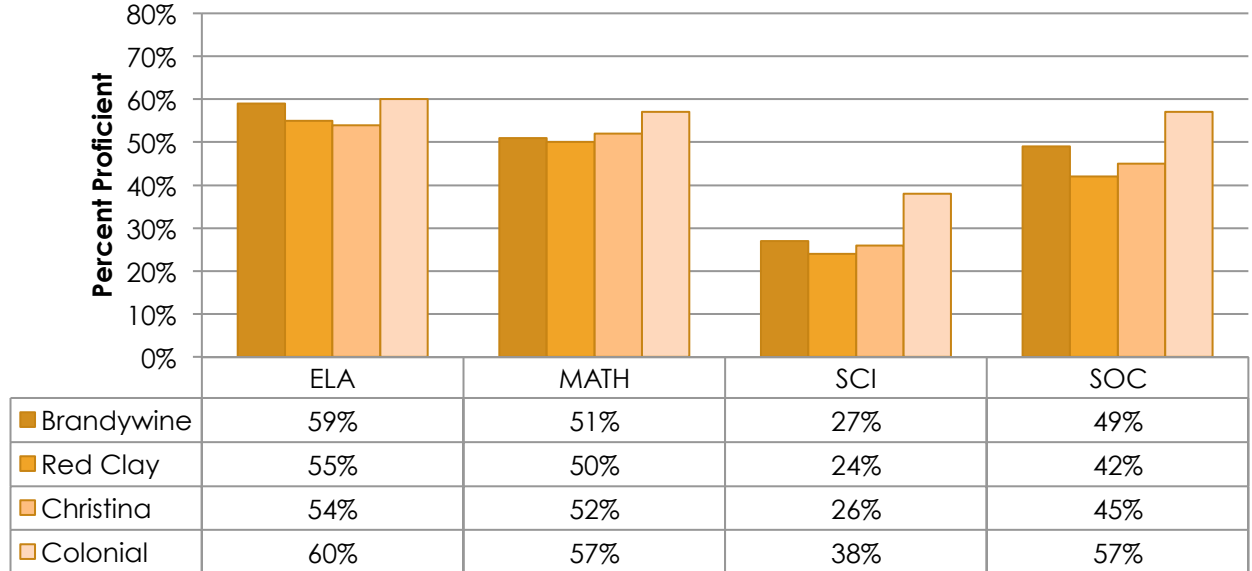
| Educational Attainment                             | Wilmington | NCC   | Delaware | United States |
|--|------------|-------|----------|---------------|
| <b>Less than a High School Diploma</b>             | 18.5%      | 10.7% | 12.3%    | 13.9%         |
| <b>High School Graduate (includes equivalency)</b> | 33.4%      | 29.1% | 31.7%    | 28.1%         |
| <b>Some College, No Degree</b>                     | 18.8%      | 19.7% | 19.9%    | 21.2%         |
| <b>Associate's Degree</b>                          | 4.4%       | 6.8%  | 7.3%     | 7.8%          |
| <b>Bachelor's Degree</b>                           | 14.6%      | 19.9% | 17.2%    | 18.0%         |
| <b>Graduate or Professional Degree</b>             | 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)**

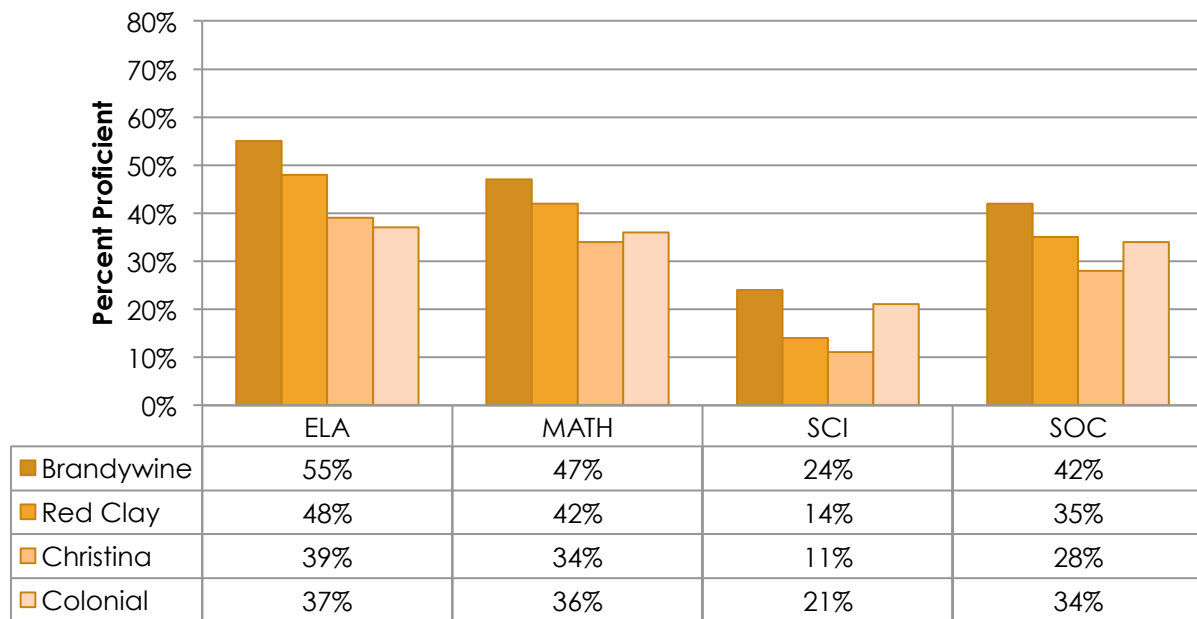


**Figure 9: 2013 DCAS, All Low-Income Students by District (Grade Level Aggregated)**

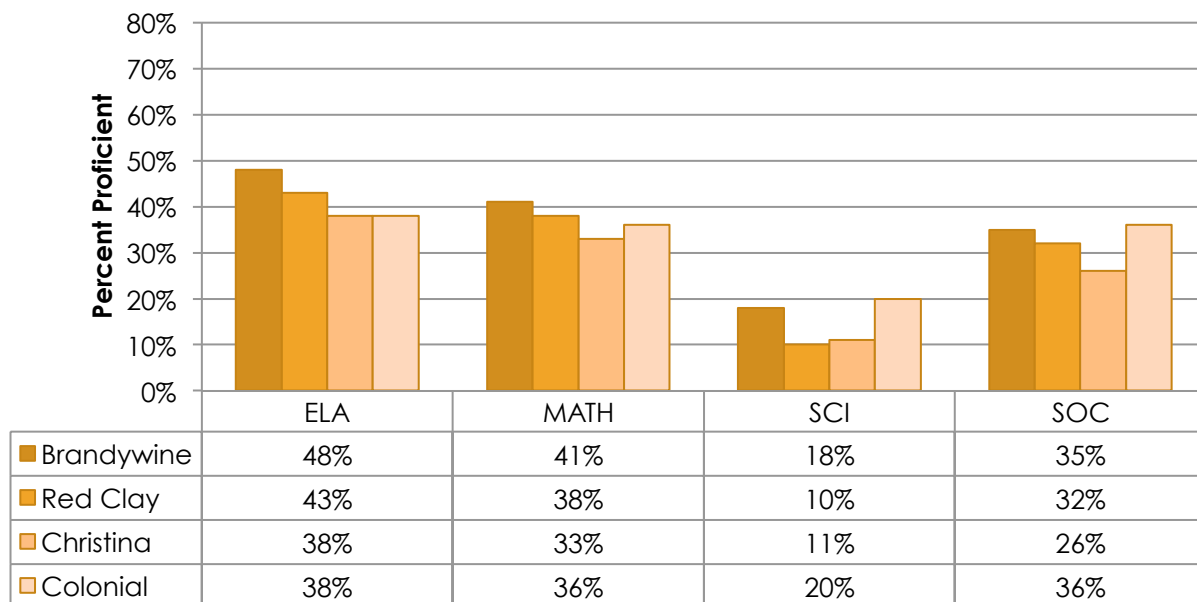




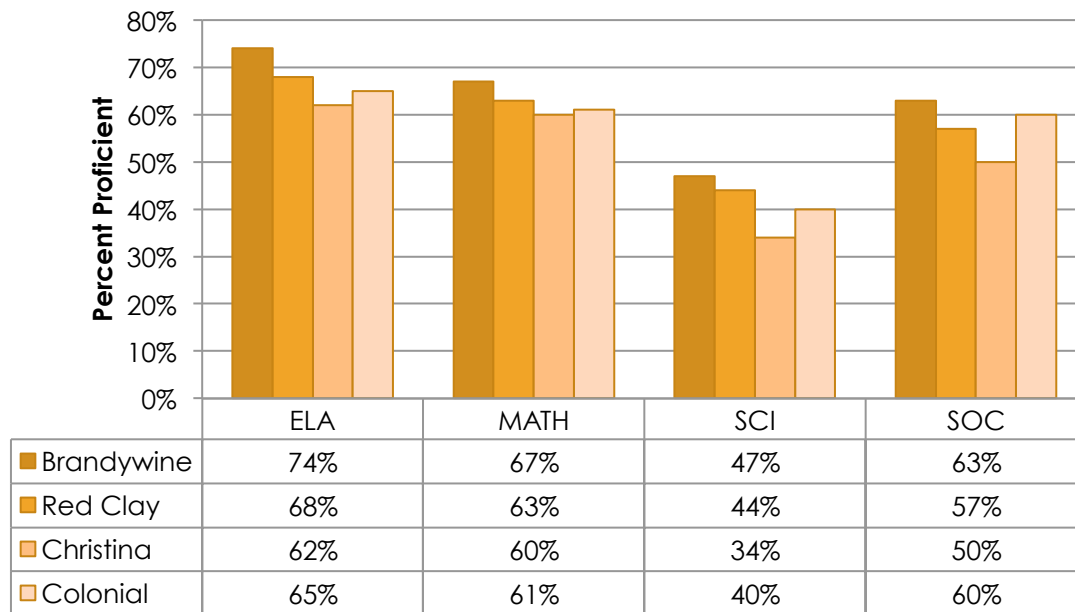
**Figure 10: 2013 DCAS, City of Wilmington Students by District (Grade Level Aggregated)**



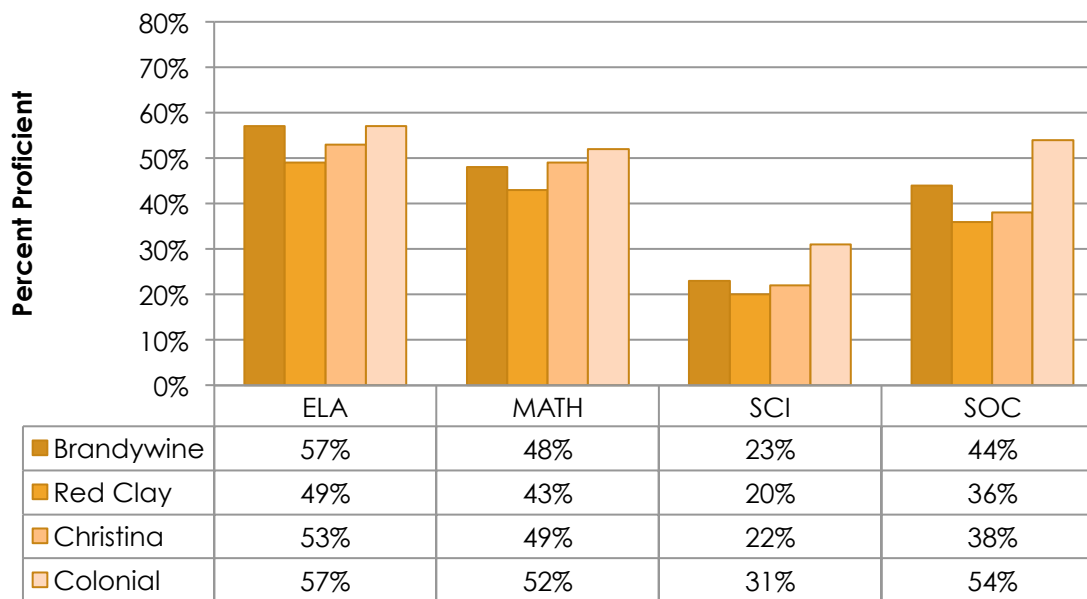
**Figure 11: 2013 DCAS, Low-Income City of Wilmington Students by District (Grade Level Aggregated)**



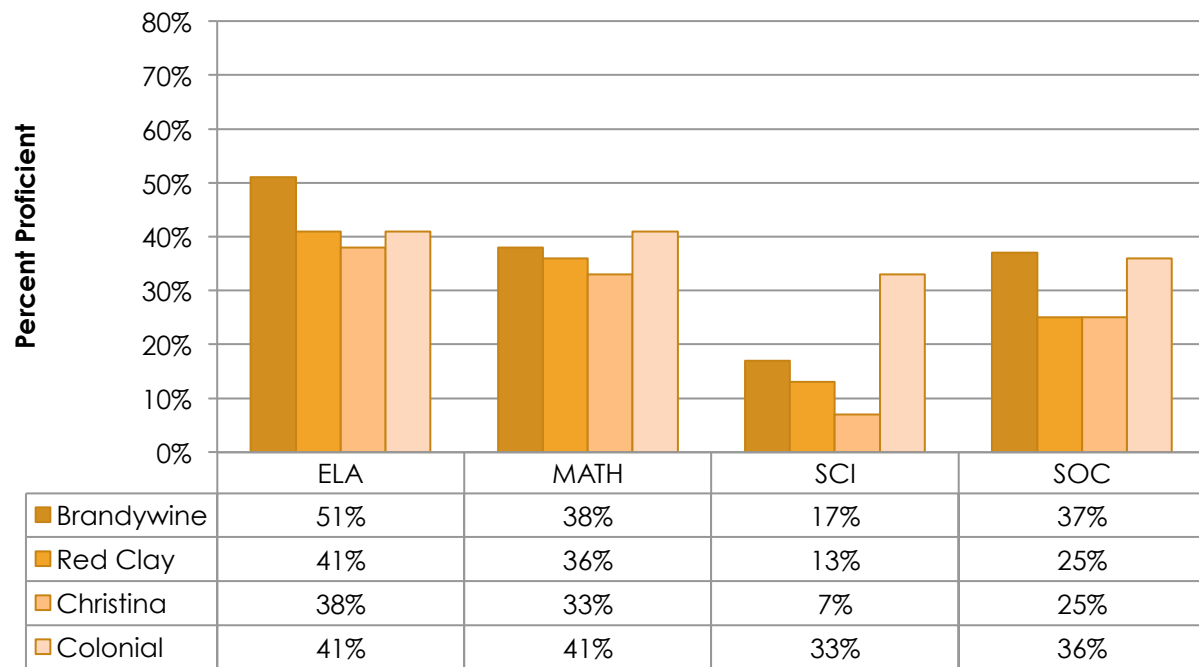
**Figure 12: 2014 DCAS, All Students by District (Grade Level Aggregated)**



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



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



## 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<br>Elbert-Palmer Elementary School<br>Pulaski Elementary School<br>Stubbs Elementary School   | Bayard Middle School  | N/A  |
| Colonial   | N/A  | N/A   | N/A  |
| Red Clay Consolidated  | Delaware College Preparatory Academy**<br>Highlands Elementary School<br>Lewis Dual Language Elementary School<br>Shortlidge Academy<br>Warner Elementary School | Cab Calloway School of the Arts*  | Delaware Military Academy** <i>(not located within Wilmington)</i><br>Cab Calloway School of the Arts*<br>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<br>Edison Charter School<br>First State Montessori Academy<br>Freire Charter School  |  | Great Oaks Charter School<br>Kuumba Academy<br>La Academia Antonia Alonso<br>Prestige Academy<br>The Delaware MET |  |
| Additional State-Authorized Charter Schools Serving Wilmington Students  |  |   |  |
| Delaware Academy of Public Safety<br>Delaware Design Lab High School<br>Early College High School at Delaware State University<br>First State Military Academy |  | Gateway Lab School<br>Las Américas ASPIRA Academy<br>MOT Charter School<br>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).<sup>25</sup>

*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.<sup>26</sup> In fact, Wilmington students have experienced—*

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<sup>25</sup> 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).

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

*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)

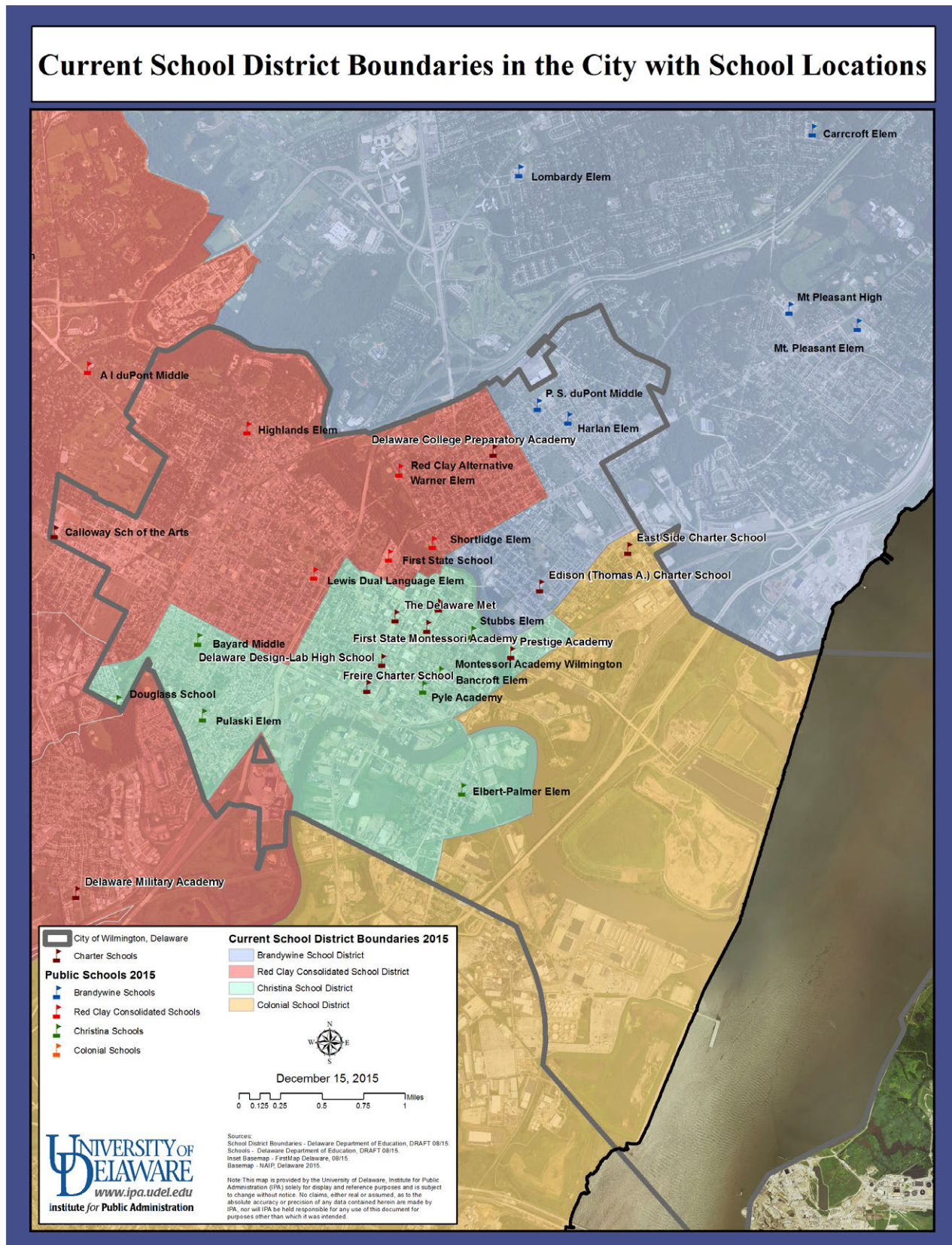
The legacy that has resulted from 40 years operating under a district configuration that was established to more effectively and equitably support the education of City of Wilmington students is that most low-income students living in the City of Wilmington are below educational proficiency in all areas.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



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



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>  |
|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• 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 students have the opportunity to graduate from the schools in which they are enrolled.</li> <li>• Transitional funding adjustments will be needed to implement this reconfiguration (see section on Funding Student Success on page 57).</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. <i>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).<sup>27</sup> 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.</i></li> </ol> |

<sup>27</sup> 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.

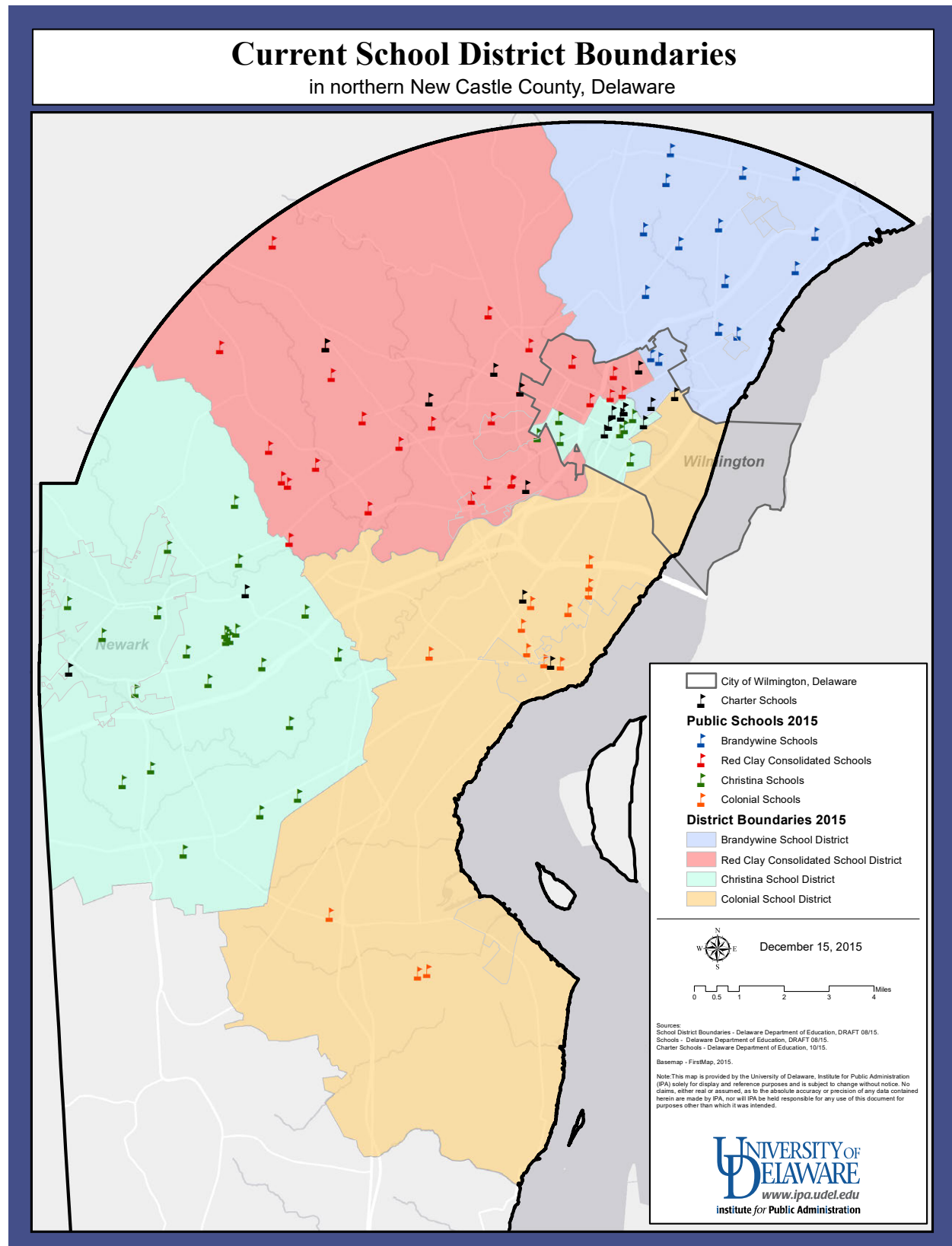
## Reconfiguring Wilmington School Districts Action Agenda from the Wilmington Education Advisory Committee's final report *Strengthening Wilmington Education: An Action Agenda*

- 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 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.*

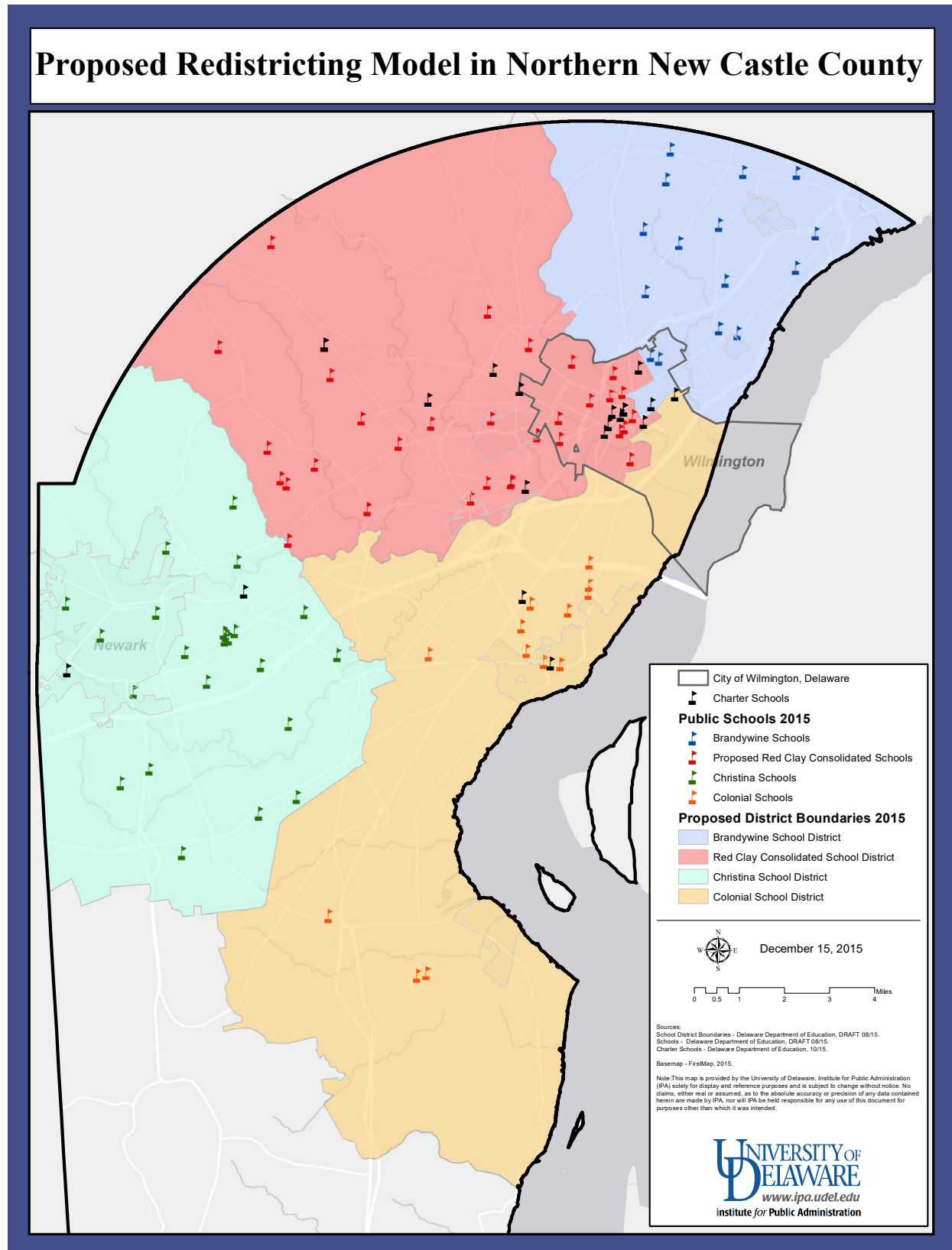
Source: WEAC, 2015, 25-27.



**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 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. 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 redistricting 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 redistricting. 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

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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.

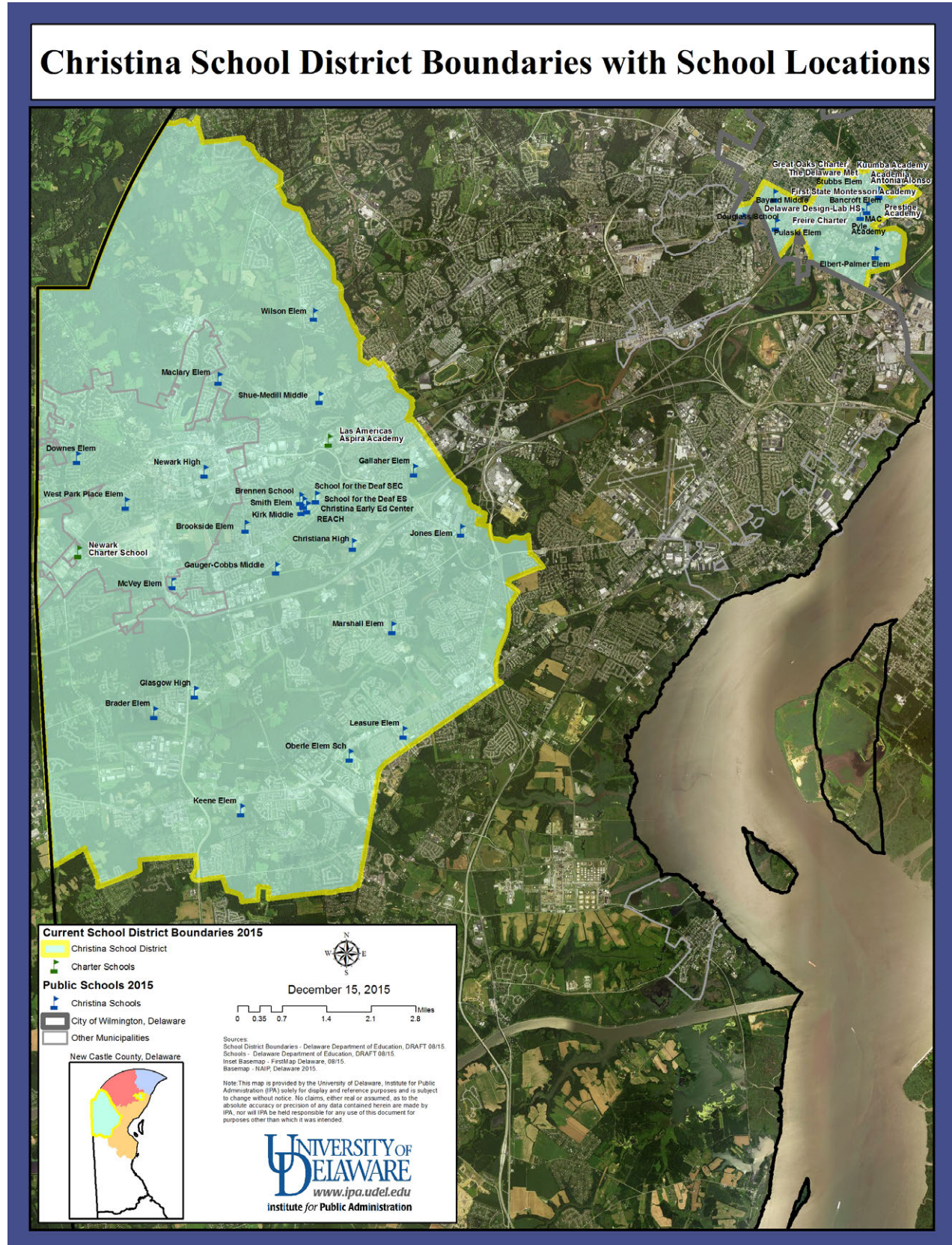
Changing the Christina School District's boundaries in a manner consistent with the recommendations of *Strengthening Wilmington Education: An Action Agenda* and in congruence with the subsequent planning of the Commission and the Christina School Board is straightforward since the western segment of 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.

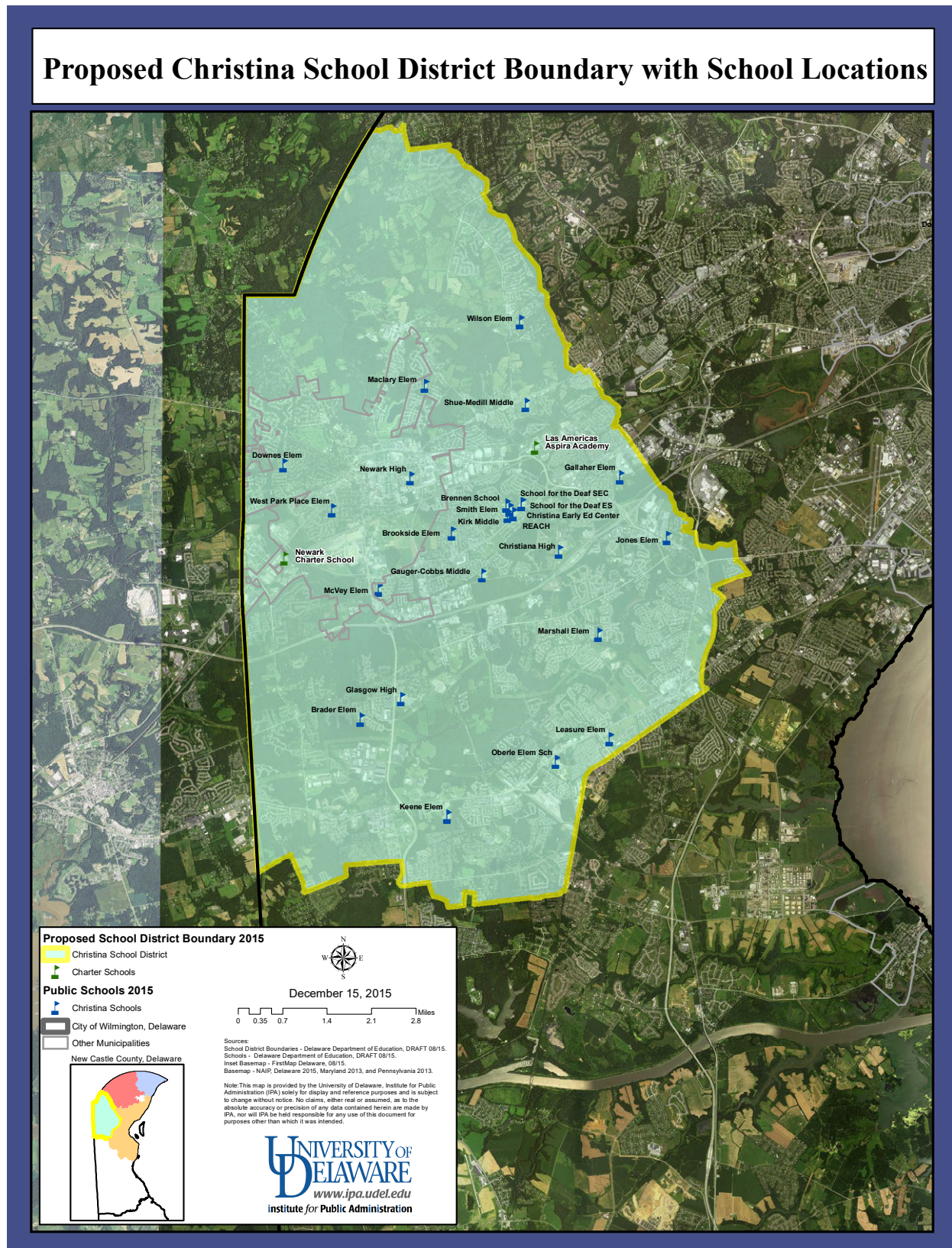


Figure 18: Map CSD-1, Christina School District Boundaries with School Locations



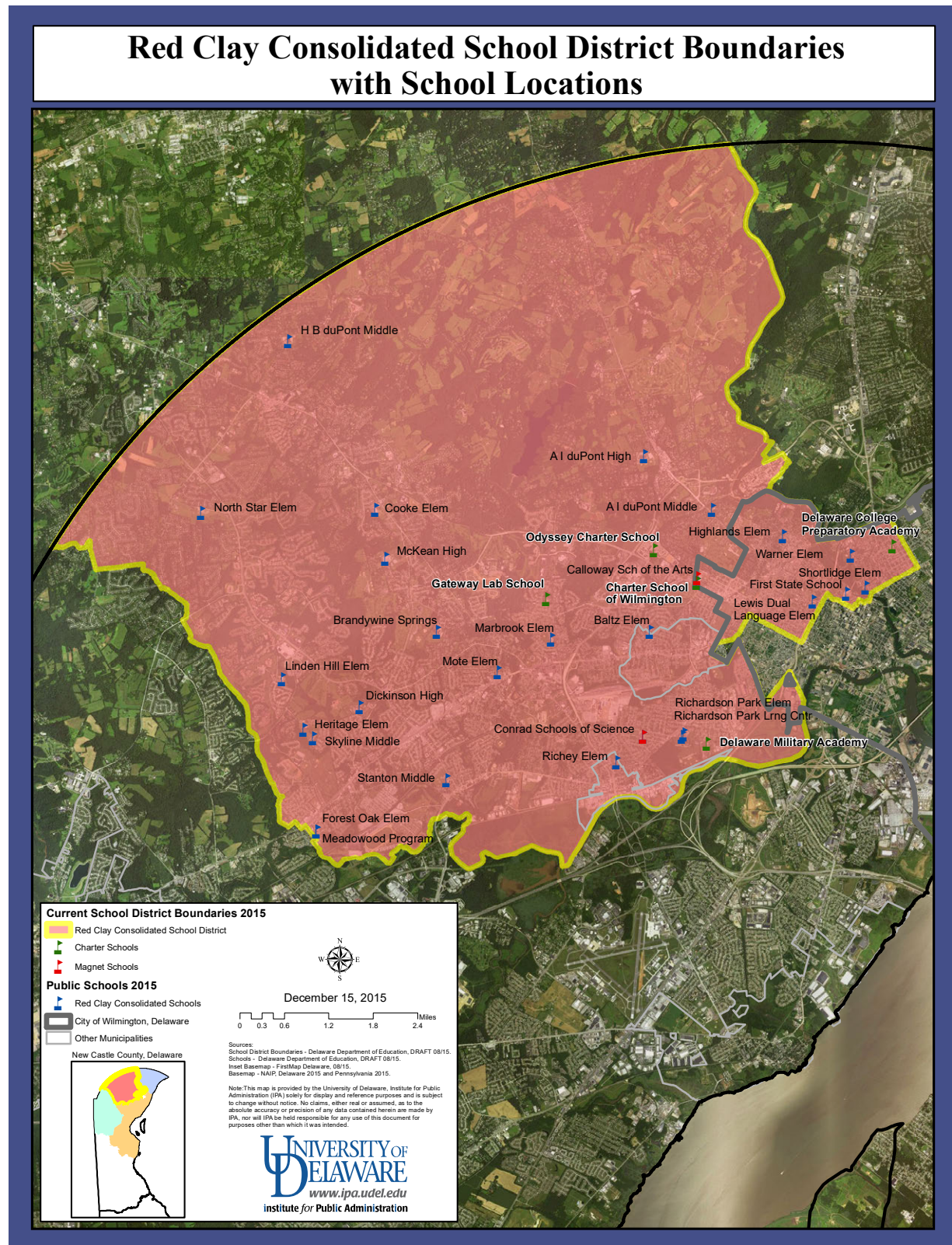


**Figure 19: Map CSD-2, Christina School District Boundaries with School Locations**



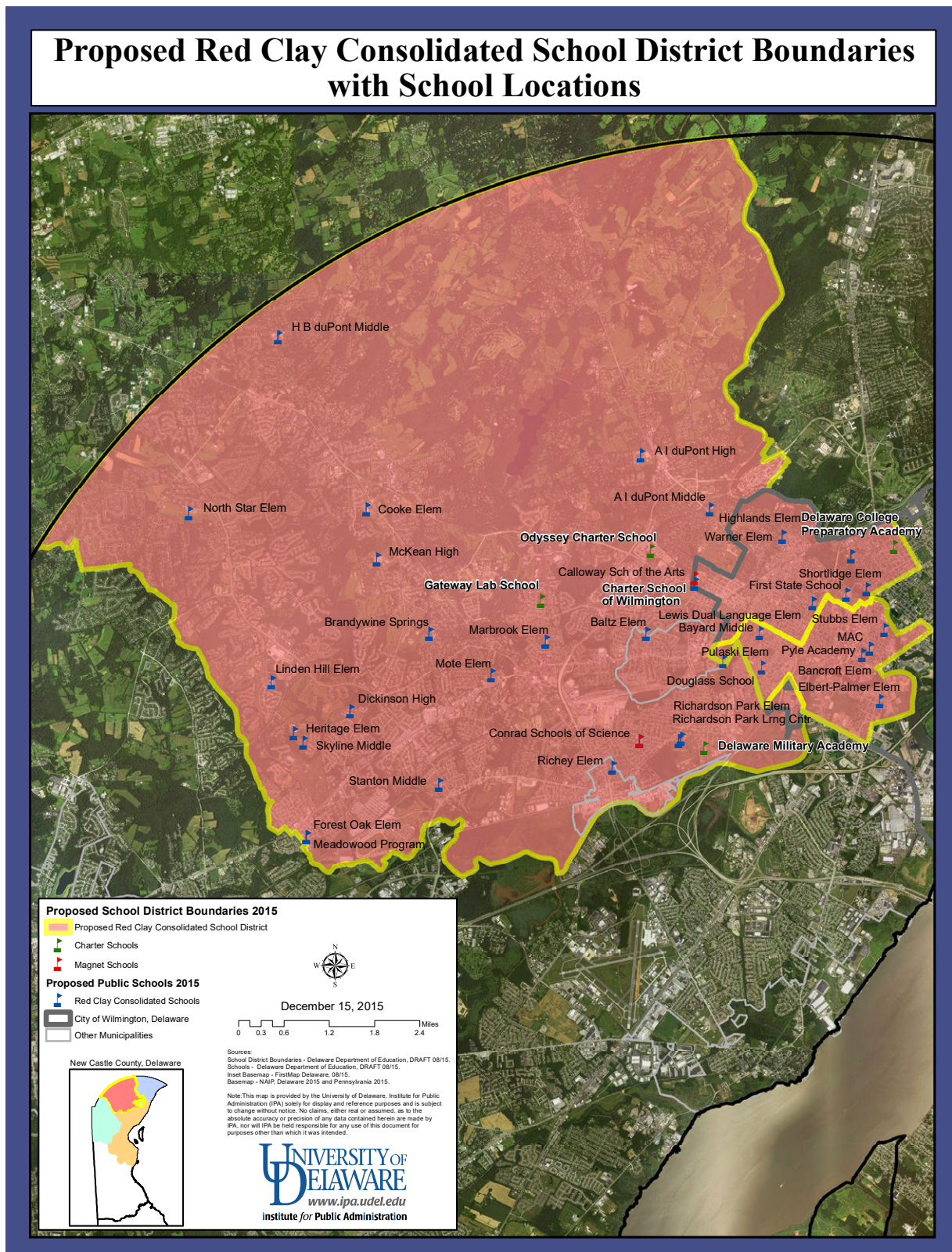


**Figure 20: Map RC-1, Red Clay Consolidated School District Boundaries with School Locations**





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

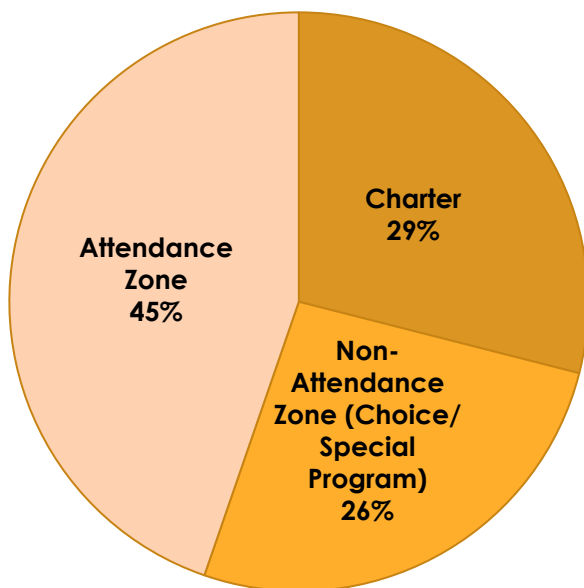


### Developing the Transition, Resource, and Implementation Plan

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<br>2 Pre-K<br>1 DAP<br>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)<br>2 Pre-K               | PreK-5        |
| Bayard Elementary School        | 138,689        | 416/30.52        | 1058     | 1 DAP<br>1 Therapeutic<br>2 Reach<br>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**

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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**

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- **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.

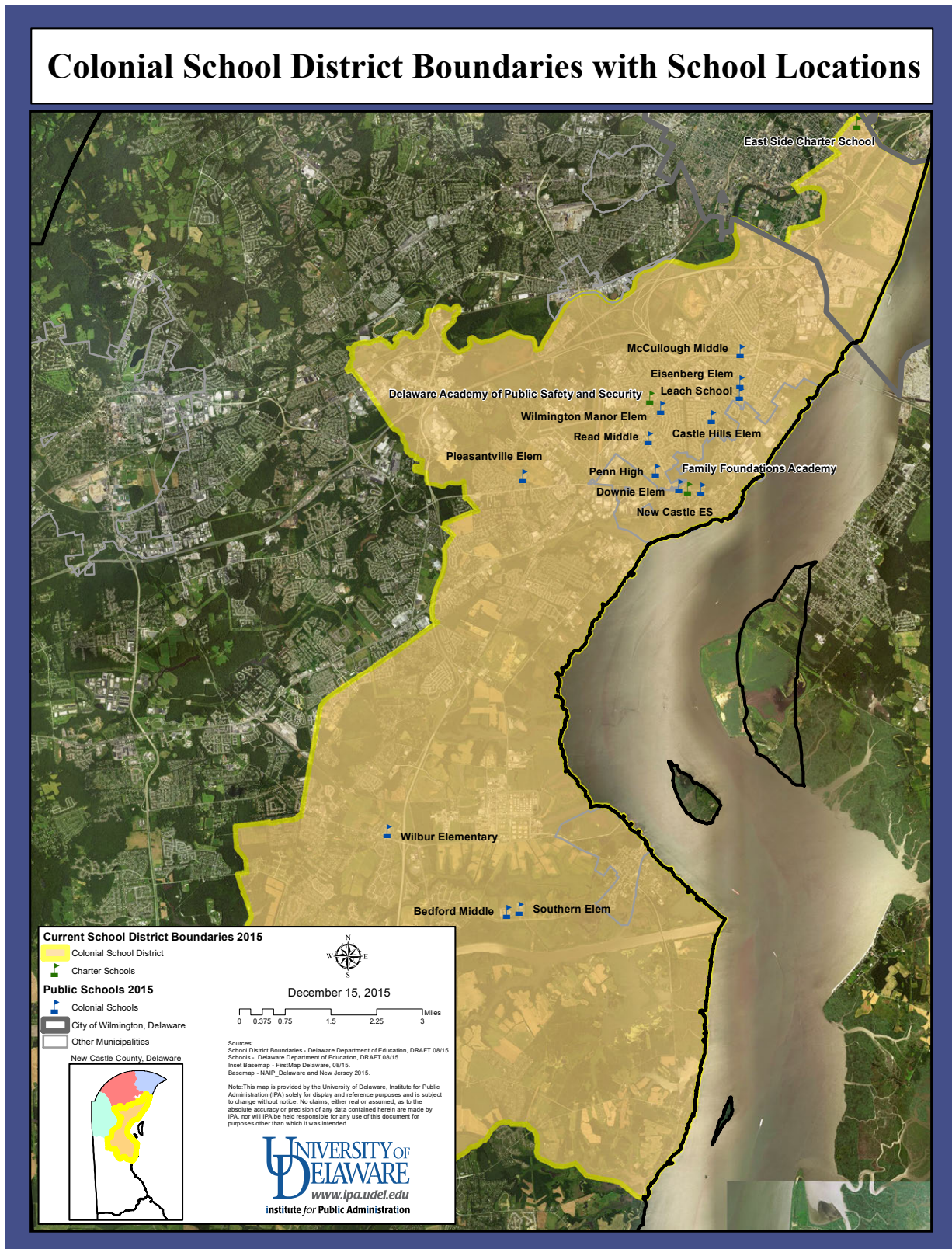
Colonial School District occupies a portion of the City of Wilmington that includes a large industrial area in the southeast portion of the city. The current boundaries of the Colonial School District are depicted in Figure 23: MAP COL-1; the detailed narrative description of these is included in Part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

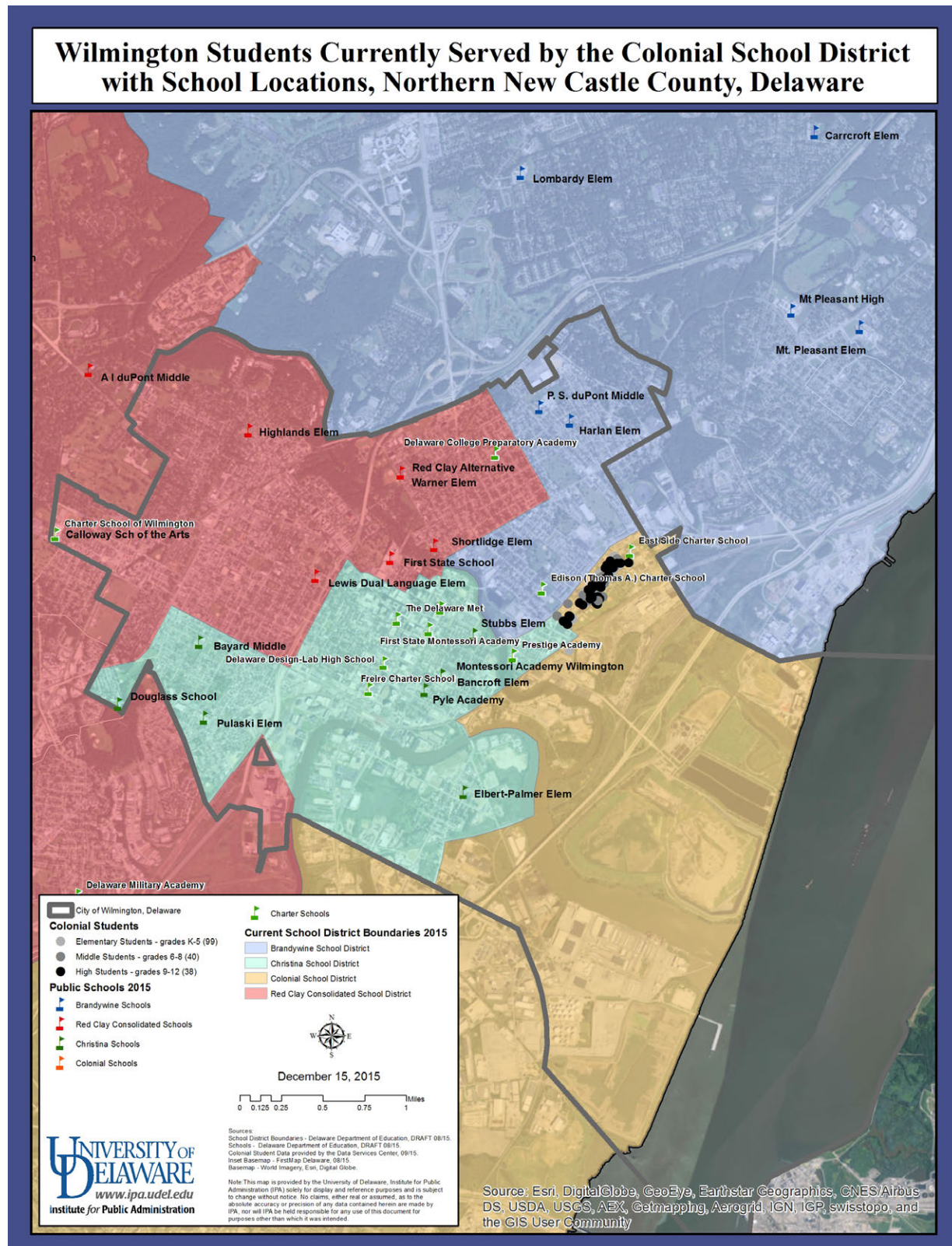


Figure 23: Map COL-1, Colonial School District Boundaries with School Locations



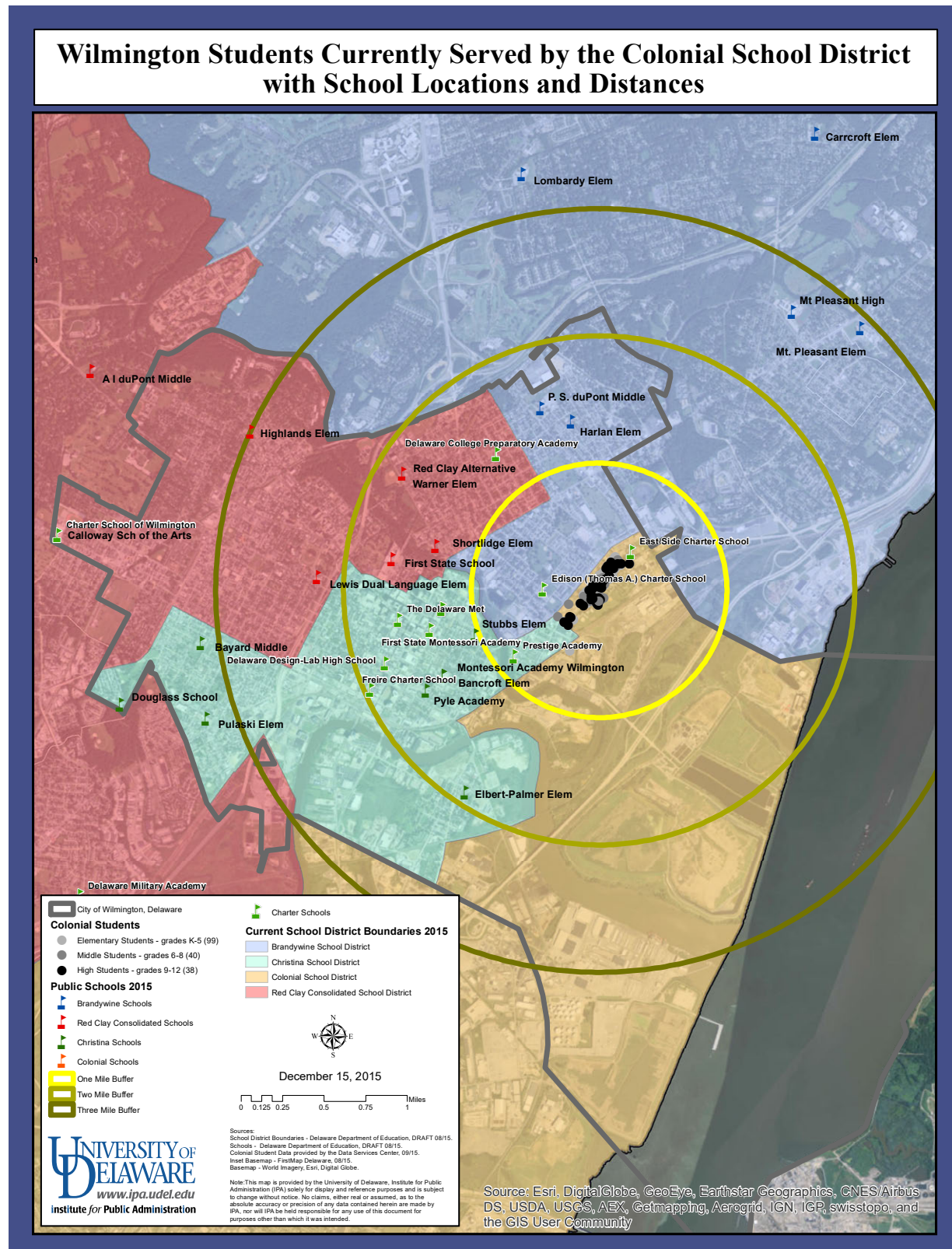


**Figure 24: Map of Wilmington Students Currently Served by the Colonial School District with School Locations, Northern New Castle County, Delaware**





**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      |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|
| <b>Elementary School</b> | 101                     | 154                         | <b>255</b> |
| <b>Middle School</b>     | 38                      | 27                          | <b>65</b>  |
| <b>High School</b>       | 32                      | 34                          | <b>66</b>  |
| <b>Total</b>             | <b>171</b>              | <b>215</b>                  | <b>386</b> |

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**

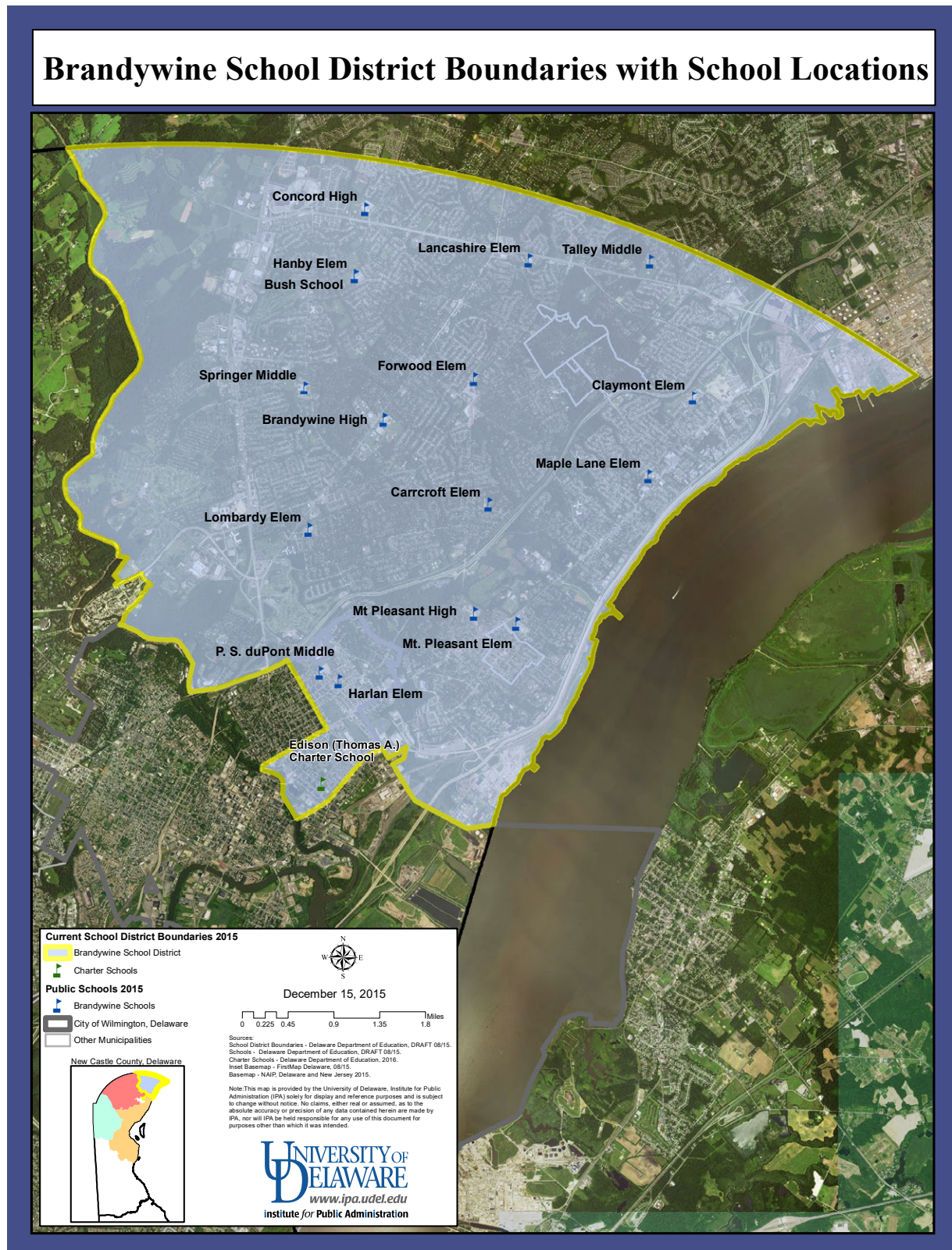
The Brandywine School District occupies the northeast section of the county with a segment in the City of Wilmington that is adjacent to all three other districts. The current boundaries of the Brandywine School District are depicted in Figure 26: MAP BR-1; the detailed narrative description of these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





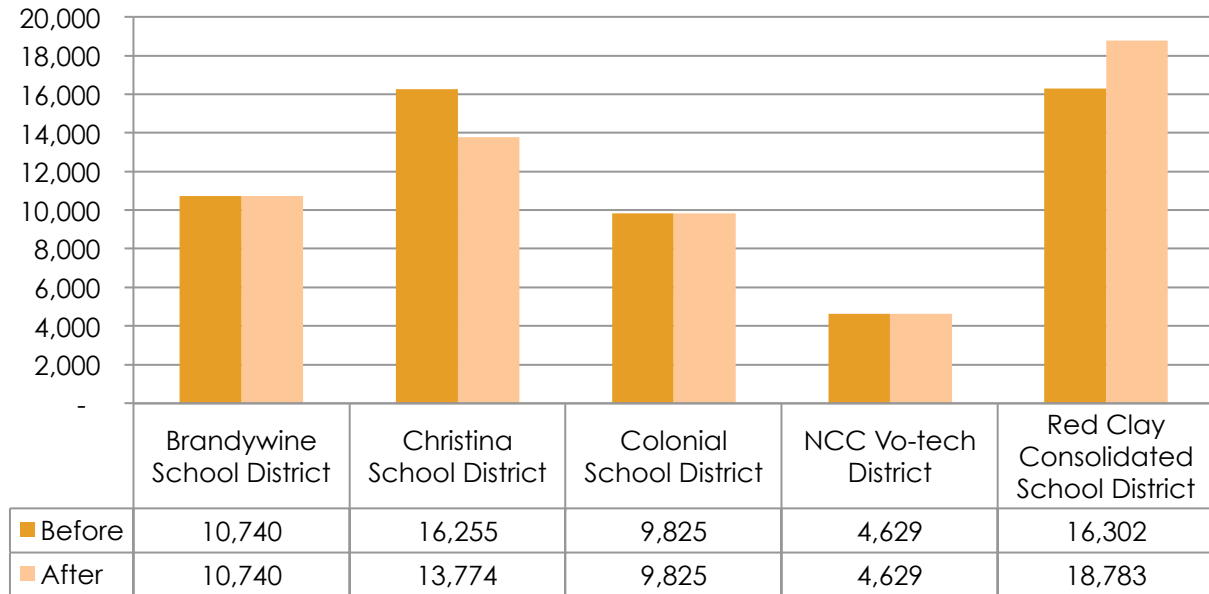
## Part IV: Projected Enrollment and Demographic Impacts of Redistricting

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.

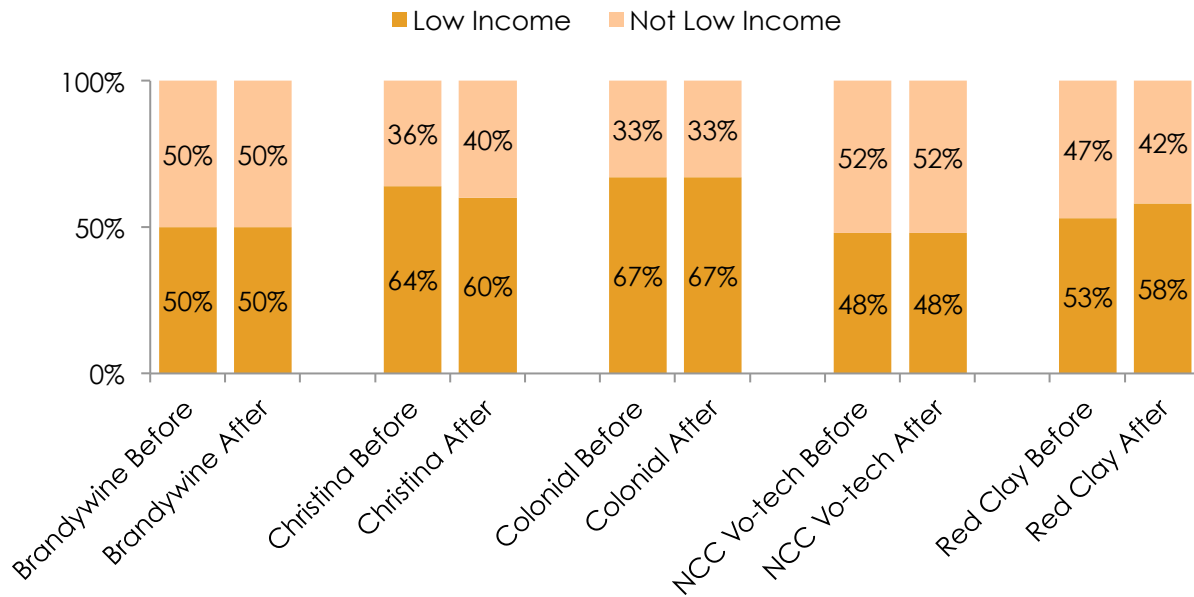
Using data from the 2014–2015 school year, the figures below provide illustrative demonstration of changes in total student enrollment and demographic composition of enrollment for factors of low-income status, English-language-learner (ELL) status, students with disabilities, and race. These comparisons 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**



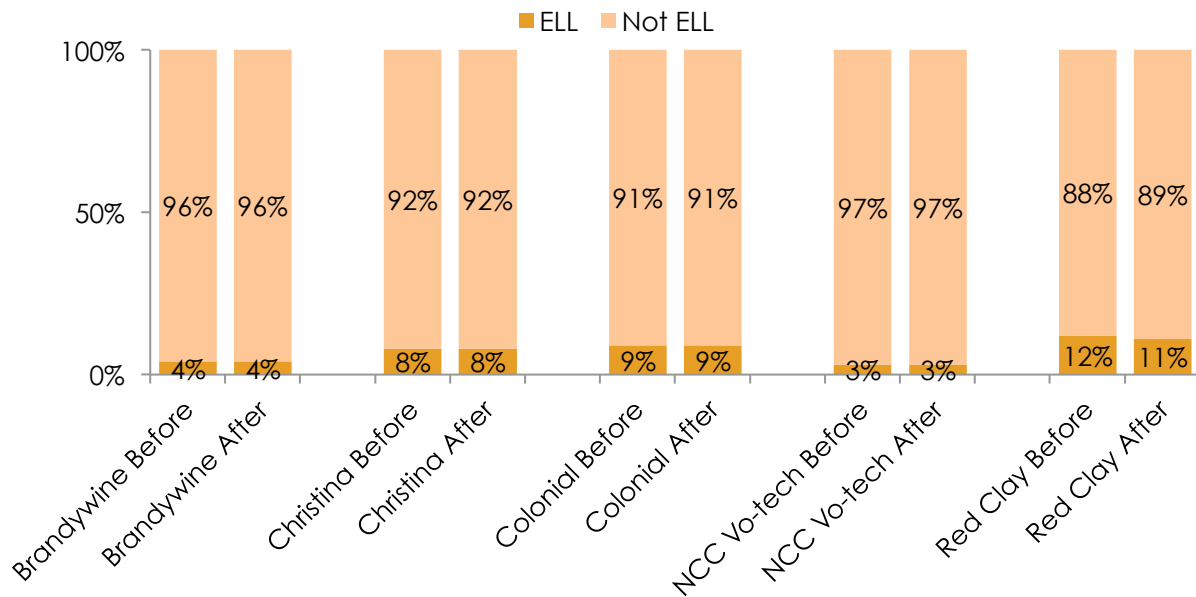
Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Set, 2014–15 School Year.  
Note: Excludes Red Clay-authorized charter schools.

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



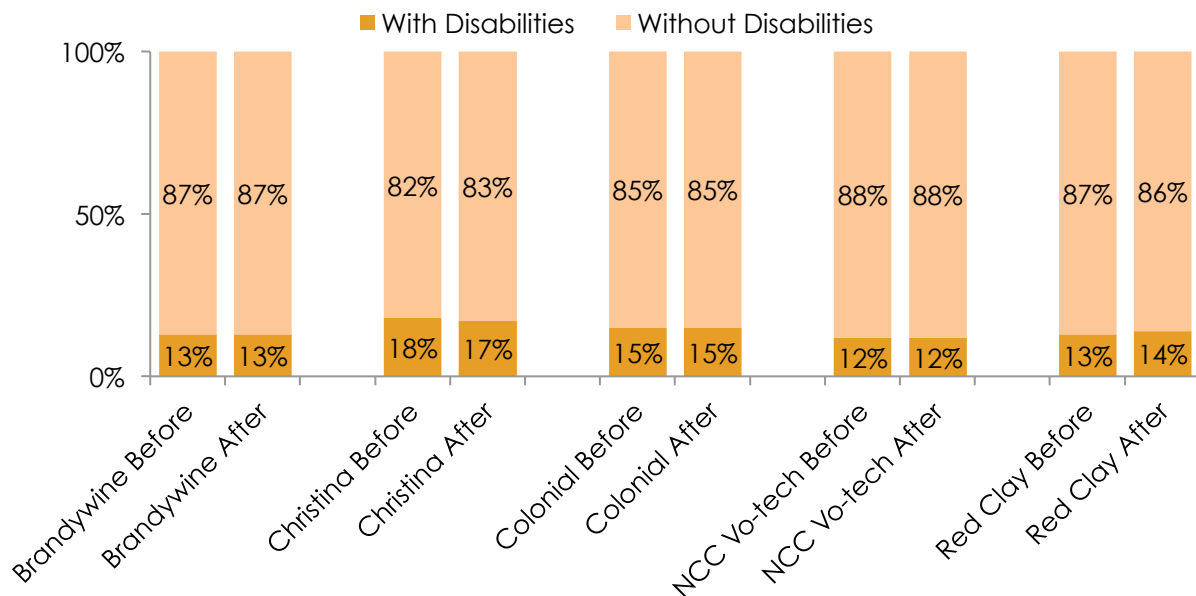
Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Set, 2014–15 School Year.  
Note: Excludes Red Clay-authorized charter schools.

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



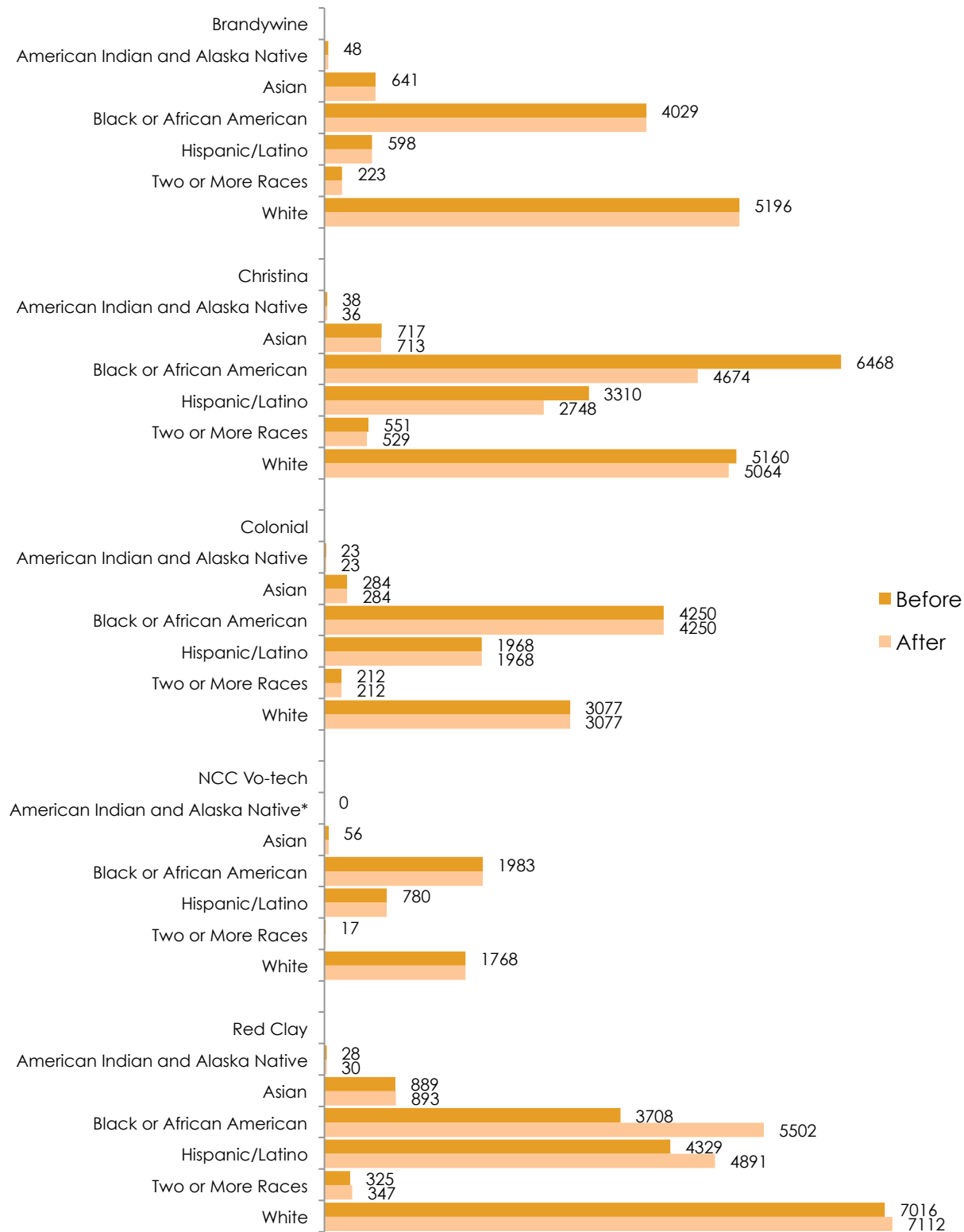
Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Set, 2014–15 School Year.  
Note: Excludes Red Clay-authorized charter schools.

**Figure 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**



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.

**Table 13: Race Breakdown, Before and After Redistricting**

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

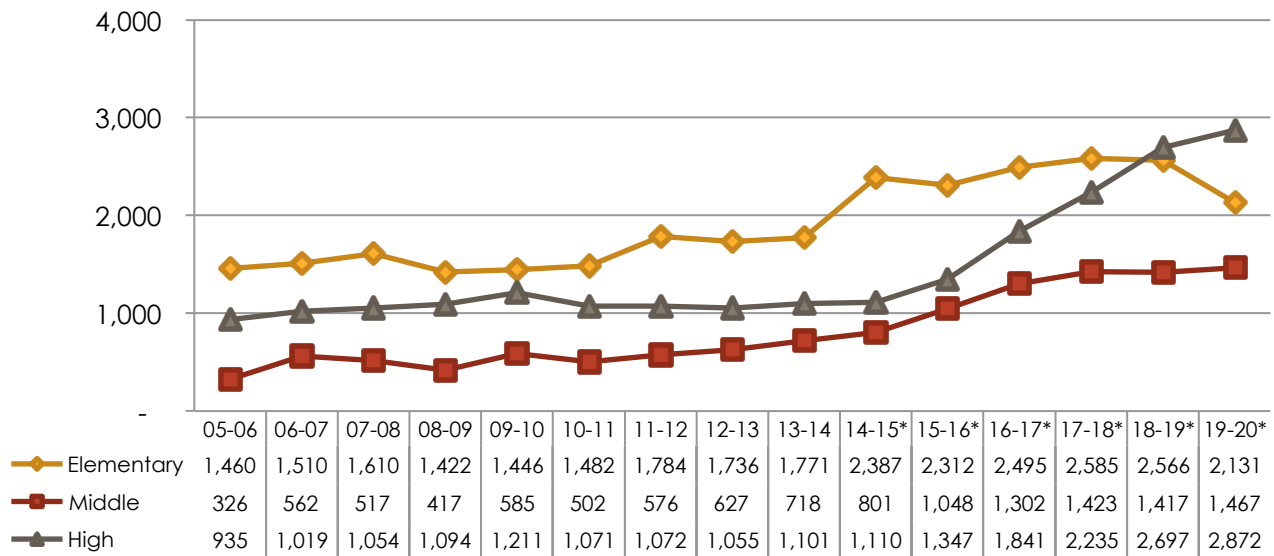
Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Set, 2014–15 School Year.

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

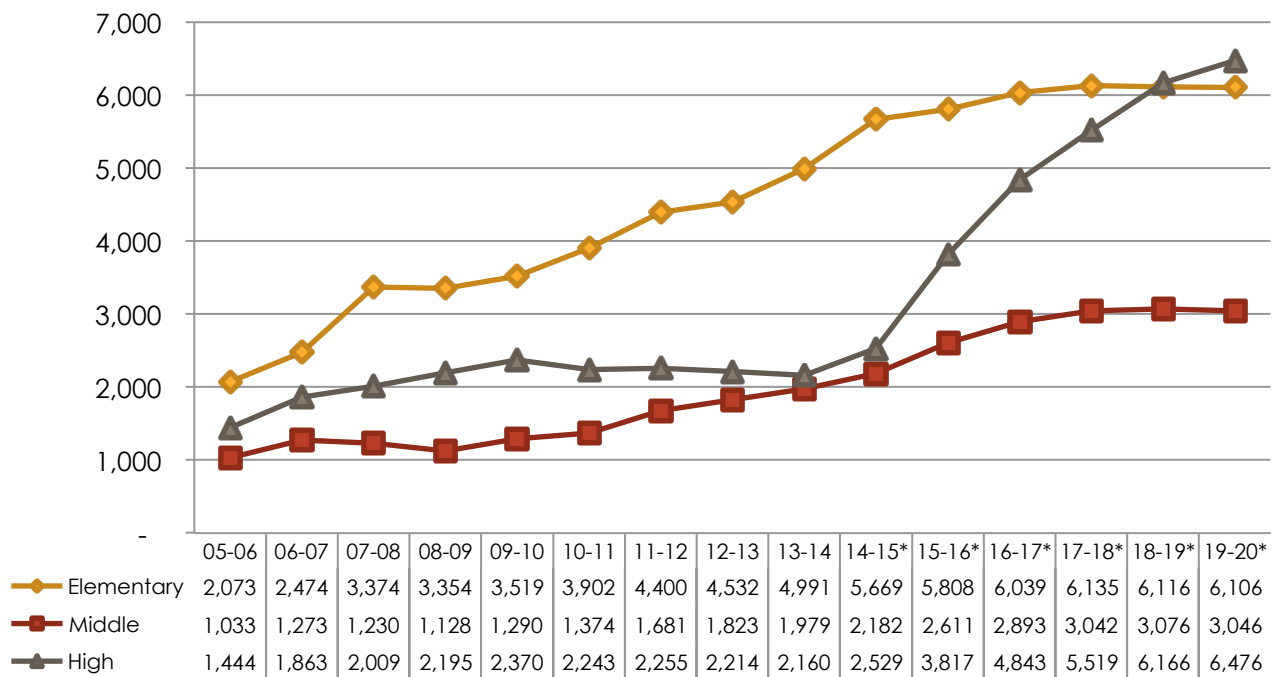
In the past decade, charter schools in the City of Wilmington and New Castle County have proliferated, with charter enrollment increasing dramatically. The figures below show actual charter enrollment through the 2014–15 school year and projected enrollment through the 2019–20 school year for charter 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.

**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**

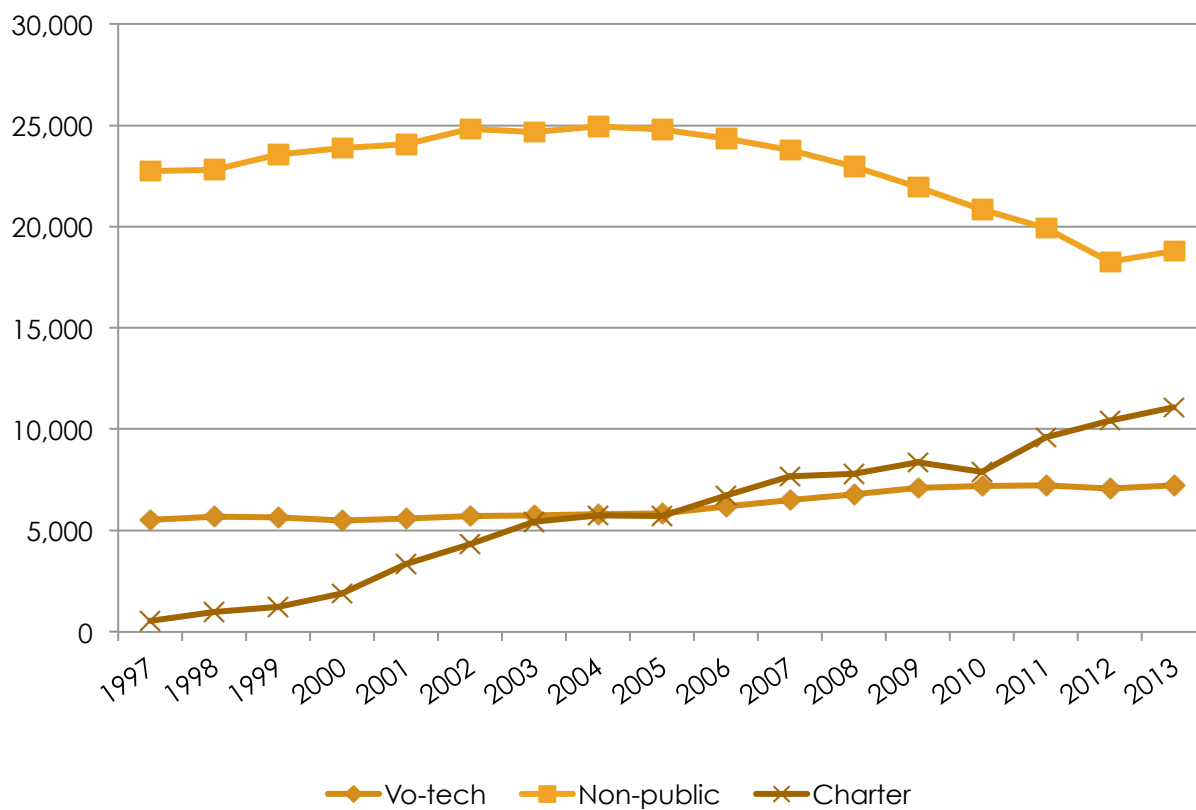


Notes: (1) Analysis follows approved modifications (2) Projections for new charters and modifications assume enrollment at capacity as indicated. (3) Existing schools without a modification are assumed static. (4) \*Projected Figure  
Source: University of Delaware's Institute for Public Administration,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



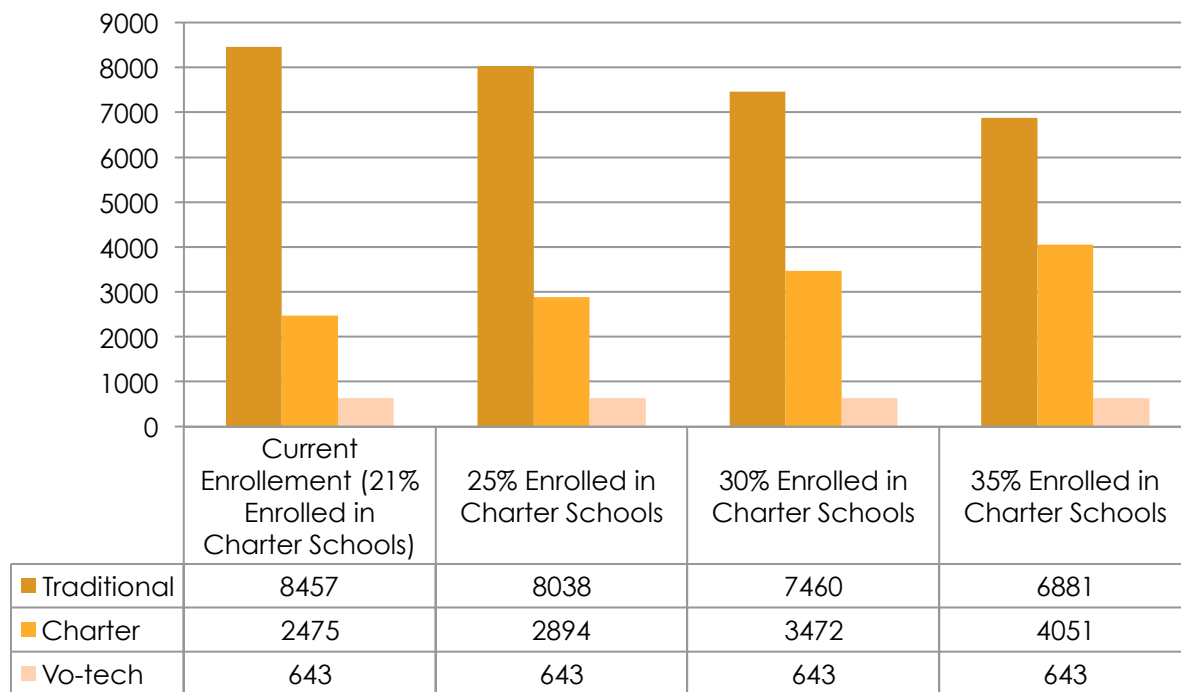
Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Set, 2014–15 School Year.

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.

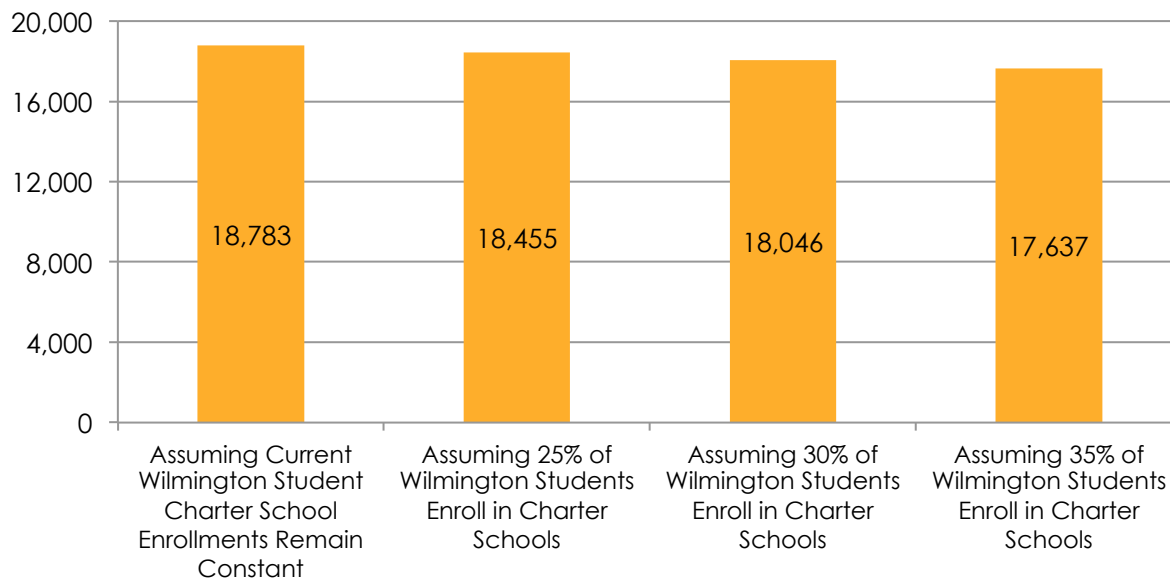
**Figure 35: Illustration of the Potential Effect of Charter Enrollment Increases on Wilmington Student Enrollments**



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

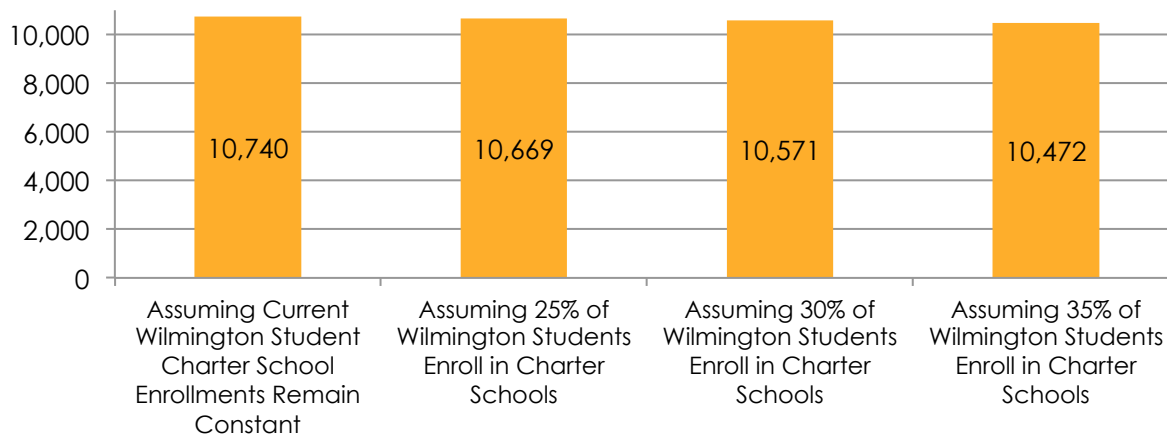
The following illustration of Red Clay Consolidated School District enrollment after redistricting assumes that the increases in charter enrollment apply to students transferring from Christina and Colonial School Districts and also to students already in the Red Clay Consolidated School District.

**Figure 36: Illustration of Red Clay Enrollment under Increasing Percentages of Students in Wilmington Charters<sup>28</sup>**



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

**Figure 37: Illustration of Brandywine Enrollment under Increasing Percentages of Students in Wilmington Charters<sup>29</sup>**



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

<sup>28</sup> 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.

<sup>29</sup> 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.

## 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 students<sup>30</sup>) 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.<sup>31</sup>

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 a weighted student funding system designed to provide enhanced resources for low-income students and schools in which they are concentrated.<sup>32</sup> 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).

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<sup>30</sup> Wilmington Neighborhood Schools Committee. (2001, January 01). They matter most: Investing in Wilmington's children and Delaware's future.

<sup>31</sup> Wilmington Neighborhood Schools Committee. (2001, January 01). They matter most: Investing in Wilmington's children and Delaware's future.

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

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.<sup>33</sup> 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

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

percent today, with a significant portion of that increase in the City of Wilmington.<sup>34</sup> 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.<sup>35</sup> 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.<sup>36</sup> 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 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.

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<sup>34</sup> 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](http://www.delawarestars.udel.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/Monthly-Data-Report-September-2014.pdf)

<sup>35</sup> [www.doverpost.com/article/20151202/NEWS/151209968](http://www.doverpost.com/article/20151202/NEWS/151209968)

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

**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 *Strengthening Wilmington Education: An Action Agenda***

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. 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.
4. 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.
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

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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

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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 Commission, 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

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**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.<sup>37</sup>

**Resources Required to Support Students with Disabilities:** Currently, all states provide some form of additional funding to districts to serve students with disabilities.<sup>38</sup> 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 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.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> 14 Del. Code § 1716

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

<sup>39</sup> House Bill 30, 148<sup>th</sup> 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)

**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**

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**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.

## Enhancements to the Existing Education Finance Structure: Revenue Base

### Central Issues

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**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),<sup>40</sup> 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

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**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

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

report should be modified to begin at the date of adoption, rather than at the date when the 2008 report was written.

**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

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**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.<sup>41</sup> 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,

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

§ 1925(b).<sup>42</sup> 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.

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.

### Action Plan/Designated Responsibilities

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**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.

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<sup>42</sup> 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.



- 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 complications 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

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**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

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**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 participation 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

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#### **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.

## 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

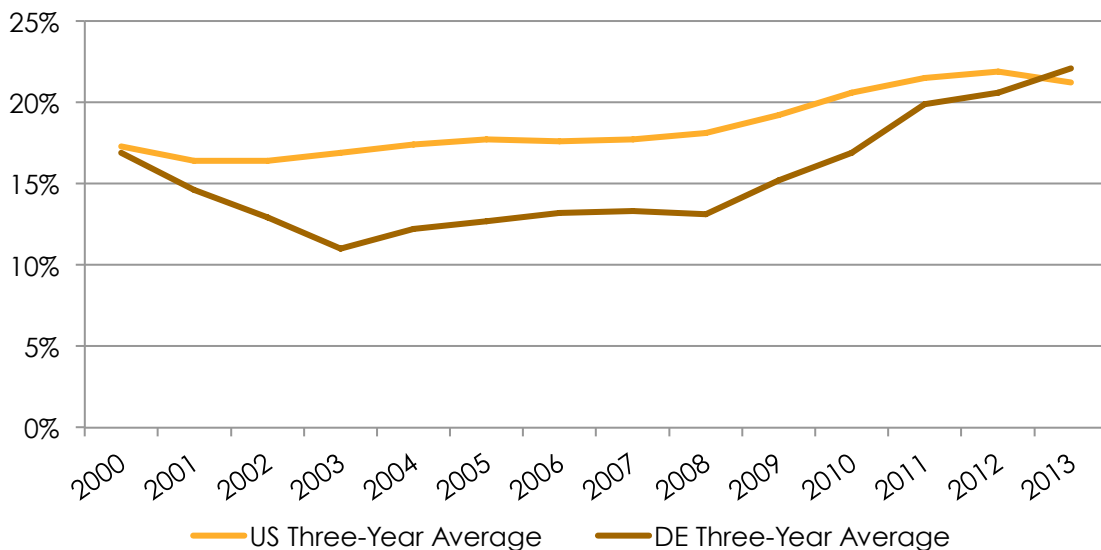
development that are specifically focused on supporting the Commission's plan by providing support for achieving improved educational outcomes for City of Wilmington students.

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).

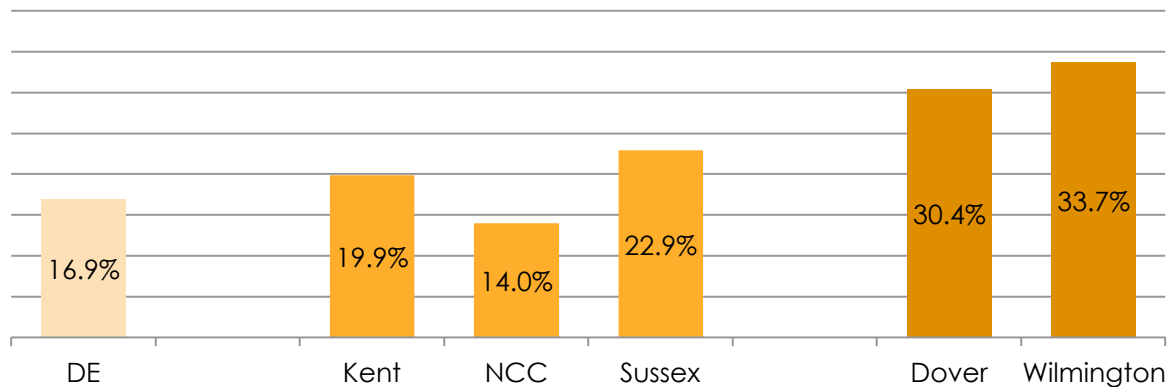
**Figure 38: State of Delaware Children in Poverty, 2000–2013**



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

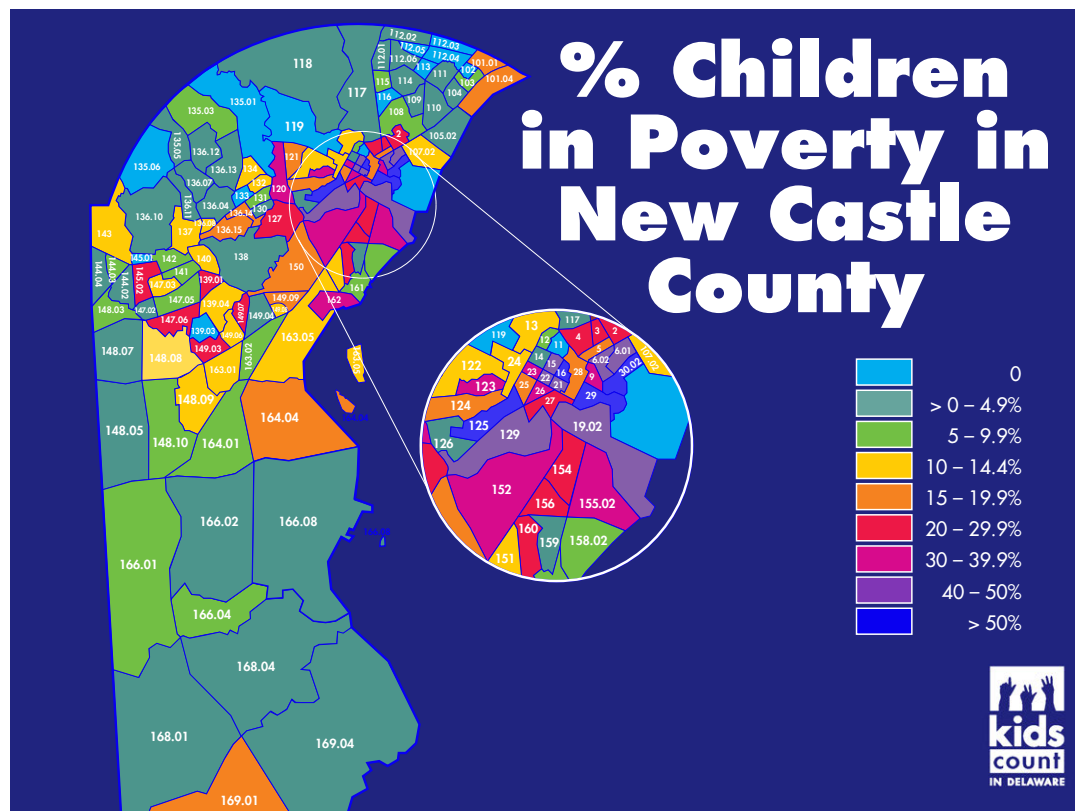


**Figure 39: Delaware Child Poverty by County and Place, Five-Year Average, 2008–2012**



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.<sup>43</sup>

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

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, representing 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

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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.<sup>44</sup> As proposed in the *Strengthening Wilmington Education: An Action Agenda*, a key step will be the development of a citywide partnership that includes all

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<sup>44</sup> *Sustaining Early Success: Delaware's Strategic Plan for a Comprehensive Early Childhood System*, Dover, DE: Delaware Early Childhood Council, 2013, p. 2.

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**

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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**



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**

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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)**

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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**

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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**

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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 experiential 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**

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*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**

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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**

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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 agency 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**

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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 improvement 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**

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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.<sup>45</sup> 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.

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<sup>45</sup> Percentage attending charters who reside within the district.

## Parent, Educator, and Community Engagement

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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 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.

## **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

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- 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

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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 Therapeutic 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**

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Christina and Red Clay Consolidated School Districts have identified several 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

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- 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**

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- 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**

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- 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

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- 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

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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

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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

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- 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

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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

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### **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

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- 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

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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

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- 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

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- 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

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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

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- 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”<sup>46</sup> 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.”<sup>47</sup>

The opportunities for choice are greatest for Wilmington students and 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.<sup>48</sup> 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

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**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.

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<sup>46</sup> Delaware State Code Title 14, Chapter 4, §401

<sup>47</sup> Delaware State Code Title 14, Chapter 5, §501

<sup>48</sup> 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](http://www.aclu.org/legal-document/aclu-challenges-delawares-segregated-charter-schools-complaint?redirect=racial-justice/aclu-challenges-delawares-segregated-charter-schools-complaint)

**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

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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 higher-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 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.

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

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

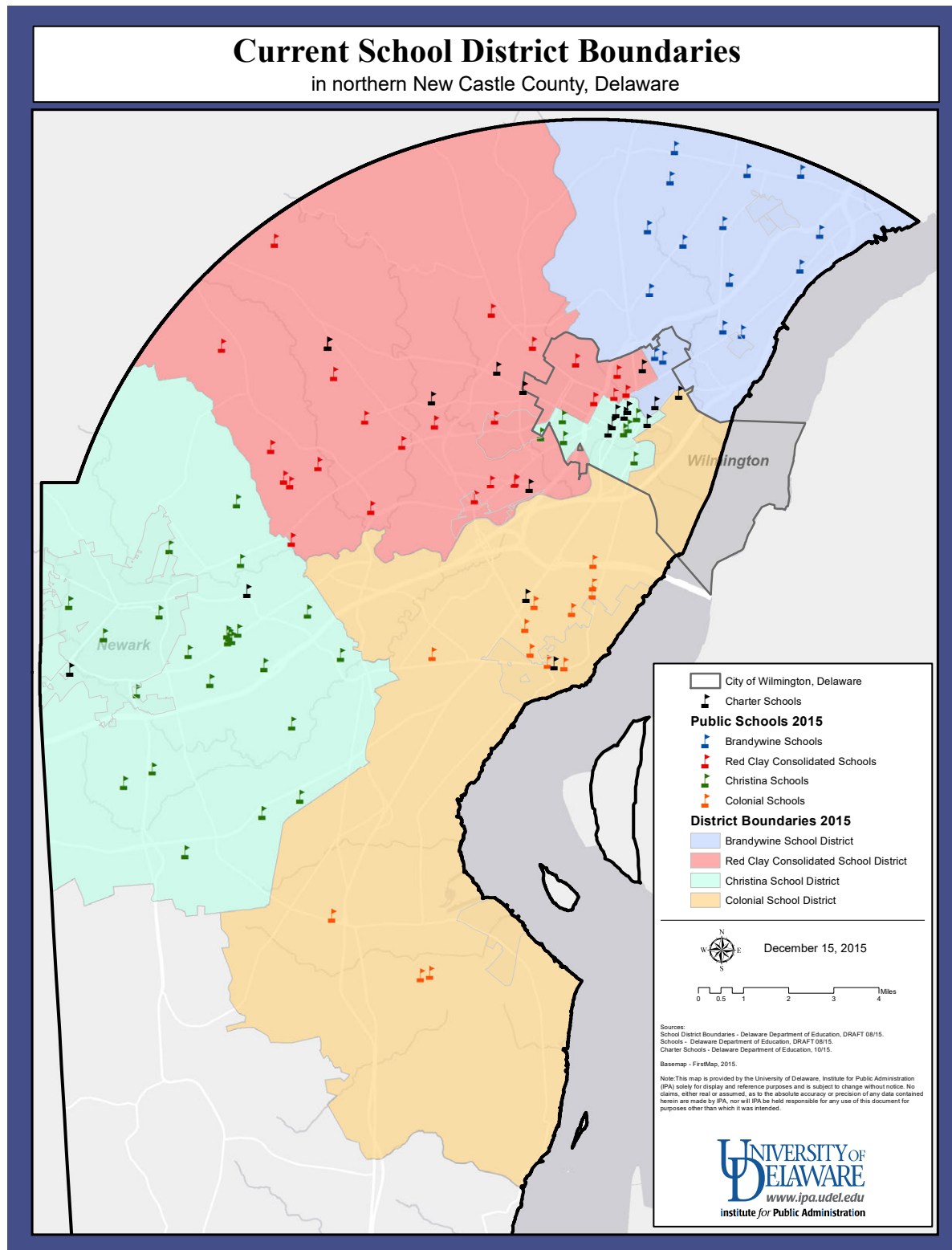


relies on the Geographic Information Systems (GIS) maps, not the written boundaries, for determining the borders of their districts. The boundaries in this report are based on current boundaries and not intended to address any current disputes.

### **Current School District Boundaries for Confirmation**

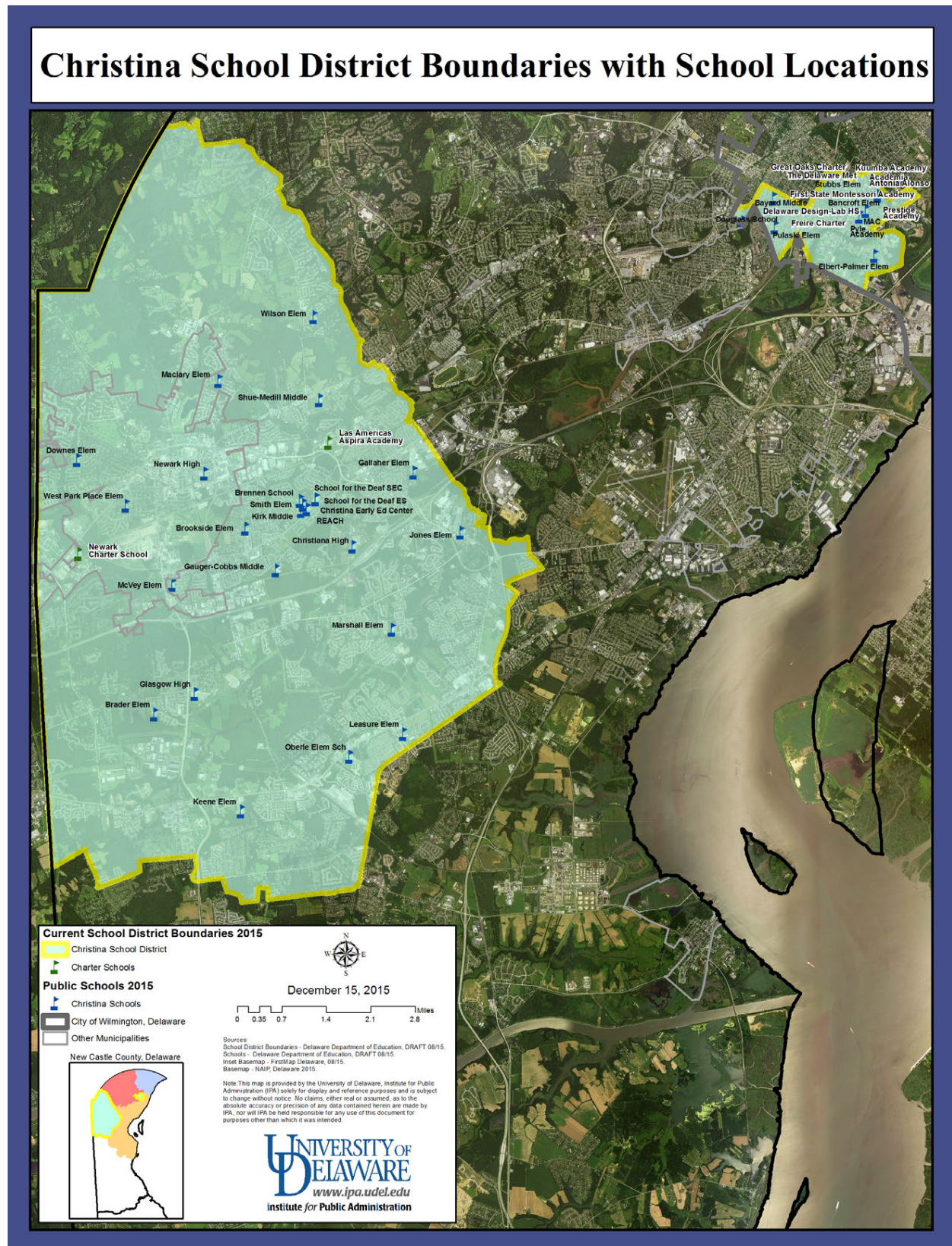
The following section provides maps and written district boundaries for the Brandywine, Christina, Colonial, and Red Clay Consolidated School Districts, the four districts affected by Part III of this report. Figure 42 provides a representation of the current boundaries.

**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.;

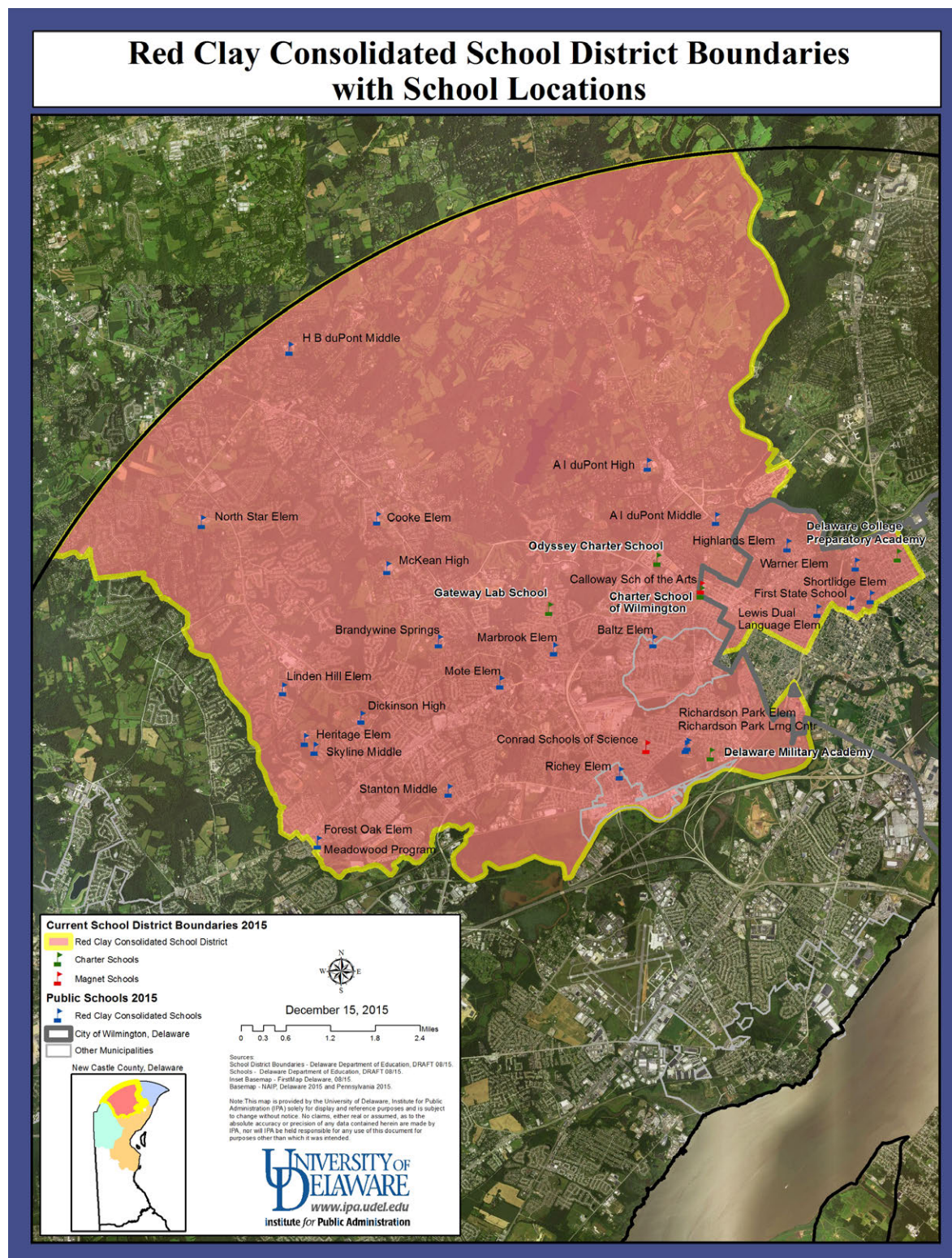
Then west following the centerline of Frenchtown Rd. to the Delaware-Maryland Border.

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;

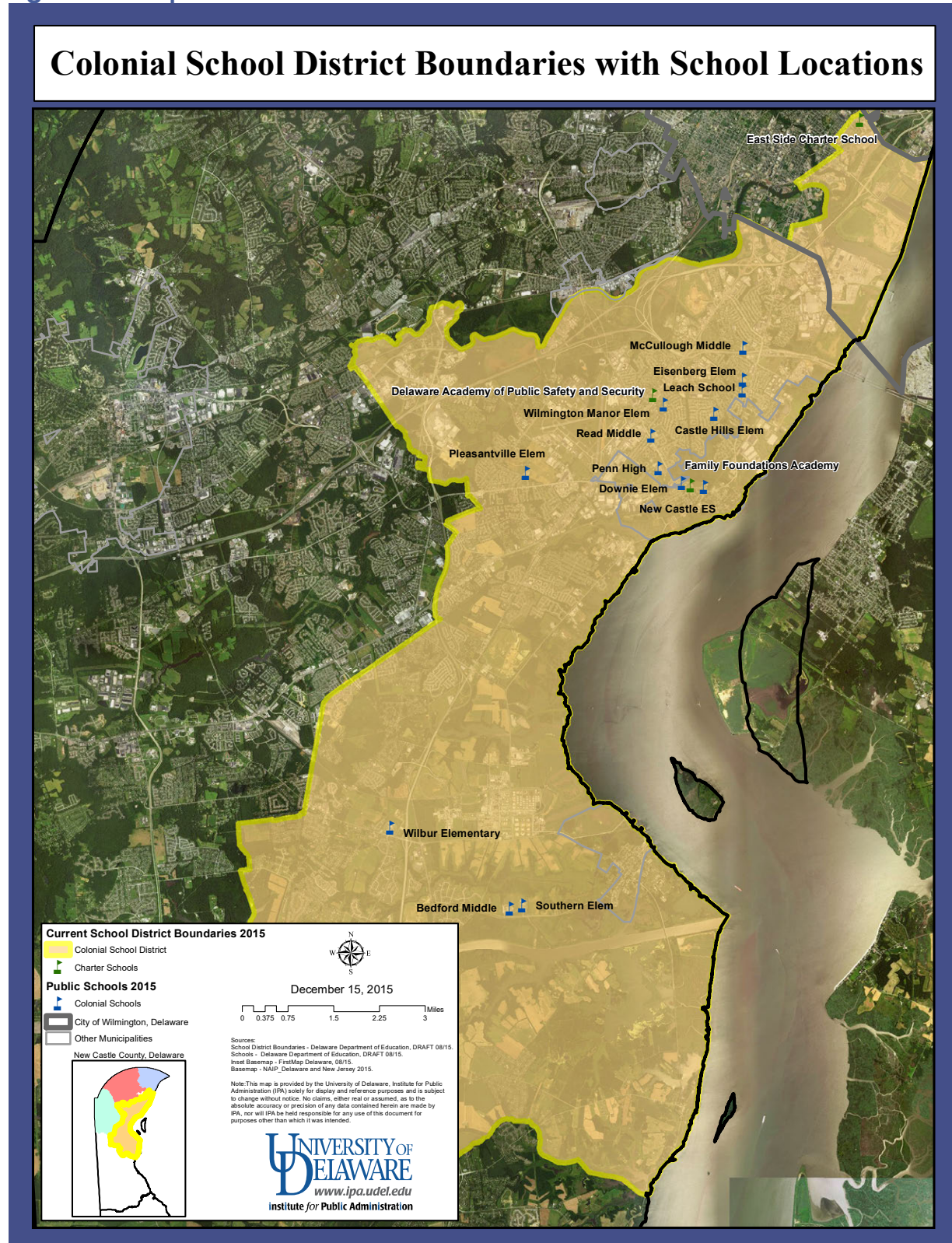
Then west along the southern boundary of the Merestone Subdivision to the Delaware-Pennsylvania border.

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 Locations



## 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;

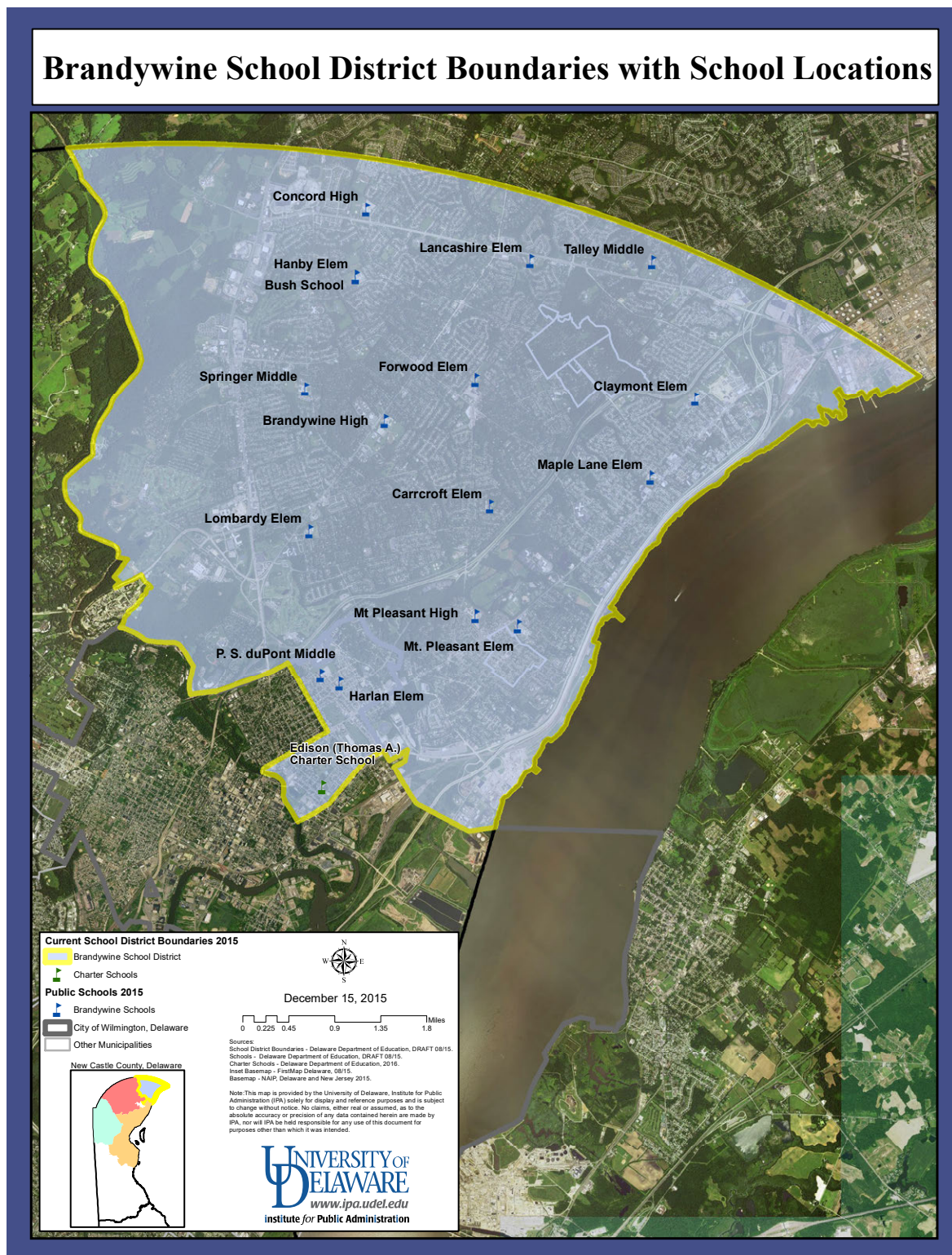
Then southeast by a line approximately 100 feet to the intersection of Route 13 and Augustine Creek;

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.

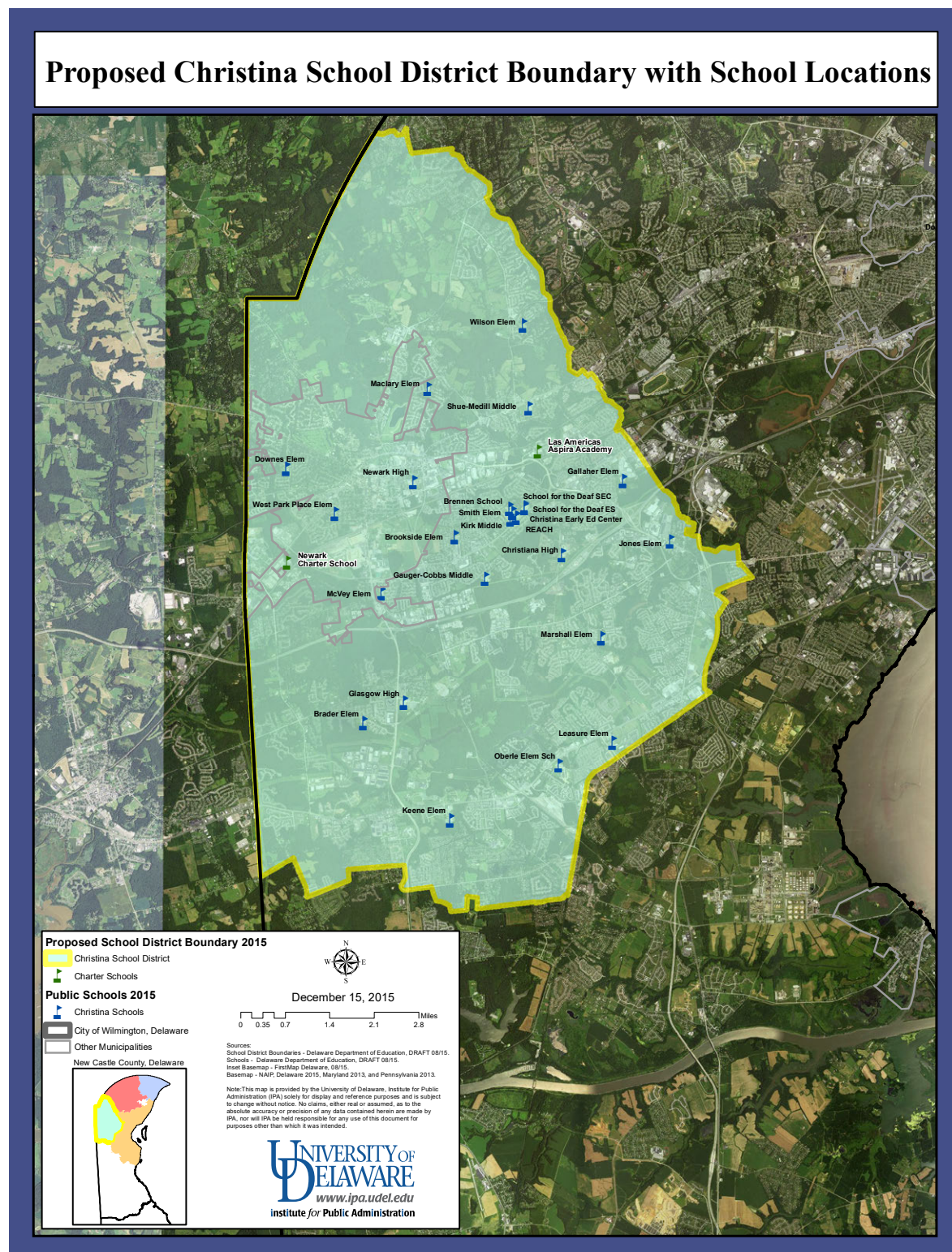
## **Proposed New District Boundaries for Confirmation**

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 ~~strike through~~. 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 15<sup>th</sup> St.;~~

~~Then west following the centerline of Market St. to its intersection with 14<sup>th</sup> St.;~~

~~Then northwest by a line to the intersection of 14<sup>th</sup> St. and Orange St.;~~

~~Then southwest following the centerline of Orange St. to its intersection with 13<sup>th</sup> St.;~~

~~Then northwest following the centerline of 13<sup>th</sup> St. to its intersection with Chippey St.;~~

~~Then southwest following the centerline of Chippey St. to its intersection with 12<sup>th</sup> St.;~~

~~Then northwest following the centerline of 12<sup>th</sup> 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);

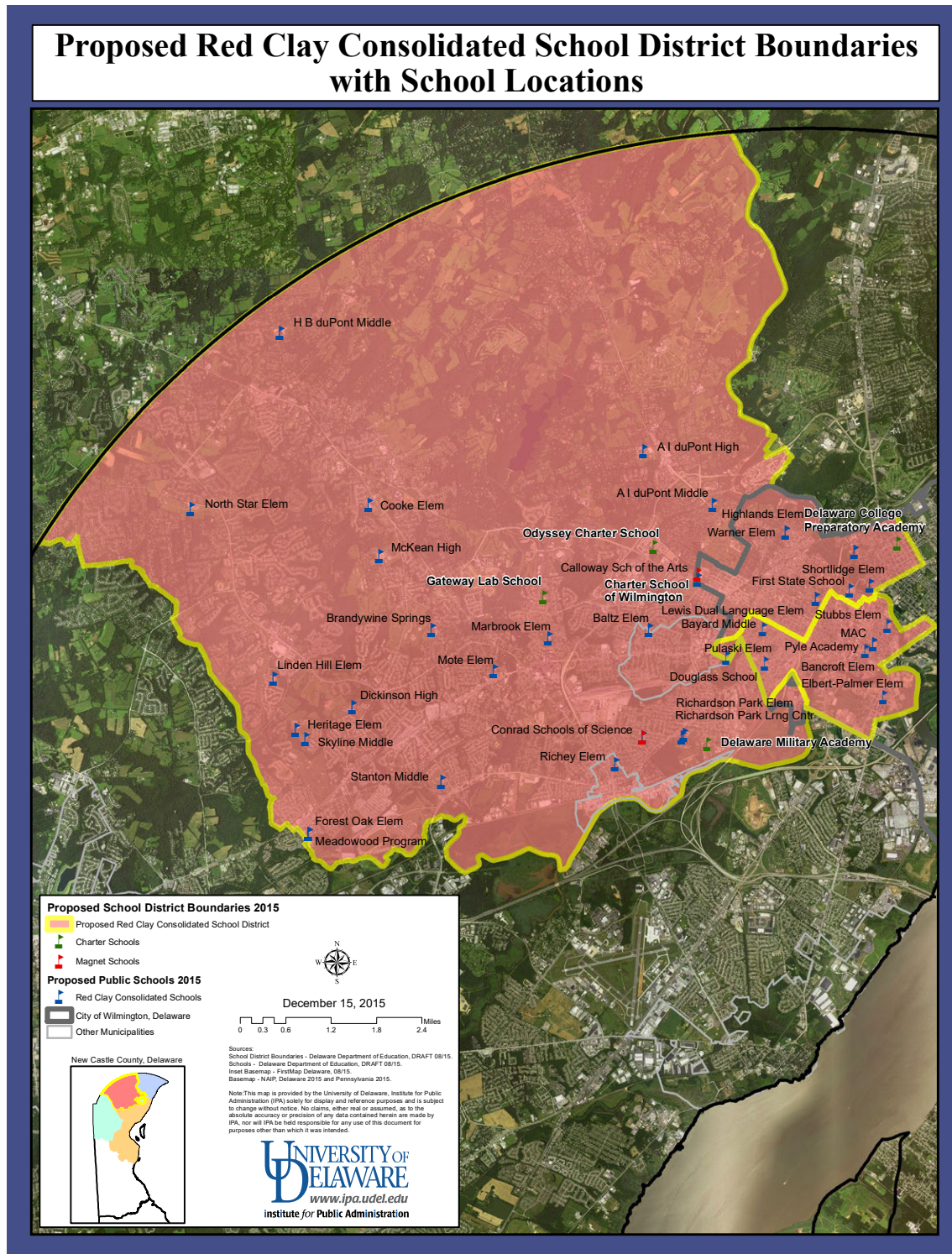
Then north following the centerline of Frazer Rd. to its intersection with Frenchtown Rd.;

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 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.**

### ~~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

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### 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 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.

### **Proposed Brandywine School District Boundary Changes**

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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.

## Part IX: Milestones and Measures of Success

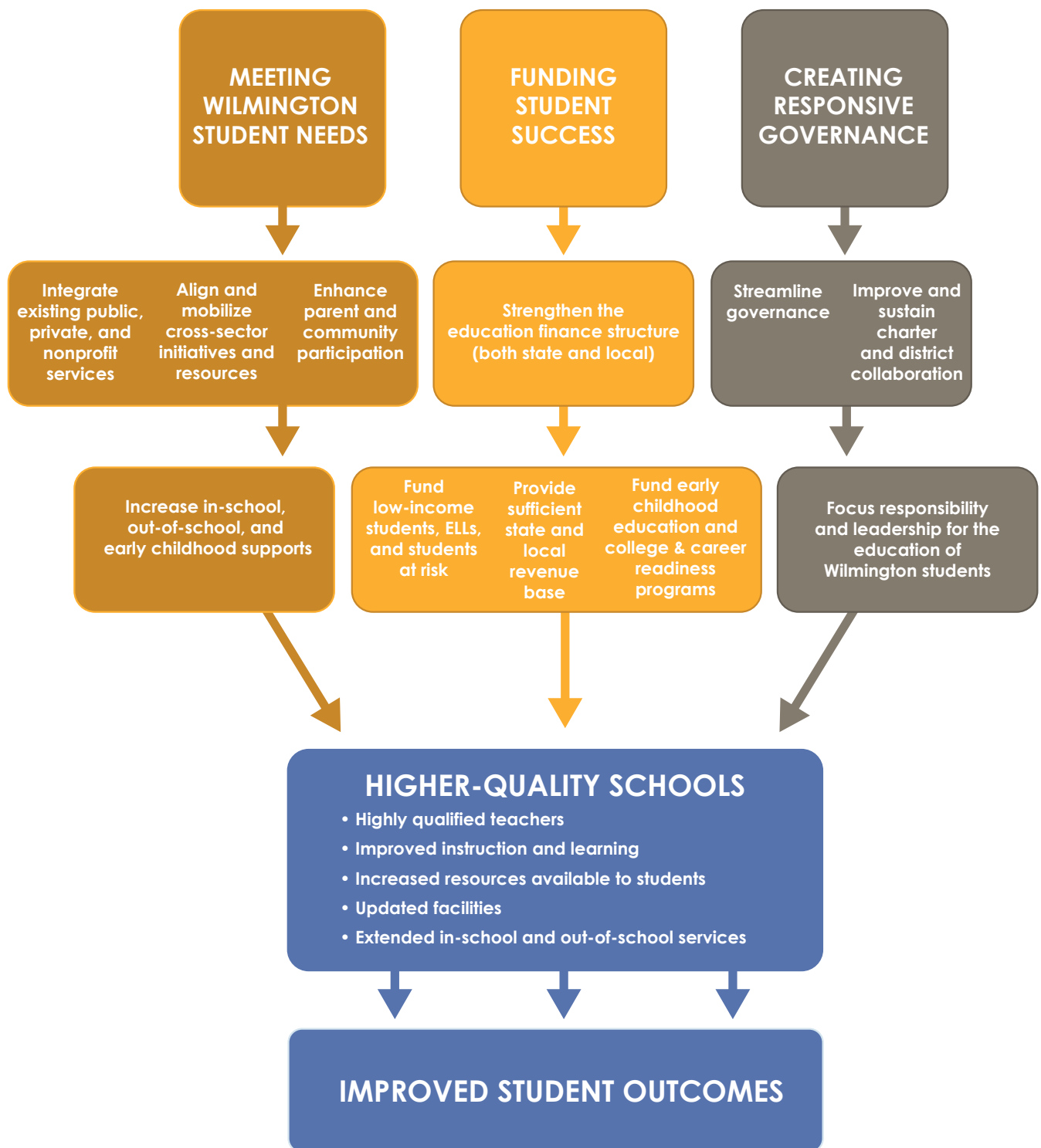
The Commission will submit to the State Board an annual evaluation of progress in achieving milestones and in improving success for City of Wilmington students. This evaluation also will be part of the annual report that the Commission is mandated to provide to the Governor and the General Assembly. 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**

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#### **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**

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### **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**

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#### **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**

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#### **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**

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#### **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

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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**

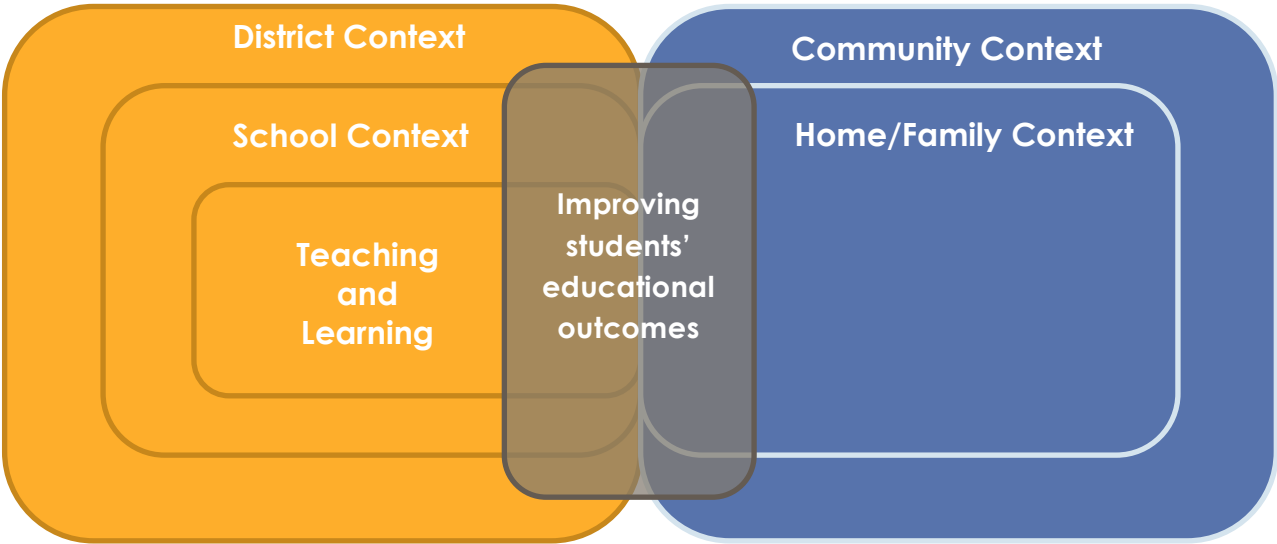


Table 15 below builds on this framework to identify initial measures of progress for the multiple contexts of student success. These measures will be refined as the process of implementation and evaluation moves forward.

**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"> <li>• Community and parent surveys.</li> <li>• Measures of student mobility within and between schools.</li> <li>• Counts and evaluations of school-community partnerships.</li> <li>• Improved school culture/climate as indicated by established survey measures.</li> </ul>   |
| Improved Quality of School Context   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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).</li> <li>• Recruitment and retention of high-quality teachers and leaders in urban schools.</li> <li>• Reducing the resource gap between urban and suburban schools.</li> </ul>   |
| Improved Instruction and Learning  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher and student surveys.</li> <li>• Delaware Comprehensive Success Review.</li> <li>• Observational measure of instructional quality.</li> </ul>   |
| Improved Student Outcomes  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher developmental assessments beginning in early childhood.</li> <li>• Early learning survey.</li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• Increased attendance and persistence of City of Wilmington students and low-income students, English language learners, and students at risk statewide.</li> <li>• Reduced disciplinary incidents of City of Wilmington students and low-income students, English language learners, and students at risk statewide.</li> <li>• Increased graduation rates of City of Wilmington students and low-income students, English language learners, and students at risk statewide.</li> <li>• Increased college and workforce readiness of City of Wilmington students and low-income students, English language learners, and students at risk statewide.</li> <li>• Reduced incarceration rates of City of Wilmington children and low-income children, English language learners, and children at risk statewide.</li> <li>• Improved rate of successful employment for at-risk individuals.</li> </ul> |

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**

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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.

**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 |            |
| 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%       |

**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 |            |
| 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%       |

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 18: Performance of Students By District**

|                              | Colonial | Brandywine | Christina | Red Clay | State Average |
|------------------------------|----------|------------|-----------|----------|---------------|
| <b>Enrollment</b>            | 9,825    | 10,700     | 16,255    | 18,046   | n/a           |
| <b>Suspension</b>            | 19%      | 13%        | 15%       | 11%      | 12.00%        |
| <b>Passing AP Exam</b>       | 22.40%   | 46.50%     | 37.80%    | 68.40%   | 49.10%        |
| <b>Drop-Out Rate</b>         | 4%       | 2.60%      | 3.40%     | 2%       | 2.10%         |
| <b>College Readiness</b>     | 6.60%    | 25.00%     | 13.60%    | 40.90%   | 19.30%        |
| <b>SAT Composite Average</b> | 1,162    | 1,364      | 1,242     | 1,452    | 1,305         |
| <b>Graduation Rates</b>      |          |            |           |          |               |
| <b>Overall</b>               | 80.80%   | 84.60%     | 74.50%    | 90.30%   | 87.00%        |
| <b>Low-Income</b>            | 76.70%   | 74.20%     | 71.90%    | 81.00%   | 77.80%        |
| <b>African American</b>      | 83.70%   | 81.80%     | 71.30%    | 83.40%   | 80.10%        |

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.



## **List of Appendices**

Appendix A: WEAC 2015 Legislative Priorities

Appendix B: Christina School District Interim Framework for Planning for the Implementation of the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission Recommendations

Appendix C: Red Clay Consolidated School District Interim Framework for the Implementation of the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission Recommendations

Appendix D: Resources for Funding Student Success

Appendix E: Research Support Documents

Appendix F: Commission, Committee, and Community Outreach Meeting List

Appendix G: Public Transmittal

Appendix H: Actions by School Districts and Responses

Appendix I: Community and Institutional Responses to the Interim Plan

Appendix J: Formal Public Record