



Redding Consortium for Educational Equity

ANNUAL REPORT

July 1, 2021 through
June 30, 2022

Prepared by
Institute for Public Administration
University of Delaware

In Partnership with
Delaware State University



UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE
BIDEN SCHOOL OF PUBLIC
POLICY & ADMINISTRATION

**DelawareState
University**

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Prepared by the
Institute for Public Administration
Joseph R. Biden, Jr. School of Public Policy & Administration
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Preface and Acknowledgements

The Redding Consortium for Educational Equity (Redding Consortium) was created in 2019 to recommend policies and practices to the Governor and General Assembly that will achieve educational equity and improve educational outcomes for all Pre-K–12 students in the City of Wilmington and northern New Castle County, Delaware.

The Redding Consortium for Educational Equity is the sixth group, since 2001, charged with addressing equity and governance issues for Wilmington and northern New Castle County, Delaware school systems through state-level policymaking. With your support, a course will be charted toward sustainable solutions for our students—and we will be the last.

While there are numerous valued contributors, a special thanks goes to:

- **Governor John Carney** for his willingness to continue the fight for all students in Delaware.
- **Secretary of Education Mark Holodick** for his commitment to Delaware students.
- **Former Secretary of Education Susan Bunting** for her lifetime commitment to student success.
- **The Delaware General Assembly** for their leadership and support of the pursuit for educational equity.
- **All members of the Redding Consortium and its Work Groups** for their commitment and dedication to improving the Delaware education system so that it benefits all students.
- **The faculty, staff, and graduate and undergraduate students** of the Institute for Public Administration at the University of Delaware and Delaware State University for providing outstanding support to the operations and research of the Redding Consortium.

Without you, this work would not be possible.

Senator S. Elizabeth ‘Tizzy’ Lockman & Matthew Denn
Co-Chairs, Redding Consortium for Educational Equity

Executive Summary

The Redding Consortium for Educational Equity (Redding Consortium) was created in 2019 to recommend policies and practices to the Governor and General Assembly that will achieve educational equity and improve educational outcomes for all Pre-K–12 students in the City of Wilmington and northern New Castle County, Delaware.

During its third year of operation, the Redding Consortium continued to focus on priority areas and mandates from the first year of operations and made exciting new accomplishments. The Redding Consortium continued to use its definition for educational equity and focused on stakeholder engagement, research, and data. There were three active Work Groups for Fiscal Year 2022 (FY22):

- Educators
- Settlement
- Social Determinants

The Funding and Governance Work Group paused work for this fiscal year to regroup and determine the best strategy for approaching governance change in Wilmington and New Castle County.

The focus this year for the Educators and Social Determinants Work Groups was to ensure the recommendations released in December 2020 and funded in FY22 moved from recommendation to implementation. The Redding Work Groups ensured that money allocated for Redding Consortium activities was used as intended—to help Wilmington and New Castle County families. The Settlement Work Group, formed in December 2020 to lead the Redding Consortium’s response to the education equity lawsuit settlement between the Delawareans for Educational Opportunity and the NAACP Delaware State Conference and the State, continued to monitor pieces of the settlement. The Settlement Work Group made recommendations for how to implement the settlement requirements with fidelity.

The Redding Consortium also made a concerted effort to be transparent and have two-way communication with the community. The Redding Consortium continued to build its Facebook presence, posted all meetings on YouTube, and used its website to share the consortium’s publications, meeting notices, and agendas. The Redding Consortium also published reports and one-pagers related to the educational outcomes for students across the state. For a list of publications, please visit: <https://www.solutionsfordelawareschools.com/resources-2/>.

In the FY23 proposed budget, there are \$10.2 million in funds for the Redding Consortium. These funds will help to continue initiatives for pre-K programs and wraparound services for high-needs schools in Wilmington. In speaking with the community, they are thrilled about this funding and are eager to see it continue so childcare centers, schools, community centers, and facilities can sustain these programs long term.

Creation and Mandate

The Redding Consortium for Educational Equity (Redding Consortium) was created to recommend policies and practices to the Governor and General Assembly that will achieve educational equity and improve educational outcomes for all Pre-K–12 students in the City of Wilmington and northern New Castle County, Delaware.

Two pieces of legislation from the 2019–2020 legislative session created the Redding Consortium Senate Bill 148 and House Bill 222 (HB222). Senate Bill 148 created the Redding Consortium, establishes its mandates, and specifies membership and staffing requirements. HB222 allowed the State Board of Education to change or alter boundaries of reorganized school districts based upon redistricting recommendations from the Redding Consortium. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the timeline in HB222 is no longer effective.

House Bill 436 (HB436) passed in June 2022 and extends the dates in which the governance recommendation and plan of the Redding Consortium must be reviewed and acted upon by the State Board of Education. The Consortium’s recommendation and plan must be reviewed and acted upon by the State Board of Education on or after July 1, 2023, and no later than October 1, 2023, to take effect on or after January 1, 2025, and no later than July 1, 2026.

Research and Engagement Framework

The Redding Consortium is a body that is committed to making decisions informed by community stakeholder engagement, data, and research. To achieve its goals and fulfill its mandate, the Redding Consortium convenes education and community stakeholders and examines local data and rigorous research to inform the creation of policy recommendations and local and state policy proposals.

Redding Consortium Operations

The Redding Consortium met six times between July 2021 and June 2022. The agendas and minutes for each of these meetings can be found in the [meeting materials](#) section of the Redding Consortium's website, www.solutionsfordelawareschools.com. All Redding Consortium and work group meetings have been open to the public, materials are available on the website, and the recordings are available on the Redding Consortium for Educational Equity [YouTube page](#). The [Consortium members](#) and [Work Group members](#) are listed on the website and on pages 11–13 of this report.

The Redding Consortium's continuing focus was to enact the recommendations and track legislation in the following areas:

1. Educator Recruitment, Retention, and Allocation
2. Social Determinants of Health and Education
3. Delaware Education Equity Lawsuit Settlement

Legislative Update

In the FY23 budget, there is \$12.8 million in funds for the Redding Consortium with \$10.2 million in the operating budget. These funds will help to continue initiatives for pre-K programs and wraparound services for high-needs schools in Wilmington. In speaking with the community, they are thrilled about this funding and are eager to see it continue so childcare centers, schools, community centers, and facilities sustain these programs long term.

In FY22, through Redding Consortium recommendations and a partnership with the Delaware Department of Education (DDOE), the Redding Consortium helped provide funding and services to high-needs childcare centers, schools, community centers, and facilities in Wilmington. Listed below are the impacted organizations:

In 2022, the Redding Consortium helped provide full-day pre-school at:

- Kingswood Community Center
- Latin American Community Center
- A Leap of Faith Child Development Center
- St. Michael's School and Nursery

In 2022, the Redding Consortium helped provide wraparound services to:

- The Bancroft School
- The Bayard School
- Kuumba Academy Charter School



Redding Consortium Work Groups

Between July 2021 and June 2022, there were three active Work Groups: Educators, Settlement, and Social Determinants of Health and Education. The Educators and Social Determinants Work Groups released recommendations in December 2020. The focus of FY22 was to ensure these recommendations turned into reality and were implemented with fidelity. The Settlement Work Group was formed between December 2020 and January 2021 to ensure the Redding Consortium responded diligently to the education equity lawsuit settlement between the State and the Delawareans for Educational Opportunity and NAACP Delaware State Conference. In FY22, the Settlement Work Group focused on monitoring items created or implemented as a result of the settlement and making recommendations for change or improvement for those items—ensuring that equity is at the forefront of decision-making.

Educator Work Group

The Educator Work Group started in December 2019. In 2021, the Educator Work Group recommendations were funded, and FY22 focused on ensuring the recommendations came to fruition. The Educator Work Group did not formally meet during this time, but Work Group Co-chairs, Noelle Picara and Michael Smith, worked diligently with Redding Consortium staff and leadership and DDOE leadership on implementation. The work focused on ensuring that roll out of the recommendations aligned with the best practice research conducted by the Educator Work Group and that implementation steps focused on equity and the specific needs of students, families, and educators in Wilmington. The Educator recommendations from December 2020 are available on the Redding Consortium website [here](#). A summary of the funded recommendations is listed below:

- The Redding Consortium recommends that the State create a whole school professional learning package in five high-need schools within the City of Wilmington.
- The Redding Consortium recommends that the State begin the process of expanding its Teacher Academy programs conducted with institutes of higher education, in order to create a stronger and more sustainable pipeline of teachers to high-need schools. This would be the first step in the type of “Grow Our Own” program that has been recommended to improve the quality of Delaware’s pipeline of new teachers. In FY22, the Redding Consortium recommends providing \$100,000 to better advertise teacher academy programs, particularly for critical shortage area candidates, and up to \$4,000 per person in scholarship funds to allow related education professionals, community members, parents, and others representative of the school population to participate in these programs.

While these recommendations do not address all educator recruitment and retention issues, the Work Group believes they are a positive starting point that will help address some of the systemic issues related to the recruitment, retention, and equitable allocation of critical-shortage-area educators. In the FY23 budget, there is \$12.8 million for the Redding Consortium to continue this important work.

Social Determinants of Health and Education Work Group

The Social Determinants of Health and Education Work Group started in the Summer of 2020 and met eight times between July 2021 and June 2022. This work group was charged with identifying the challenges that disadvantaged students face both in and outside of school that impact their education. In 2021, the Social Determinants Work Group recommendations were funded, and FY22 focused on ensuring the recommendations came to fruition.

A summary of the funded recommendations is listed below:

- The Redding Consortium recommends that the State expand intensive home visitation programs targeted at mothers, infants, and toddlers living below the poverty line in the City of Wilmington, in order to ensure that those children are receiving the highest level of care with respect to developmental milestones, health, and early learning.
- The Redding Consortium recommends that the State provide adequate funding to DDOE so that it can require and enforce developmental screening requirements for state-licensed child care facilities.
- The Redding Consortium recommends that the State ensure free, high-quality full-day Pre-K services for three- and four-year-old children in areas having the state's highest concentrations of poverty.
- The Redding Consortium recommends that the State implement comprehensive wraparound services, including robust before-school, after-school, and summer programming and school-based health centers with mental health resources, at between two and ten of its schools serving student populations with the highest levels of poverty.
- In order for the State to make thoughtful transformations to address race-related school inequality, the Redding Consortium recommends that the State gather transparent and user friendly disaggregated open-source schooling data, access data, and outcome data. The Redding Consortium also recommends that the State collect primary data, such as interviews and other forms of ethnographic data to capture the larger context and voices of students, parents, other community members and educators. Part of this data collection should result in a designation for historically-segregated educational settings and collection of data related to those settings.

In terms of follow-through, Work Group Co-chairs Raye Jones Avery and Jeffrey Menzer and Redding Consortium Co-chairs worked diligently with DDOE, community groups, and childcare providers to accomplish two of the recommendations listed above: provide free, high-quality full-day Pre-K services to areas having the state's highest concentrations of poverty and help facilities provide comprehensive wraparound services, including robust before-school, after-school, and summer programming.

In 2022, the Redding Consortium helped provide full-day pre-school at:

- Kingswood Community Center
- Latin American Community Center
- A Leap of Faith Child Development Center
- St. Michael's School and Nursery

In 2022, the Redding Consortium helped provide wraparound services to:

- The Bancroft School
- The Bayard School
- Kuumba Academy Charter School

In 2021 and 2022, the Social Determinants Work Group also focused on the funded recommendation to create an equity data dashboard. The Work Group invited staff members from DDOE and the Data Service Center (DSC) to provide input on the dashboard. The Work Group held brainstorming sessions to determine potential metrics, audiences, and uses for the dashboard. The Co-chairs and Work Group plan to continue working with DDOE and DSC to build the dashboard and follow through on the promise to help the State address race-related school inequality.

During FY22, the Work Group stayed informed on current legislation and social determinants-related work going on in the state. Delaware legislators presented about critical legislation effecting the education and health of Delaware students and Work Group members presented about critical Social Emotional Learning, trauma-informed, and street data work occurring throughout the state and nation.

The Social Determinants Work Group also voted for the Redding Consortium to consider supporting legislation related to health and education. The bills are listed below:

- HB 129: School-based Health Centers in High-needs Elementary Schools
- HS 1 for HB 144: Funding for Pre-kindergarten Special Education
- HB 300: Mental Health Services in Middle Schools
- HB 301: Mental Health Programs
- HB 303: Annual Behavioral Health Well Check
- HB 317: Medical Coverage Program for All Children in Delaware
- HS 1 for HB 377: Early Childhood Education
- HB 400: Suppression of Explanation of Benefits
- HCR 82: Mental Health Services in Delaware Schools

The Social Determinants Work Group has made major steps toward achieving their goals and ensuring educational equity remains the foundation for all work.

Settlement Work Group

At the end of 2020, the Settlement Work Group was formed in response to the Delaware education funding lawsuit settlement. The purpose of the Work Group is to be a watchdog for how the state and General Assembly implement the actions outlined in the settlement. This group includes stakeholders from institutes of higher education, DDOE, schools and districts, community members,

and parents and is co-chaired by Aaron Bass and Chuck Longfellow. The Work Group met six times during FY22. Meetings focused on monitoring items created or implemented as a result of the settlement (i.e., legislation, programs, requests for proposals, etc.) and making recommendations for change or improvement for those items—ensuring that equity is at the forefront of decision-making.

The Work Group held discussions and pushed forward recommendations related to the following items:

- Recommendations about the Independent Funding Assessment Request for Proposal. These recommendations were shared with DDOE (see Appendix 1, pgs. 14–17).
- Creation of an Educational Equity Settlement [Progress Report](#) that monitored actions related to the settlement and scored them on “implementation” and “alignment” using a rubric. Implementation was measured by asking, “Are the responsible parties meeting their timing benchmarks to implement the settlement’s provisions?” Alignment was measured by asking, “Has the implementation of each settlement provision made meaningful progress towards educational equity?” This progress report aligns with the Work Group goals of challenging the State to use the settlement as a base level of necessary action and push for further change and connecting the settlement to systemic and equitable change.
- Discussions around proposed legislation
 - Governor’s recommended budget
 - A resolution and bill related to the Ombudsperson Program
 - Reinstatement of the Delaware State Parent Advisory Council
- Discussions around introduced legislation
 - HB 129: School Based Health in High Needs Schools
 - HB 252: 5-Year Property Assessments
 - HB 300: 6-8 Mental Health Services Unit
 - HB 389: No Revenue Increase from Reassessment
 - HB 430: Grow Your Own Educators
 - SB 293: Minor Capital Funding
- Presentations focused on settlement-related items
 - The Ombudsperson Program from the Parent Information Center of Delaware (PIC). PIC was awarded the Ombudsperson contract and will lead the work.
 - Delawareans for Educational Opportunity (DEO) update and discussion about how the Redding Consortium and/or Settlement Work Group could support DEO’s work.
 - Non-supplanting language in Opportunity Funding legislation. Co-chair Chuck Longfellow explained how language included in the settlement around non-supplanting may limit the flexibility for schools and districts to use new funding, like Opportunity Funding, where it is most needed.

Planning Team Meetings

There were 15 planning team meetings between July 2021 and June 2022. The Redding Consortium co-chairs met bi-weekly with staff members of the University of Delaware’s Institute for Public Administration (IPA) and Delaware State University (DSU), work group co-chairs, and dedicated members of the Consortium. These meetings were open to the public and members of the public

often joined. At the planning team meetings, members planned full body Redding Consortium meetings, provided work group updates, and shared other relevant updates about communications and transparency. The planning meetings serve as an excellent time to engage Redding Consortium and work group leadership and ensure members and the public are informed and have input on Consortium work. Find all planning team meeting information on the Redding Consortium website [here](#).

Publications and Communications

Publications

In addition to background research in areas such as educational equity, public school funding, and child development and wellbeing, the Redding Consortium published the following in FY22:

Reports and Documents

- [Educational Equity Settlement Progress Report](#) (2022)
- [Timeline of minimum state actions needed for compliance in the DE funding lawsuit settlement](#) (2021)
- [Status of Wilmington Education for the 2018-2020 School Years Data Report](#) (2021)
- [Data Report Executive Summary](#) (2021)
- [Redding Consortium One-pager in Spanish](#) (2021)

Communications

The Redding Consortium utilized communication with stakeholders through its newsletter, website, Facebook page, YouTube page, and the Delaware Public Calendar. The Redding Consortium used all of these platforms to post meeting dates and times, meeting materials, infographics, and data to help keep Redding Consortium work transparent, interactive, and user-friendly.

Facebook Posts

The Redding Consortium [Facebook page](#) is an excellent place for stakeholders to ask questions, provide input, and share Redding Consortium work with a larger audience. Some of our Facebook posts have reached over 1,100 people, which means the work is visible and can create open and authentic dialogue with and for community members.

YouTube

The Redding Consortium [YouTube page](#) allows stakeholders to watch or listen to meetings they could not attend or re-watch meetings as needed. The page has over 100 videos of Planning Team meetings, Work Group meetings, testimonials, and more. This resource gives the Redding Consortium the opportunity to showcase its work and provides greater access for the public to stay informed about its progress. When most activities went virtual during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Redding Consortium adapted too and created the YouTube page as a space for transparency and accountability.

Website

The Redding Consortium [website](#) is a great resource to stay updated and informed on all Consortium activities. The website contains meeting materials, Work Group updates, publications that pertain to educational equity, and all other Redding Consortium information. Stakeholder engagement is the Redding Consortium's priority, and the website is one of the tools utilized to inform and communicate with the community.

Funding and Resources

For the period of July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022, the work of the Redding Consortium for Educational Equity was funded by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). Additional funding and support came from contributed professional services provided by IPA and DSU staff members, in-kind services and contributions from other institutions and individuals, and a contract with IPA from the State of Delaware. The following section describes the types of services provided.

IPA & DSU Contract with the Redding Consortium

Senate Bill 148 indicates that “The Consortium shall be staffed by the University of Delaware’s Institute for Public Administration and Delaware State University’s School of Graduate Studies. The staff shall be managed by a policy director from the Institute for Public Administration, who shall be approved by the co-chairs of the Consortium. An annual line-item allocation of funding shall be provided to the Consortium to support the operational services, research, and analysis carried out by the Institute for Public Administration and Delaware State University and in the development of the transition, resource, and development plan.” A \$240,000 state contract between IPA and OMB provided funding for this provision of staff services to the Consortium from IPA and DSU.

Redding Consortium Membership

S. Elizabeth “Tizzy” Lockman—Co-Chair

State Senator, Senate District 3

Matthew Denn—Co-Chair

Managing Partner, Wilmington office, DLA Piper

Raye Jones Avery

Representative, Wilmington Center for Education Equity and Policy

Aaron Bass

Chief Executive Officer, EastSide Charter School

Ted Blunt

Community Leader, Wilmington, Delaware

Nnamdi O. Chukwuocha

State Representative, Representative District 1

James DeChene

Partner, Armitage DeChene & Associates

Jeffrey Menzer

Superintendent, Colonial School District

Dorrell Green

Superintendent, Red Clay Consolidated School District

Bettina Tweardy Riveros

Chief Health Equity Officer, Christiana Care

Tika Hartsock

Parent Representative

Lincoln Hohler

Superintendent, Brandywine School District

Stephanie Ingram

President, Delaware State Education Association

Joseph Jones

Superintendent, New Castle County Vocational-Technical School District

Ernesto Lopez

State Senator, Senate District 6

Maria Matos

President and CEO, Latin American Community Center

Xavia Mills

Parent Representative

Noelle Picara

Educator, Kuumba Academy Charter School

Michael Purzycki

Mayor, City of Wilmington, Delaware

Hanifa Shabazz

Chair, Wilmington Community Advisory Council

Dan Shelton

Superintendent, Christina School District

Michael F. Smith

State Representative, Representative District 22

Margie López Waite

Head of School, Las Américas ASPIRA Academy

Danya Woods

Assistant Principal, Richardson Park Elementary School, Red Clay School District

Jennifer Thompkins (current)

& Eugene Young (former)

President & CEO, Metropolitan Wilmington Urban League

Ex-officio, non-voting members

Mark Holodick

Secretary of Education, State of Delaware

Richard Geisenberger

Secretary of Finance, State of Delaware

Cerron Cade

Director, Office of Management and Budget, State of Delaware

Institute for Public Administration and Delaware State University Staff

Jason Bourke

Director, Master of Public Administration Program,
DSU

Christopher Kelly

Associate Policy Scientist, IPA, UD

Brendan Laux

Graduate Public Administration Fellow, IPA, UD

Jerome Lewis

Director, IPA, UD

Cimone Philpotts

Doctoral Student, Biden School of Public Policy and
Administration, UD

Sarah Pragg

Communications Specialist & Assistant Policy Scientist,
IPA, UD

Haley Qaissaunee

Assistant Policy Scientist, IPA, UD

Shelley Rouser

Chair, Department of Education, and Associate
Professor, DSU

Kelly Sherretz

Policy Scientist, IPA, UD

Alexis Wrease

Undergraduate Public Administration Fellow, IPA, UD

Redding Consortium Work Group Membership

Settlement Work Group Membership

- Aaron Bass—Co-chair, Chief Executive Officer, EastSide Charter School
- Chuck Longfellow—Co-chair, Chief Financial Officer, Christina School District
- Raushann Austin, Education Associate, Alternative Evaluations Systems, Delaware Department of Education
- Kristin Dwyer, Director of Legislative and Political Strategy, Delaware State Education Association
- Shannon Griffin, Senior Policy Advocate, ACLU of Delaware
- Tika Hartsock, Parent, Brandywine School District
- Gary Henry, Dean, College of Education and Human Development, UD
- Monique Martin, Education Associate, Educator Equity, Delaware Department of Education
- Shelly Rouser, Chair, Department of Education, Delaware State University
- Laurisa Schutt, Executive Director, First State Educate
- Sarah Stowens, Program Officer, Rodel Foundation of Delaware

Social Determinants of Health and Education Work Group Membership

- Raye Jones-Avery—Co-chair, Representative, Wilmington Center for Education Equity and Policy
- Jeffrey Menzer—Co-chair, Superintendent, Colonial School District
- Dawn Alexander, Preschool Expansion Coordinator, Colonial School District
- Evelyn Edney, Principal and School Leader, Early College High School
- Roger Harrison, Pediatric Psychologist, Nemours Children's Health
- Tika Hartsock, Parent, Brandywine School District
- Teri Lawler, Education Associate of Trauma-Informed Practices and Social and Emotional Learning, Delaware Department of Education
- Yasser Payne, Associate Professor, Department of Sociology and Criminal Justice, University of Delaware
- Shanika Perry, Board Member, Brandywine School District
- Mark Pruitt, Principal, Conrad School of Science
- Yvette Santiago, Director of Community Engagement, Nemours Children's Health, Delaware
- Aaron Selekman, Principal, Newark High School
- Tamara Smith, Executive Director, Teach for America Delaware
- David Sokola, State Senator, Senate District 8
- Jeff Taschner, Executive Director, Delaware State Education Association
- Salome Thomas-El, Head of School, Thomas Edison Charter School
- Kim Williams, State Representative, Representative District 19

Educators Work Group Membership

The Educator Work Group did not actively meet in FY22. View the Work Group [membership](#) on the Redding Consortium website.

Funding and Governance Work Group Membership

The Funding and Governance Work Group did not actively meet in FY22. View the Work Group [membership](#) on the Redding Consortium website.

Appendix 1: Considerations for the Independent Funding Assessment RFP

Memorandum

To: Delaware Department of Education
From: Redding Consortium for Educational Equity
Subject: Considerations for the Independent Funding Assessment RFP
Date: December 10, 2021

After discussion in the Settlement Work Group and the full body of the Redding Consortium for Educational Equity, we recommend the Delaware Department of Education include the following items in their RFP for the Independent Funding Assessment.

The Independent Funding Assessment must include all Local Education Agencies including reorganized districts, vocational districts and charter schools. This scope applies to all questions below.

Defining equity

The Redding Consortium's defines educational equity as, "Educational equity requires safe, secure, and student-focused learning environments where every student is intentionally provided access to the support, resources, and opportunities they need to reach their full academic and social potential, in and out of the classroom."

1. How does your organization define educational equity? How would you operationalize the Consortium's definition of educational equity in the assessment of Delaware education financing?

What amount of education funding is necessary to achieve equitable outcomes including measures of student achievement, learning, and wellbeing (students are physically and psychologically safe and secure)?

2. What is the amount of per pupil funding necessary to achieve equitable outcomes for all of Delaware students? What evidence supports this amount of funding? What levels of base funding do other states that measure progress invest?
3. What are the advantages and disadvantages of Delaware's current "unit cost" method of calculating the amounts of funding necessary to achieve equitable outcomes? For example:
 - a. Do schools/districts with more experienced teachers receive more or less funding than schools/districts with less experienced teachers? How much variation in the amount of per pupil funding has occurred between schools and districts in the most recent five fiscal years? Does the "unit cost" system allocate more or less funding to schools with higher concentrations of economically disadvantaged, special education and English learners?

4. Are there improvements that can be made to Delaware's current "unit cost" funding system that would improve the equity of the distribution of funds? What are those improvements and how much would they improve the equity of the allocation of funding to schools?
5. What are the advantages and disadvantages of a "weighted student funding" (WSF) method of calculating the amounts of funding necessary to achieve equitable outcomes? For example:
 - a. Would schools with more students with disabilities, economically disadvantaged students and English learners receive more or less funding than schools with fewer of these students under the "weighted student funding?" How much variation in the amount of per pupil funding would have occurred between schools and districts in the most recent five fiscal years?
6. Are there other funding allocation models that should be considered (other than WSF) and to what extent would they improve equity in the allocation of funds to schools? Can you describe the models, where they have been used and any effects they have had on improving student outcomes, including student achievement, learning and wellbeing?
7. How do the amounts of funding allocated to each school and each district required by the "unit cost" method, the "weighted student funding" method, and any alternative funding method considered in this report differ?
8. How could any large changes to the state funding allocations for individual schools be implemented to minimize disruptions to school operations and local taxpayers? Phasing in changes over time? Holding schools harmless in terms of funding reductions for one to three years? What amounts of education funding would be required to phase in any alternative funding systems examined in this report including a weighted student funding system for Delaware schools over five years? How much would projections for district and school allocations change if the phase-in process increases the allocation of funds using the weighted student funding to schools by 20% per year (for example, Year 1 – 20% WSF & 80% unit funding; Year 2 – 40% WSF & 60% unit funding; Year 3 – 60% WSF & 40% unit funding; Year 4 – 80% WSF & 20% unit funding; Year 5 – 100% WSF). All alternative models and phase in would be compared to projections for the unit cost.
9. What are the implications of the Opportunity Funding and the RAND evaluation of its impact for improving educational equity and outcomes for Delaware students through reform of the education finance in the state?
10. How often are school financing models typically reassessed in other states? Are there models for ongoing assessments of other state education finance systems? Can you describe promising models for ongoing assessments? How much do those evaluations typically cost and how are they funded?
11. What are the gaps in average school-level salaries between high needs (including those with less experienced teachers or high educator turnover) and other schools? How can a compensation gap analysis inform the amount of additional resources needed to support schools with less experienced educators (and related personnel) and high staff turnover?

How should the responsibility for equitable school funding be split between the state and local districts?

12. What criteria have been used by states to inform the decision about how the responsibility for education funding is shared between the state and local districts (e.g., historical shares,

ability of local district to generate revenues, local property tax burden)? Given these criteria:

- a. What is the range of responsibility that Delaware should bear for equitable education funding?
- b. What is the accompanying range of responsibility that the local districts should bear for equitable education financing?
- c. How does the equalization function of Delaware's school funding system affect equity?
- d. How could the equalization formula be modified or improved?
- e. What factors should be included in determining the equitable allocation of education funding responsibility (e.g., local revenue generation capacity, local property wealth, costs of equitable funding)?
- f. How does the proportional share of education funding that is borne by the State of Delaware compare to other states?

How should the funding decisions for schools be made within Delaware's school districts?

13. What are the strengths and weakness of requiring local referenda for increasing local funding for schools in the manner currently set for Delaware school districts? What are the strengths and weakness of state setting the minimum level of funding for each locality?
14. What are the strengths and weaknesses of requiring that local school boards set tax rates for the school district?
15. What are the strengths and weaknesses for requiring that local districts spend the amount of funding in each school equals the amount of funding that school should receive according to the state's definition of the per pupil amount required to achieve equitable education funding?
16. What are the advantages and disadvantages of how Delaware currently funds capital projects? Are there improvements that could be made to the current system?
17. What types of state funding support would be better handled through formula or other allocation methods outside of the support for teaching and learning and school operations? For example, transportation funding or food services?

The settlement requires an independent funding assessment. How should independent be defined?

For a funding assessment to be independent requires that parties who have a direct interest in the findings of such a study not have control over the findings. For example, the findings of such a study may have direct implications for education funding decisions made by the Governor's Office, Delaware Department of Education, Delaware General Assembly, School Boards, and school districts. Therefore, the organization and individuals conducting the study must have independence from these stakeholders. However, these individuals and groups may be directly affected by the findings of such a study and have a reasonable expectation to know about the findings before they are released.

A common way to accomplish this independence is to establish through the RFP that certain key stakeholders (not only the Redding Consortium, but other groups potentially impacted by the

findings as well) have the right to review reports prior to public release of the report and provide questions and comments to the study authors by a specific time, often 30 or 60 days after they receive a confidential copy of the report. The study authors are required to make any corrections of factual that are pointed out by the stakeholders and consider any changes of interpretation. The independence is established by the organization's status for providing honest and accurate information, the experience and qualifications of the individuals who will conduct the study, and the conditions set in the RFP.



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