

Interim Plan Appendix

The following appendices are for reference and provide additional context for the development of the interim and final redistricting plan.

Appendix 1: Wilmington Education Historical Timeline

- 1897** Separate educational system is encoded in the 1897 constitution.
- 1921** Delaware General Assembly (GA) requires separate but equal schools; 50 separate school districts operate in the state.
- 1954** Brown v. Board of Education; desegregation ordered, but compliance is limited.
- 1956** Evans v. Buchanan first brought to court; court orders desegregation, but implementation is delayed.
- 1957** The U.S. District Court requires Delaware to develop a comprehensive desegregation plan.
- 1965** State Board of Education (State Board) adopts resolution to close smaller schools and phase out the last “black school district.”
- 1968** GA passes the Education Advancement Act, consolidates smaller districts (Wilmington excluded), and provides equalization funding.
- 1971** The Education Advancement Act is challenged in the U.S. Supreme Court; Evans v. Buchanan reopened.
- 1974** U.S. District Court decides Wilmington schools are segregated; Education Advancement Act declared unconstitutional.
- 1976** Evans v. Buchanan; court-mandated inter-district busing upheld through repeated appeals.
- 1978** “9–3” busing school-desegregation plan is implemented.
- 1980–1981** GA passes law prompting the State Board to create four districts in New Castle County; court upholds.
- 1980–1990s** Sustained pressure to desegregate districts in Delaware, but also gradual loosening of desegregation standards nationally.
- 1993** State of Delaware requests unitary status for four districts; U.S. District Court assents (1995).
- 1995–1996** Court-ordered federal supervision of desegregation ends; busing continues largely unchanged.
- 1995** GA formally amends state constitution to abolish separate education system.
- 1995** GA passes legislation allowing charter schools.
- 1996** Delaware School Choice Program is approved (partly a response to busing).
- 1998** Wilmington High School closes as a traditional school and building reopens with a magnet school (Cab Calloway School of the Arts) and a charter school (Charter School of Wilmington).
- 2000** The Neighborhood Schools Act dramatically reduces busing.
- 2001** Report mandated by the 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 a plan to develop world-class public education for Delaware.
- 2006** A 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** The 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 (Commission).
- 2015** GA approved and Governor Markell signs Senate Bill 222 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.
- 2016** The Commission's plan is approved by the State Board in March 2016.
- 2016** The General Assembly passes Senate Joint Resolution 17 which confirms State Board of Education approval but requires the Commission to return to the legislature for final approval in June 2016.
- 2016** The General Assembly passes Senate Bill 300 in June 2016 which confirms that the necessary funding needed to proceed with redistricting has not been provided and calls on the Commission to provide a detailed fiscal impact analysis.
- 2016** On July 26, 2016, the Commission votes to suspend the timetable for implementation of the redistricting plan pending final approval and provision of necessary and sufficient resources.
- 2017** The Commission's Fiscal Impact Analysis Committee completes report to the General Assembly for distribution in May 2017.
- 2017** No action was taken by the General Assembly; the Commission's plan is ultimately not approved.
- 2018** Delawareans for Educational Opportunity and the NAACP of Delaware filed an education equity lawsuit against the state of Delaware to address funding inequities for low-income students, English learners, and students with disabilities.

- 2019** GA approved and Governor Carney signs Senate Bill 148, establishing the Redding Consortium for Educational Equity and replacing the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission in July 2019.
- 2020** Governor Carney orders all Delaware schools to remain closed through the remainder of the school year to prevent the spread of COVID-19.
- 2020** In October, Delawareans for Educational Opportunity and the NAACP of Delaware reach a settlement with Governor Carney.
- 2022** Wilmington Learning Collaborative agreement is reached between the Brandywine, Christina, and Red Clay Consolidated School Districts in conjunction with the Department of Education and Governor Carney on November 1, 2022.
- 2023** The American Institutes for Research released a report on December 12, 2023, about the independent funding assessment of Delaware’s public education funding system, which was a core requirement of the education lawsuit settlement.

Appendix 2: The Case for Governance Reform

To understand the context for the current state of education in the City of Wilmington, we must examine our history. We must contextualize the history of desegregation and the legacy of busing in the city. The effects of court orders, legislation, and regulations have directly affected city students and divided school communities. The Educational Advancement Act of 1968 resulted in the consolidation of smaller school districts across Delaware and in 1978 northern New Castle County's education landscape underwent major restructuring. Eleven school districts in New Castle County were first consolidated into a single district due to a federal district court order, and after a brief period of operation, the single district became four—the same four districts that exist today: Brandywine, Christina, Colonial, and Red Clay Consolidated School Districts. The City of Wilmington is the only city whose students are not served by a single district compared to other cities like Newark and Dover. This four-district model has over time created educational barriers and systemic issues within city schools. As a result, fractured governance in educational leadership, geographically divided communities, varied curricula across districts, and dismal academic outcomes for historically underserved students have become the unintended consequences of this four-district model.

The educational landscape in Delaware has drastically changed over the past three decades with the passage of the Charter School Act of 1995 and the Neighborhood Schools Act of 2000. The Charter School Act established a system of charter schools to improve choice in public education across Delaware. The Neighborhood Schools Act made stipulations to assign students to attend closer schools in their local communities; therefore, officially ending the busing of students. This law passed by the General Assembly created a city full of racially-identifiable, high-need, and high-poverty schools in Wilmington and exacerbated inequities across the four districts, which the Wilmington Neighborhood Schools Committee noted would happen in its 2001 report. For a quarter of a century, these persistent issues have continued to negatively affect school communities. We must recognize that the current system is not working for these students. Systemic reforms are needed to address these educational inequities. City of Wilmington children are entitled to relief.

The decades of advocacy for governance change in the City of Wilmington have made community leaders and Wilmington legislators think critically about what a better future can look like for city children. For far too long, inaction on governance reform by the General Assembly has hindered educational progress and improvement for Wilmington students. The cost of continuing to do nothing is too much to bear for these children affected by the lasting, detrimental effects of policies like the Neighborhood Schools Act. These impacts include declining student proficiency, a less safe city, and generations of students and families not getting the services they need. There has been a long history of division within the city. Students and families in Wilmington and northern New Castle County do not feel a sense of community or connection to their schools. This division among students and families creates a cycle of violence into the criminal justice system and the juvenile justice system for city children. Wilmington students and communities are suffering because of these divisions. The state must address these structural failures and provide redress for City of Wilmington families.

Governance reform is the right course of action for this present moment. The Redding Consortium and the Wilmington Learning Collaborative (WLC) are both working to advance educational equity and empower City of Wilmington students, educators, and families. There is a lot of collaboration potential for these two entities to work together to support these resilient

students and their school communities. The WLC is going to drive the future of education in Wilmington. The work of the WLC is providing an opportunity to provide some healing of communities to make the city whole again. District and school leaders can make transformative changes in their school communities with the support of the WLC. The Redding Consortium and the WLC can work together on governance reform in terms of a secondary option as one of the goals for Wilmington because students are still being sent to schools outside of the city. We must recognize that even if we build all of these supports for students inside of these schools, then they are still leaving again for high school. We must invest in building a holistic system that supports and meets the needs of all Wilmington students.

The Redding Consortium leadership wants to acknowledge the steadfast work of the Wilmington Learning Collaborative and recognize its value and crucial continuing role in providing targeted, student-focused, and teacher-led support. The Redding Consortium believes the WLC will continue to be a vital partner to the districts—building on-the-ground capacity—while the Redding Consortium focuses on its mandate to enact state-level policy change.

The WLC has already made great strides in connecting with schools and communities, building collaboration and alignment, and addressing targeted student, educator, and community needs. As the Redding redistricting proposal is developed, and if the legislation passes to pursue redistricting, the Redding Consortium sees the WLC as an entity that will help actualize many of the goals for district alignment. The role and function of the WLC has potential to be strengthened through district consolidation, and its mission of hyperfocus and cross-district collaboration would endure.

Redistricting is a crucial first step of a solution to meaningfully addressing fractured educational governance reform in the City of Wilmington. The Redding Consortium is acting on its mandate on redistricting to improve educational equity for students in the City of Wilmington and northern New Castle County. We believe that better supporting City of Wilmington students will improve education for all students. City of Wilmington students from low-income families and suburban Wilmington students can benefit from this streamlining of four traditional districts into two districts. This action will strengthen governance across the districts, offer greater opportunities for collaborative cross-district partnerships, and help improve educational outcomes in city schools. These critical investments in education for children in Wilmington can produce economic growth for our state. The City of Wilmington serves as the economic hub and powerhouse of business in the state. New Castle County and the state of Delaware supporting Wilmington students has economic benefits for taxpayers, school communities, and our children, who will become the next generation of leaders in our state.

Decades of Governance Reform Efforts

Currently, there are twenty-eight separate governing units, **including sixteen in the City of Wilmington**, responsible for delivering public education to about 11,000 Wilmington children. There has been progress made in collaboration to support Wilmington students, but governance for students must be streamlined to create more effective and equitable change.

The Redding Consortium's path forward for redistricting is informed by over twenty years of reports and input from engaged community members and passionate advocates. Listed below is a recap of the governance recommendations between 2001 and 2023.

In 2001, the Wilmington Neighborhood Schools Committee (WNSC) [produced a report](#) and put forward two main recommendations—one focusing on combining the City of Wilmington with the Red Clay Consolidated School District (Red Clay) and the Brandywine School District (Brandywine) to create a consolidated school district that shares students from these districts and forms a common local tax base. Below is a quote from the March 2001 [Report of the City of Wilmington on House Bill 300 of the Neighborhood Schools Act](#), where the City of Wilmington reflects on the WNSC plan:

The City of Wilmington joins the WNSC and its position that the Neighborhood School Act raises several legal and constitutional concerns. School assignments based only on a student’s geographical location, without addressing the educational and learning environments currently facing our children, serves to only intensify the existing boundaries between income and race.

The City of Wilmington supports the WNSC in their recommendation that the General Assembly abolish the existing four-district configuration, and that the State adopts the “River Plan” that requires only Brandywine, Red Clay to provide public school education for the City of Wilmington.

The City supports this “River Plan” because suburban schools located in Red Clay and Brandywine School Districts is in closer proximity to the City than the suburban schools located in the Christina and Colonial School Districts. Accordingly, [this] plan ensures that all students in New Castle County will be closer to home, eliminates long bus rides and results in savings to all districts.

In 2008, the Wilmington Education Task Force recommended students living to the east of Market Street be considered part of the Brandywine School District, students living to the west of Market Street be considered part of Red Clay, and Christina and Colonial School Districts be eliminated from the geographic confines of the City of Wilmington. Below is a quote from the April 2008 [Wilmington Education Taskforce Final Report](#).

In June 2007, Senator Margaret Rose Henry sponsored a joint resolution to establish a Wilmington Education Task Force to examine the current status of public education in the City of Wilmington.

Overall, a majority of the Task Force felt that the design for city schools created in the early 1980s—to divide up the City of Wilmington into four school districts—had outlived its purpose, particularly in light of the subsequent passage of the Neighborhood Schools Act.

The primary recommendation from the subcommittee assigned to conduct an analysis of district feeder patterns and school assignments was to [r]educe the number of regular school districts serving Wilmington to two districts instead of four.

One possible model for re-districting the city is that the children living to the east of Market Street be considered part of the Brandywine School District and the children living to the west of Market Street be considered part of the Red Clay School District, thus eliminating the Christina School District and Colonial School District from the geographic confines of the City of Wilmington.

In 2015, the Wilmington Education Advisory Committee [recommended](#) streamlining the configuration for traditional school districts operating in Wilmington to better address the needs of Wilmington students and more fully support continuous improvement and community responsiveness. This process would be done by removing the Christina and Colonial School Districts so that these school districts no longer serve Wilmington and allowing the Red Clay, Brandywine, and New Castle County Vocational-Technical (NCC Vo-Tech) School Districts to continue to serve Wilmington children.

In 2016, the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission [recommended](#) that the Christina School District should no longer serve the City of Wilmington and focus on serving the students in the western portion of the current district; Red Clay boundaries should be altered to include the portion of the City of Wilmington now served by the Christina School District; Colonial and Brandywine continue to serve students who reside in the City of Wilmington within their current boundaries.

Progress in the Education Landscape

Since 2001, reports focusing on governance in the City of Wilmington have called for school district boundary shifts. Importantly, they have also called for multi-pronged approaches to addressing the educational, social, emotional, and well-being needs of students and families. These reports and groups have continuously called for:

- **Increased funding and support** for students from low-income families, students with disabilities, and multilingual learners;
- **Increased wraparound services** for children and families;
- **Highly effective educators and building leaders who are retained**—particularly in schools with high concentrations of students in poverty;
- **Increased parent/caregiver/family engagement**, support, communication, and transparency from schools.

Although Delaware has not fully solved the issues highlighted above, the state has made significant progress in addressing these areas. Several important changes to the education landscape are below.

The education funding lawsuit was filed in 2018, resulting in:

- Opportunity Funding that is now permanent at a floor of \$60 million annually for students from low-income families and multilingual learners
- Improved K–3 basic special education funding for students, which provides students with more support and matches the funding structure for basic special education students in grades 4–12

- Doubled state investment in the Early Childhood Assistance Program (ECAP)
- Annual \$4 million investment in teacher recruitment and retention in high-needs schools
- Creation and funding of an Ombudsperson position/office in each county
- For all capital projects, school districts must submit an equity statement

There have been new school configurations and investments in Wilmington via:

- A new state-of-the-art Maurice Pritchett, Sr. Academy
- A renovated Bayard School
- A renovated Stubbs Early Education Center
- A repurposed Pulaski Early Education Center

There have been groups and initiatives dedicated to supporting the Wilmington community:

- **The Redding Consortium for Educational Equity** was established to address and recommend legislation related to education equity for students in Wilmington and northern New Castle County. The Redding Consortium has helped to increase high-quality early childhood seats in the City and funded wraparound service grants to support City schools, among other investments.
- **The Wilmington Learning Collaborative (WLC)** was created to provide hyper-focused support for city schools. The WLC's \$10 million budget supports schools exclusively in the City.
- **The Boost '22-'26 initiative** was created to promote cross-district collaboration between the New Castle County Superintendents and is focused on graduation rates for Wilmington students.

There have been investments in students and their mental health:

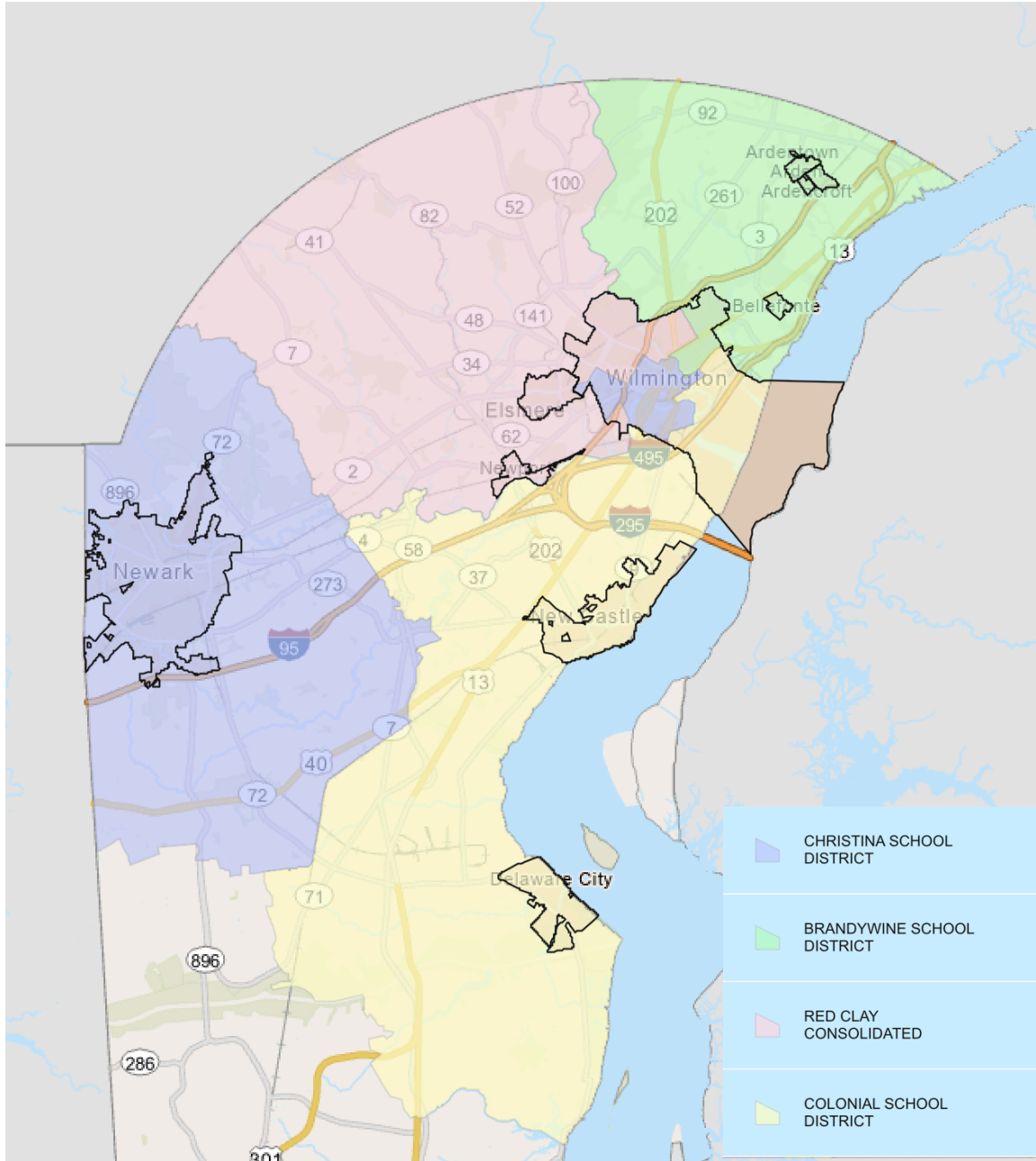
- **Mental health investments** have been increased statewide, with elementary and middle schools now required to have a 250:1 ratio of students to counselors.

There are numerous other examples of excellent work happening at the state and local levels to support Wilmington students, families, and the community. **However, the one remaining area not being addressed as a large-scale policy issue is the fractured governance in the City of Wilmington.** Addressing the school district reorganization piece of the puzzle can help ensure all these supports discussed above are streamlined and delivered to students with equity, efficiency, and alignment at the forefront.

The Redding Consortium views redistricting as a necessary first step in a larger set of reforms that address governance issues like charter and choice reform, referendum reform, and the New Castle County Tax District. There is also a shared belief that our current district configuration has an impact on the health and prosperity of the city and its residents. This current proposal focuses on the redistricting component with acknowledgment and understanding of how other shifts must also occur to ensure equity is at the core of our school governance system.

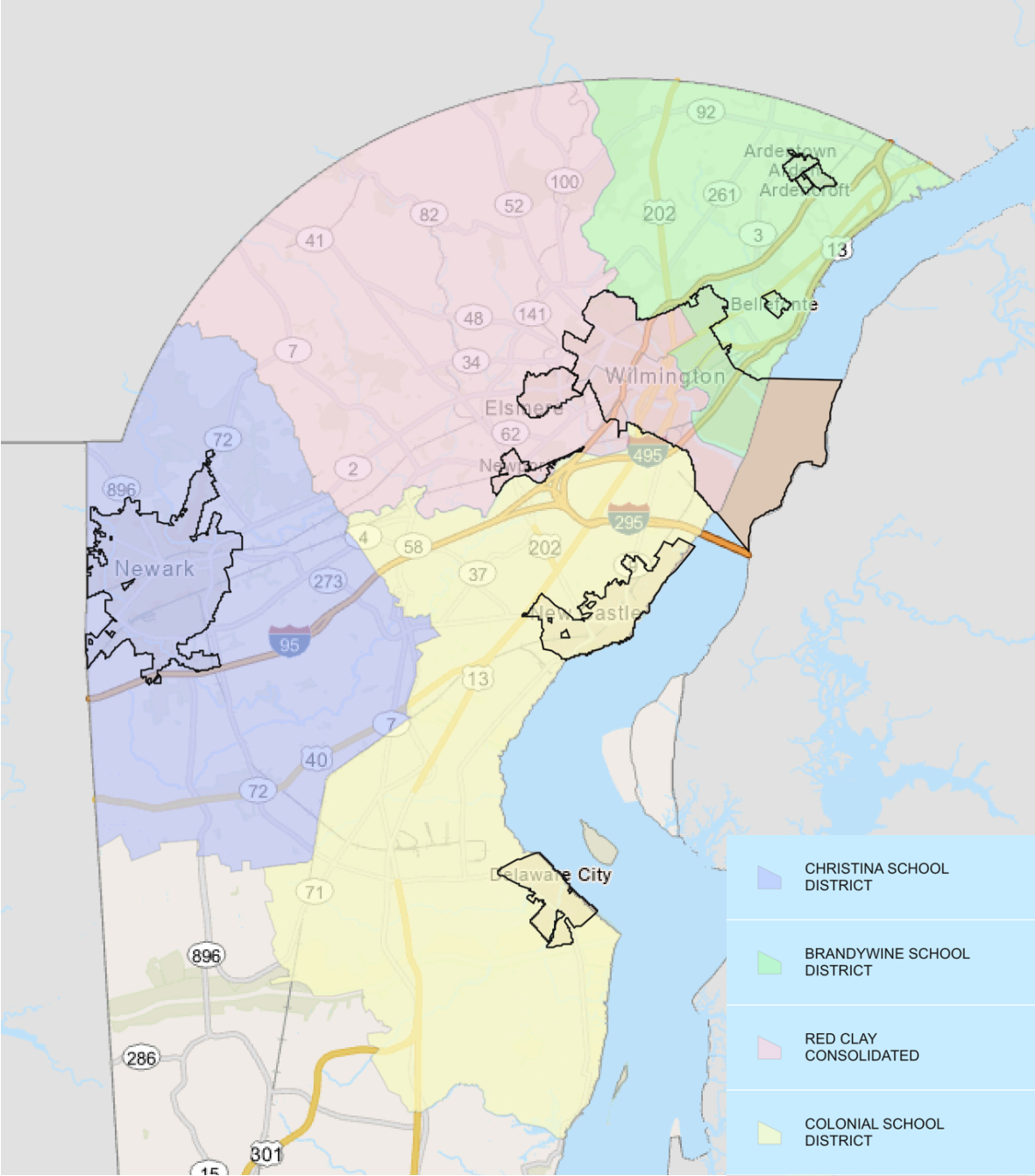
Appendix 3: Current and Proposed District Boundary Maps

Current City of Wilmington School District Boundaries, Zoomed Out



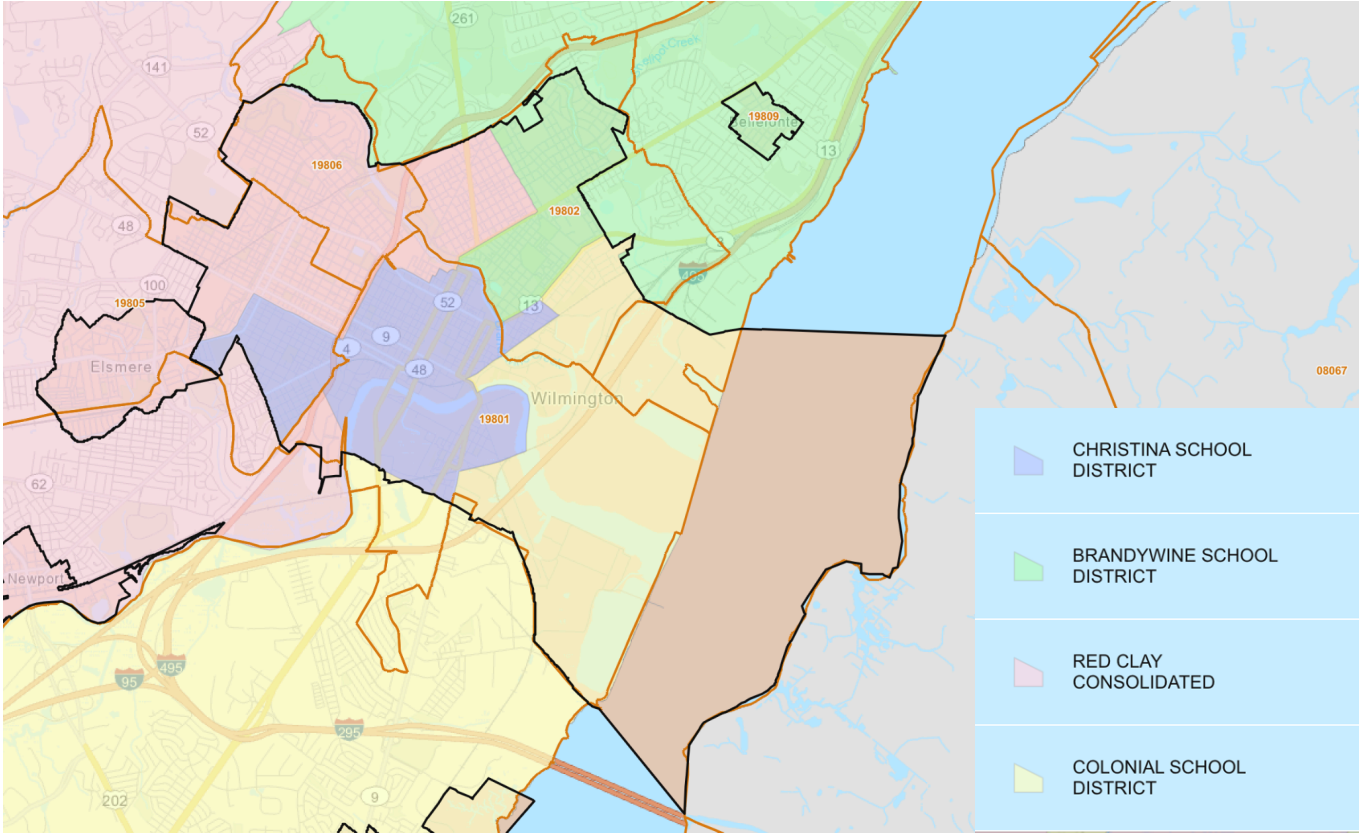
Source: University of Delaware, Institute for Public Administration, 2024

Proposed City of Wilmington School District Boundaries, Zoomed Out



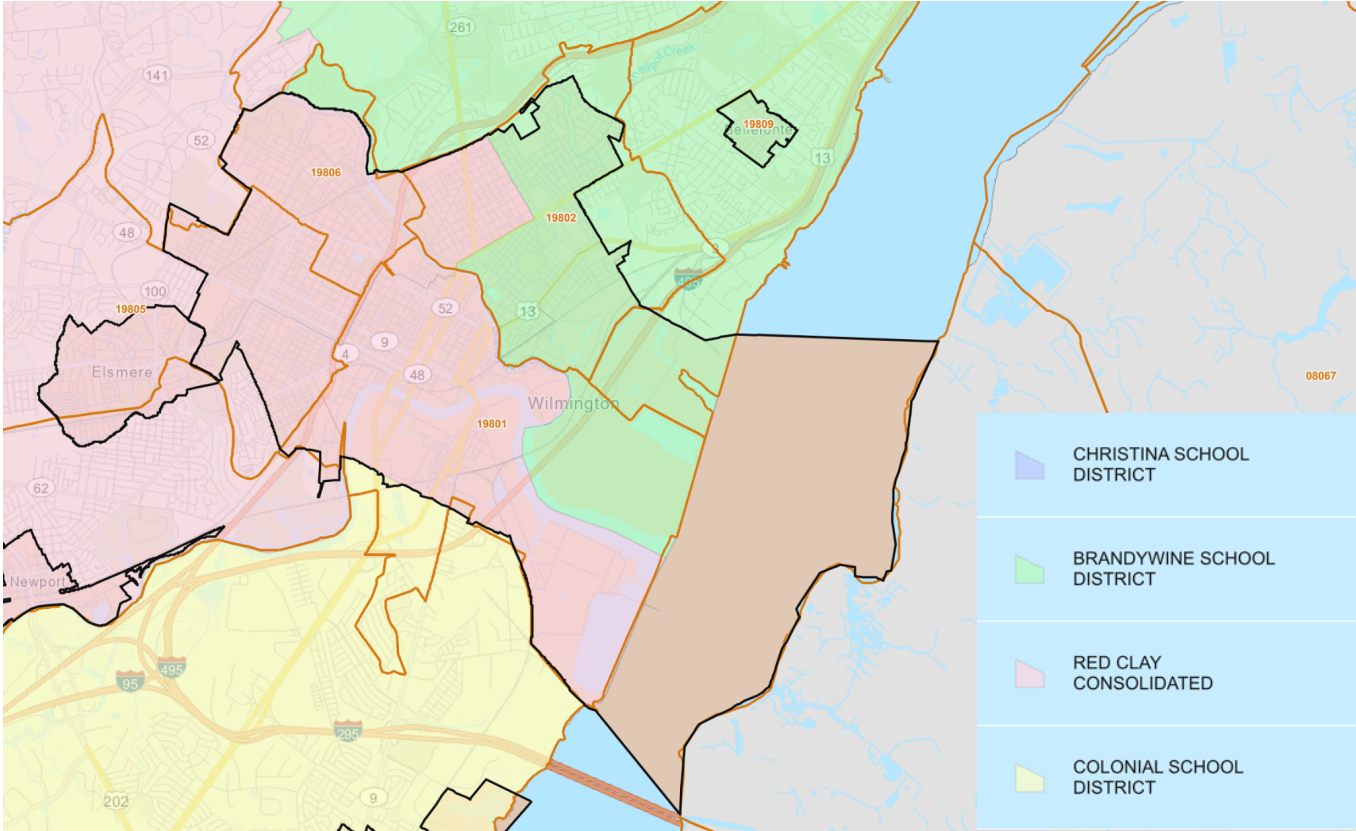
Source: University of Delaware, Institute for Public Administration, 2024

Current City of Wilmington School District Boundaries, Zoomed In



Source: University of Delaware, Institute for Public Administration, 2024

Proposed City of Wilmington School District Boundaries, Zoomed In



Source: University of Delaware, Institute for Public Administration, 2024

Appendix 4: 13 Stipulations

1. The orderly and minimally disruptive reassignment of students affected by the boundary change and the reassignment of governance responsibilities.
2. Redrawing of district boundaries in Wilmington and northern New Castle County to better serve the educational interests of all students, including reducing the concentration of low-income students and improving educational services and supports for English learners and other students at risk.
3. The plan must permit students to continue their attendance at the school they attended prior to the boundary change with tuition payments made by the sending district as provided in [Chapter 6](#) [tuition charges] of this title until such time as the pupils complete the grade levels offered in that school.
4. Student transportation.
5. An assessment of the educational needs of City of Wilmington students and the resources required to meet those needs.
6. Directives for improving secondary education options for City of Wilmington students, such as the provision of additional secondary schools.
7. Implications for educators, administrators, and other personnel that may lead to equitable adjustments to local collective bargaining agreements.
8. Engagement of educators, staff, parents, district personnel, and community members throughout the transition.
9. 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 learners.
10. Distribution of capital assets and financial obligations or a process for such distribution.
11. A stipulation that the funding statewide and locally will facilitate effective implementation of the proposed comprehensive plan in a manner that will improve the educational outcomes for all of the students impacted by that plan.
12. A timetable for implementing each element of the redistricting plan and the designated responsibility for carrying out responsibilities until the date of full implementation.
13. A process for the ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the educational impacts and outcomes of implementation, which will include an annual report by the Consortium to the Governor, the General Assembly, the Secretary of Education, and the State Board of Education.

Appendix 5: Redistricting Proposal Cost Points

This memo is from the Delaware Controller General and details redistricting proposal cost points to consider.



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Redistricting Proposal Cost Points

Salaries - Education salaries are typically funded through a cost share between state and local funds (70% state, 30% local). The state share of salary will remain consistent between districts (units are allocated based on student enrollment and classifications), but the local salary scale between Red Clay and Christina is not aligned (Christina local salaries are higher than Red Clay) there will be difficulty in aligning any staff that move between districts.

- This applies to all staff - teachers, nurses, cafeteria, custodial, administration, secretaries, mental health supports, etc.
- There may also be issues with Collective Bargaining Agreements among existing staff.
- If Christina staff become Red Clay staff, there will be inequity in pay if Christina staff retain their same salary level. So, all other Red Clay staff would have to be 'leveled up.'
- Some Christina employees within the Wilmington schools receive retention bonuses for working within the City. Determinations will need to be made on if and how these are applied once redistricting occurs.

Transportation - School transportation is also cost-shared between state and local funds (90% state, 10% local). Funds are allocated based on the number of routes that are run. Upon redistricting, additional routes will likely be added, so there may be increased costs for the state and local funding portions. There may be further complications as Red Clay owns and operates its own buses while Christina contracts for bussing.

Classroom space - if significant numbers of students are added to another district, there may be capacity concerns on classroom space. This will vary based on what grade levels are affected. Capital costs are also funded through both state and local funds. Fortunately, it looks as if the split is the same for the affected districts (with the exception of Brandywine).

District	State Share	Local Share
Brandywine	61%	39%
Christina	60%	40%
Colonial	60%	40%
Red Clay	60%	40%

Capital Assets - There is a concern that buildings transferred from Christina to receiving districts are in very poor condition in comparison to other districts' school buildings. So moving them to a new district would result in that receiving district having 'substandard' buildings in comparison to the rest of the district and will require additional investment just to meet district standards. There is also a larger concern about how and if existing debt on the buildings being transferred can occur. Simply put, the debt on those buildings was committed to and financed by taxpayers in the Christina School District, and so moving that debt and tax burden onto other districts is complex.



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Overall Local Funds Concerns: Christina School District's property tax base and rates are higher than Red Clay's. This means that adding significant numbers of students to Red Clay will be more burdensome on the local tax base. Further, if students are redistricted, presumably their home properties' tax collections will be redirected to the receiving districts – but it isn't clear how much that local revenue will be and if it will result in an overall increase or decrease to the receiving district.

The property tax issue listed above is further complicated by the ongoing reassessment. While nothing is finalized, it is generally believed that the city properties will be increasing less than the suburban properties, meaning that the discrepancy between the tax base on the existing property and the other districts will likely be compounded. A lot further information will need to be gathered on which specific properties will be redistricted, then assessments will need to be gathered from the county, then a re-calculation will have to be done on the differences between collections.

Other Concerns:

- Legal implications of special education students – IEPs that were created under the Christina School District and now have to be taken on by a different district may result in discrepancies, as well as how/if those IEPs were properly implemented. This can result in legal costs.
- Neighborhood Schools Act (14 Del. C. §223) – requires that students attend the nearest school grade-appropriate school closest to the student's residence. For example, if Red Clay inherits a middle school in the city, there are current Red Clay students who would no longer be attending the nearest middle school to their residence, which may cause difficulty for families but may have further cost implications on transportation costs.