

Redding Consortium for Educational Equity
Full Body Meeting
Meeting Minutes
June 5, 2023

The Redding Consortium full body meeting convened at 5:30 p.m. at Delaware State University (DSU) at the Riverfront in Wilmington, Delaware. Senator Elizabeth Lockman, co-chair of the Redding Consortium, welcomed all in attendance.

I. Approval of Meeting Minutes

Kevin Kelley, Consortium member, motioned to approve the February 22nd, 2023, full-body meeting minutes. Tika Hartsock, Consortium member, seconded the motion. All members voted in favor of approving the February 22nd, 2023, meeting minutes as submitted.

II. Community Impact Update

Matt Denn, Redding Consortium Co-chair, emphasized the importance of educator, staff, and student voices in the administration of wraparound services programs funded and supported by the Redding Consortium. The Redding Consortium staff sent emails to all schools eligible in New Castle County to apply for wraparound service programs funded by state grants. In the future, the Redding Consortium plans to expand the wraparound services to support students in middle- and high schools. Responding to the email, various educators from the eligible schools voiced their desire to create relevant content and professional development. Denn stated there is a gap between mandated professional development and what teachers find useful based on the feedback heard from educators from eligible schools at the school-level meetings.

In addition, school administrators, educators, and parents from Kuumba Academy Charter School, Harlan Elementary School, and Eisenberg Elementary expressed concerns about learning loss from remote learning due to the Covid-19 pandemic. According to the three schools, the Redding Consortium's spending program from the wraparound services grant may alleviate scholars' gaps and difficulties from learning losses.

Co-chair Denn and Sen. Lockman encouraged the Redding Consortium members to visit listed schools in the RFP grant and announced an upcoming school-level meeting at EastSide Charter School.

III. A Word from Recipients of Redding Consortium Funds

To further connect to the City of Wilmington's community, community partners and a recipient of the Redding Consortium Schools Support Scholarship provided an update about the impact of Redding Consortium's funds and support.

Keith Roberts is a fourth-grade teacher at EastSide Charter School. Roberts received the Redding Consortium Schools Support Scholarship for tuition support for coursework to attend Delaware Technical Community College (DTCC) for his Bachelor's in Education. According to Roberts, DelTech's curriculum has assisted with classroom management and is an example for his scholars to continue their academic careers.

Lucinda Ross, the Executive Director of St. Michael's School and Nursery, shared that the Redding Consortium's funds have aided in expanding slots for the full-day preschool program. For instance, the funds went toward constructing an outdoor space for the Pre-K students and a teacher preparation area. St. Michael's School and Nursery also created enrichment programs on nature and outdoor studies. Moreover, the funds assisted with establishing the kindergarten preparation camp to assist with the transition to kindergarten. Lastly, St. Michael's School and Nursery allocated funds to hiring new personnel and supporting and training said staff to boost educator retention and attrition. Ross expressed concerns about receiving fewer funds from the Redding Consortium for the 2023-2024 academic year. Cora Scott, Deputy Secretary of Education, responded that she would follow up with Delaware's Department of Education (DOE) staff concerning the logistics of the Redding and Delaware Early Childhood Assistance Program (ECAP) RFP grant. Maria Matos inquired about schools choosing between Redding Consortium funds or Delaware Social Services's Purchase of Care subsidies. In response, co-chair Matt Denn asked the Consortium to assess the state budget for grants with a short turn-around time. Kevin Kelley agreed.

Krystal Greenfield, Principal of The Bancroft School, and Paul Dunford, Director of Teaching and Learning for Christina School District, presented updates for The Bancroft School. Dunford stated that the United Way of Delaware has been working with the Christina School District to empower the community. Greenfield highlighted how Redding funds expanded upon the wellness center and its mental health and medical services. The Bancroft School hired a Nurse Practitioner, RN, and LPN available for examinations and immunizations/vaccinations for students. The in-school wellness center offered social-emotional support and workshops this year in all classrooms. According to Dunford, 376 out of 549 students are registered within the center, and 190 have participated in medical testing and immunizations. However, Dunford and Greenfield noted The Bancroft School needs support with recruitment for staff to help students

recover from learning loss due to the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic. Since The Bancroft School has the highest registration of first-grade students who have never attended school in person, there is a demonstrated need to test literacy levels. Greenfield also encouraged families to bring their scholars to their 21st Century After-School Program to get them accustomed to their school's culture.

IV. Settlement Work Group Updates

Aaron Bass, Settlement Work Group co-chair, announced the Settlement Work Group had finalized all of its recommendations on the settlement between Delaware's Department of Education and the NAACP. Chuck Longfellow, Settlement Work Group co-chair, stated there is still work to be done concerning educational equity and funding; however, it does not connect to the settlement work group. Sen. Lockman commended the Work Group for spotlighting call-to-action items.

Director Cerron Cade, ex-officio Consortium member, asked if the Settlement Work Group focused on teacher retention and recruitment and how that fits into the governor's budget. Bass responded that the governor's response to teacher retention and recruitment on a large scale was outside the scope of the Settlement Work Group.

V. Educator Work Group Updates

Shelley Rouser, Educator Work Group member, highlighted the spending recommendations proposed by the Work Group concerning scholarship and professional development. The Delaware Higher Education Office, alongside the Redding Consortium, awarded seventy individuals with scholarship funds approximating \$185,000 for fall, winter, and spring semesters. The applicants received targeted communications through outreach to eligible recipients. In addition, recipients could use funds toward earning their associate, bachelor's, or master's degree(s), certifications, and advanced credentialing. The Educator Work Group inquired (1) how the Consortium could proactively market the scholarship and (2) how the scholarship can be ongoing for the 2023-2024 academic year. Scholarship applications were open on June 5th, 2023, and will close at 4:30 p.m. on August 5th, 2023.

Secretary Rick Geisenberger, ex officio Consortium member, asked if there were existing professional reimbursements outside of the Redding Consortium Schools Support Scholarship. Rouser responded that funding and rebates vary amongst schools and professional programs. Geisenberger inquired whether the scholarship was competitive and awarded at different

percentages. Rouser said no, and all applicants may receive the Redding Consortium Schools Support Scholarship if they fulfill eligibility requirements.

Aaron Bass asked if Professional Development Management System (PDMS) hours are required for applications, Rouser said no, however, they could create PDMS hour opportunities in the future. In addition, Bass queried if eligible applicants have to apply every year; Rouser said yes. Lastly, Bass noted that the Redding Consortium Schools Support Scholarship is a reimbursement; Rouser highlighted that financial offices at Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs) could collaborate with the state of Delaware so eligible educators do not have to pay for the tuition for their coursework out-of-pocket. Rouser expressed that establishing a professional development program will wait until the onboarding of the new executive director of the Wilmington Learning Collaborative (WLC).

VI. Redistricting and Governance Update

Representative Nnamdi Chukwuocha shared an update about redistricting legislation in the Delaware General Assembly. He also announced the desire to partner with the WLC and the new executive director about cohesive governance for schools and districts in the City of Wilmington. Rep. Chukwuocha stated he would arrange a meeting with the executive director to outline the partnership between the Redding Consortium and WLC.

VII. Social Determinants Work Group Updates

Raye Jones Avery, Social Determinants Work Group Co-chair, stated that the Work Group has focused on early childhood education, K-5 education, and the Racial Equity Data Dashboard for the last few years. However, the Work Group now desires to expand its focus on wraparound services to middle- and high-school scholars. The Social Determinants Work Group voted in May 2023 to support this expansion of the wraparound services programming. Jeff Menzer, co-chair of the Social Determinants Work Group, stated this expansion would be two-fold: incorporating Redding funds to support wraparound services and the Boost Initiative. Furthermore, this expansion of wraparound services calls for developing a long-term collaborative strategy for supporting wraparound services across various districts, charters, and vo-techs with WLC alignment.

Kevin Kelley asked for the graduation rate in Boost '22. Menzer announced that the graduation rate was 88%, two percentage points lower than the target goal of 90%.

VIII. Proposed Redding Spending Plan for Fiscal Year 2024

Co-chair Matt Denn highlighted the differences in the proposed 2024 Redding Consortium spending plan. The spending plan incorporated the expenditure of operating and unspent funds, the new category (Middle School/High School Outside of School Time and In-School Health Services) recommended by the Social Determinants Work Group, and the expansions of funds within scholarships and professional development.

The proposed 2024 Redding Spending Plan was as follows:

- **Redding Pre-K Slots:** \$3.7 million, all in operating funds;
- **State Support of Developmental Screening at Early Childhood Facilities:** \$150,000, all in operating funds;
- **Outside School Time Services and In-School Health Services:** \$5.74 million in operating funds and \$2.174 million in carryover funds;
- **Redding Scholarships:** \$370,000, all in operating funds;
- **Whole School Professional Development:** \$1.6 million, all in carryover funds;
- **Racial Equity Data Dashboard:** \$1.404 million, all in carryover funds; and
- **Middle School/High School OST Programming (“Boost” Program):** \$640,000, all in carryover funds.

Denn asked for the motion for the Consortium voting members to approve over \$400,000 in carryover funds instead of the stated \$200,000.

Chuck Longfellow asked how the Consortium would distribute the \$1.6 million dollars in professional development. Co-chair Denn responded by potentially including pay for educators attending professional development sessions and the development of more meaningful sessions for educators.

Kevin Kelley expressed concerns about significant carry-over funds and wondered how many Pre-K slots the Consortium could fund with \$3.7 million dollars. Co-chair Denn stated that \$5.47 million in operating funds is sufficient to fund wraparound service grants for three schools, so they may offer new programs. In addition, Denn noted that \$2.174 million dollars in carryover funds would fund schools already receiving support from the Redding Consortium that did not apply for substantial grants.

Aaron Bass inquired if the \$2.174 million dollars is due to one-time carry-over funds. Denn said yes, and that this is an effect of the lower recommended budget from the Governor’s Office.

Kevin Kelley motioned to approve the 2024 proposed Redding spending plan with co-chair Denn's correction. Margie López Waite seconded the motion. All members favored, and the Consortium approved the 2024 proposed Redding Consortium spending plan.

IX. The Vision Coalition

Bettina Tweary Riveros, Redding Consortium member, shared an update about the Vision Coalition, a public-private partnership working on the Student Success 2025 initiative. On March 17th, 2023, the Coalition fostered a conversation on educational equity concerning school funding with Sen. Lockman and approximately 140 community members and students in attendance. The second series, "Money Matters," discussed how school funding impacts student success; the meeting occurred on June 12th, 2023, at 1:00 p.m. Shelley Rouser and Julien Lafortune also led the second series discussion.

X. Public Comment

Karen Eller asked the Redding Consortium to send flyers of the Redding Schools Support Scholarships to eligible schools to share with school personnel. She also noted that the Nurse Practitioner at the Bancroft School is limited as they work at three schools in the Christiana School District. Therefore, Eller expressed the need to hire more medical personnel within the Bancroft School.

Sen. Lockman adjourned the meeting at 7:16 p.m.

Redding Consortium for Educational Equity
Full Body Meeting Attendance List

Redding Consortium Members

Senator Elizabeth Lockman, Co-Chair
Matt Denn, Co-Chair
Aaron Bass
Hugh Broomall, proxy for Dorrell Green
Sen. Eric Buckson
Rep. Nnamdi Chukwuocha
Tika Hartsock
Lincoln Hohler
Raye Jones Avery
Kevin Kelley
Chuck Longfellow, proxy for Dan Shelton
Margie López Waite
Maria Matos
Jeffrey Menzer
Xavia Mills
Noelle Picara
Sean Sokolowski, proxy for Joseph Jones
Jennifer Thompkins
Bettina Tweardy Riveros
Danya Woods
Director Cerron Cade - ex officio
Secretary Rick Geisenberger - ex officio
Secretary Mark Holodick - ex officio

Members of the Public

Dawn Alexander
Madeleine Bayard
Paul Dunford
Karen Eller
Nicole Freedman
Krystal Greenfield
Susan Haberstroh
Pei-Jen Hickey
Lynne Howard
Nicholas Konzelman
Anesha Law
Alice Leonce-Stevens
Jerome Lewis
Fran O'Malley
Keith Roberts
Rep. Cyndie Romer
Lucinda Ross
Jarrett Royster
Cora Scott
Jim Simmons

IPA/DSU Staff

Haley Burns
Alaina Robinson
Shelley Rouser
Kelly Sherretz
Ashley Wilkinson