

**Wilmington Education
Improvement Commission**
Solutions for Delaware Schools

August 18, 2015

Formation and Membership of the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission

Dear Parents, Students, Educators, Community Residents and Leaders, and Friends;

On the heels of Governor Markell's [historic signing](#) of House Bill 148 and Senate Bill 122 on the steps of the historic **Hockessin Colored School 107C**, we are pleased to announce the formation and membership of the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission.

The new Commission is a community-based council with 23 members from Wilmington and New Castle County, including elected officials, community leaders, school district and charter representatives, teachers, parents, and students. A list of the Commission's members and committee co-chairs is included on the following pages. Elizabeth Lockman, a Wilmington parent and education advocate, Kenny Rivera, President of the Red Clay School Board and a teacher at Brandywine High School, and I will be leading the Commission. Dan Rich, professor and former University of Delaware provost, will serve as policy director. The work of the Commission and its committees will be supported by the Institute for Public Administration at the University of Delaware.

The Commission is charged with implementing the recommendations outlined in the final report of the Wilmington Education Advisory Committee, [Strengthening Wilmington Education: An Action Agenda](#). While many of those recommendations focus on improvements in the quality and availability of pre-K through grade 12 education in Wilmington and New Castle County, much of the Commission's mandate is statewide. This is particularly relevant to schools throughout Delaware with high concentrations of children living in poverty and English language learners. By Delaware law, the Commission sunsets in 2021. In the near term, much of the Commission's work will be to provide the State Board of Education with a plan for transition, resources, and implementation required for effective redistricting in New Castle County in a manner consistent with the school governance recommendations outlined in the final report of the Wilmington Education Advisory Committee. A summary of the Commission's roles and responsibilities is included on the following pages.

Our work will be built on transparency, candor, debate, and deliberate action, and—most importantly—with students, parents, and families at the center of everything we do. The time to act is now.

We look forward to you joining us and welcome your input and feedback. You can learn more about the work of the Commission, the schedule of meetings (all of which are public), and how you can help, at our website that will be launched by September 1: www.solutionsfordelawareschools.com.

Sincerely,



Tony Allen, Ph.D., Chairman, Wilmington Education Advisory Committee

www.solutionsfordelawareschools.com

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Wilmington Education Improvement Commission

Fact Sheet

Wilmington Education Improvement Commission (WEIC)

- Established by state law HB148 to advise the Governor and General Assembly on:
 - Improvements to the quality and availability of education for children in Pre-K through grade 12 in the City of Wilmington and New Castle County (NCC);
 - Actions to address the needs of all Delaware schools with high concentrations of children living in poverty and English language learners (ELLs); and
 - Recommended policies and actions to promote the continuous improvement of public education.
- A community-based council outside of state agencies, mandated to work across all governmental units, educational entities, and private and nonprofit institutions to support the implementation of all recommended changes from the final report of the Wilmington Education Advisory Committee (WEAC), *Strengthening Wilmington Education: An Action Agenda*.
- Will submit an annual report to the Governor and General Assembly and will sunset on June 30, 2021.

Commission membership

- Limited to 23 members from Wilmington and NCC, most designated by position.
- Includes district, charter, parent, teacher, student, and community representatives.

Commission leadership

- Appointed by Governor Markell: Chairperson Tony Allen (banking executive, Wilmington and Red Clay resident); Vice-Chairperson Elizabeth “Tizzy” Lockman (Red Clay parent and education advocate); and Vice-Chairperson Kenneth Rivera (President of Red Clay Consolidated School Board and Brandywine teacher).
- Policy Director Dan Rich (University of Delaware)
- Administrative support is provided by the University of Delaware’s Institute for Public Administration.

Commission committees

- Will prepare recommendations to the Commission.
- The initial committees include: 1) redistricting; 2) charter and district collaboration; 3) meeting the needs of students in poverty; 4) funding; and 5) parent, educator, and community engagement.
- Will include membership beyond those represented on the Commission.

Commission redistricting responsibilities

- SB122 authorizes the State Board of Education to alter boundaries of school districts in NCC in a manner consistent with the recommendations made in the final WEAC report.
- The State Board’s action must be based on a transition, resource, and implementation plan prepared by WEIC.
- The General Assembly must pass, and the Governor sign, a Joint Resolution supporting the proposed changes.

The redistricting plan shall include and provide for

- Orderly and minimally disruptive reassignment of students affected by the boundary change and the reassignment of governance responsibilities;
- Implications for educators, administrators, and other personnel that may lead to equitable adjustments to local collective bargaining agreements;
- Funding resources to support the redistricting transition and provide effective education for all affected students, and for the support of schools with high concentrations of low income students and ELLs;
- Student transportation;
- Distribution of capital assets; and
- Engagement of educators, staff, parents, district personnel, and community members.
- Students to continue their attendance at the school they attended prior to the boundary change, with tuition payments by the sending district, until such time as the pupils complete the grade levels offered in that school.

www.solutionsfordelawareschools.com

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Prepared by the University of Delaware’s Institute for Public Administration, August 26, 2015.

Wilmington Education Improvement Commission Membership

Tony Allen, Ph.D., Chairperson
Wilmington resident and senior executive with
Bank of America

Kenny Rivera, Vice-Chairperson
President, Red Clay School Board and Teacher,
Brandywine High School

Elizabeth Lockman, Vice-Chairperson
Wilmington Parent, Education Advocate, and Public
Allies Alumna

Eve Buckley, Ph.D.
Parent and Education Advocate, Christina School
District

The Honorable Nnamdi Chukwuocha
Chair, Education, Youth & Families Committee,
Wilmington City Council

Rosa Colon-Kolacko, Ph.D.
Chief of Diversity Officer, Christiana Care

Karen Eller
Teacher, Christina School District and Member of
Wilmington Education Advisory Committee

Reverend Meredith Griffin
Chairperson, Education Committee
Interdenominational Ministers Action Council

Frederika Jenner
President, Delaware State Education Association

Yvonne Johnson
Parent and Education Advocate, Red Clay
Consolidated School District

Joseph T. Laws
President, Colonial School Board

Margie Lopez Waite
Head of School, L'Aspira Academy Charter School

Aretha Miller
Executive Director, Community Education Building

Harrie Ellen Minnehan
President, Christina School Board

Joe Pika, Ph.D.
Former President, State Board of Education

Chandra Pitts
Parent and Executive Director, One Village Alliance

The Honorable Charles Potter, Jr.
Representative, Delaware General Assembly

Vicki Seifred
Teacher, H.B. duPont Middle School, Red Clay
Consolidated School District

John Skrobot
President, Brandywine School Board

The Honorable David Sokola
Senator, Delaware General Assembly

Michelle Taylor
President, United Way of Delaware

High School Student
Red Clay School District

Breyonna Williams
Student, Colonial School District

Wilmington Education Improvement Commission Support

Provided by the University of Delaware's Institute for Public Administration

Dan Rich, Ph.D., Policy Director

Kelly Sherretz, Project Manager

Elizabeth Burland, Administrative Coordinator

Jerome Lewis, Ph.D., IPA Director and Senior
Policy Advisor

Ed Freel, Senior Policy Advisor

Liz Farley-Ripple, Ph.D., Policy Advisor

Neil Kirschling, Policy Advisor

Sarah Pragg, Communications Advisor

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Wilmington Education Improvement Commission Committee Chairs

Redistricting Committee

Joe Pika, Ph.D., Former President, State Board of Education

Henry Harper, Ph.D., Former Superintendent, Appoquinimink School District

Charter and District Collaboration Committee

Eve Buckley, Ph.D., Parent and Education Advocate, Christina School District

Aretha Miller, Executive Director, Community Education Building

Meeting the Needs of Students in Poverty Committee

The Honorable Chandlee Kuhn, Former Chief Judge, Family Court

Michelle Taylor, President, United Way of Delaware

Jackie Jenkins, Ed.D., Education Advisor, Office of the Mayor of the City of Wilmington

Funding Student Success Committee

Jill Floore, Chief Financial Officer, Red Clay Consolidated School District

Mike Jackson, Deputy Comptroller-General, State of Delaware

Parent, Educator, and Community Engagement Committee

Yvonne Johnson, Parent and Education Advocate, Red Clay Consolidated School District

Chandra Pitts, Parent and Executive Director, One Village Alliance