



STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
THE TOWNSEND BUILDING 401
FEDERAL STREET, SUITE 2
DOVER, DE 19901

January 31, 2016

Dear Dr. Allen:

On January 21, 2016, the State Board of Education (Board) took action on the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission (WEIC) submitted plan, "Redistricting in the City of Wilmington and New Castle County: A Transition, Resource, and Implementation Plan." The Board voted to return the plan to WEIC and send a letter detailing reasons and outstanding concerns with the proposal. In returning the plan, this allows the Commission to resubmit the plan for reconsideration within 60 days.

Reasons for returning the plan as expressed by the Board are outlined below:

- A clear connection was not sufficiently established that identified how shifting district boundary lines would lead to improved student outcomes.
- There are not commitments to evidence based programs and best practices to address instruction, student learning outcomes, and support services for all Wilmington students now and throughout the proposed implementation timeline.
- The proposed weighted funding recommendations are not broad enough for meaningful city-wide change. The proposed timeline and distribution for funding does not provide an equitable impact for all students in the City of Wilmington.
- There is not an executive summary or concise overview that outlines all associated costs with appropriate categorization mapped to implementation milestones.
- Without milestones connecting the work of other WEIC committees, it is unclear how essential services and supports will integrate with redistricting efforts to allow meaningful impact on student outcomes.
- There is not a clear and concise summary of required components for the redistricting transition, resource, and implementation as it relates to the overall timeline. It is difficult to differentiate what's required immediately versus the broader recommendations within the full report.
- A lack of milestones related to relevant work to be done by the Department of Elections.

- The Board does not support all components within the “Board Resolution” and does not support the inclusion of a “Board Resolution” within the WEIC proposal.
- The Board expressed concerns with the proposed approach around suspension of the implementation timetable and expiration of the plan.
- It is not clear how broad and sufficient community/stakeholder support for this proposal will be sustained throughout the duration of the implementation timeline and beyond.
- Potential for duplicative actions and additional levels of bureaucracy among WEIC and other entities (IRMC, Office of Early Learning, P-20, Delaware Charter Schools Network, etc.) are referenced in the proposal.

We thank all members of WEIC and their subcommittees for their hard work and steadfast commitment to this important work. We share your passion around improving educational opportunities for our children in the City of Wilmington, and the desire to embrace this unique opportunity to take action toward that end.

We look forward to your response. Please copy Ms. Donna Johnson, SBE Executive Director, and direct all questions to donna.johnson@sbe.k12.de.us or [302-735-4010](tel:302-735-4010).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Teri Quinn Gray".

TERI QUINN GRAY, PH.D.
PRESIDENT

Cc: Members of the Delaware State Board of Education
Ilona Kirshon, DAG
S. Elizabeth Lockman, WEIC Vice Chair
Kenneth Rivera, WEIC Vice Chair
Dan Rich, Policy Director