

Wilmington Education Improvement Commission
Fiscal Impact Ad-Hoc Committee
DSEA Newark Offices
Meeting Minutes – January 27, 2017

Dr. Joe Pika, Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:01am.

J. Pika thanked the committee members for their commitment and for their attendance at the meeting.

Meeting Overview

J. Pika mentioned that he sees gaps in the draft report's data and that there are items the group still needs to talk through.

J. Pika said the group is in good shape overall. He mentioned the group's goal is to be completely wrapped up and finalized with the report by February 20, 2017 so that the committee has adequate time to review the report.

J. Pika transitioned the discussion to Chris Kelly to lead the report review.

C. Kelly first asked the group if there were any issues or concerns with the minutes from last committee meeting. There were none raised.

Report Review

C. Kelly initiated the discussion about the report when he reviewed the data with the group, page by page.

Jill Floore said that she would like to see some clarification on data pertaining to the students that would transfer from CSD to RCCSD. In response to J. Floore's request, Karen field Rogers said she will contact R. Silber for clarification.

C. Kelly transitioned the discussion to the data on page 8 of the report regarding students currently choosing into Christina School District (CSD) Wilmington Schools.

J. Pika said R. Silber had provided some edits for the report. He emphasized that only eight buildings are to actually be included in the report.

C. Kelly asked the group if the report should have a footnote that states this analysis is based on the current configuration of Red Clay Consolidated School District (RCCSD).

In response to C. Kelly's question, J. Floore emphasized that there is supposed to be a year of planning to figure out the reconfiguration of the schools, and that it would be impossible to accurately predict the costs of reconfiguration without this planning period.

C. Kelly transitioned to table 5 on page 15 of the report that lists the impacted federal grants. He asked the group if everyone was comfortable with the table. Everyone said yes.

In response to C. Kelly's question, Jeff Taschner requested that the group reinforce that these numbers are based off of 100 percent of the students transferring over to RCCSD; in reality, the amounts will be lower.

J. Floore raised a concern with how data was presented in the report. She expressed concern that the totals listed in table 7 make it look like all student needs will be met with redistricting because it only focuses on the transfer of state funding.

J. Floore expressed concern that the General Assembly will think that the transfer of state funding will be sufficient to address student needs.

C. Kelly said he will add transportation for students who choose to stay in CSD to additional costs to consider.

K. Field Rogers said she supports adding transportation costs to the additional costs section since there will be students who choose to stay where they currently are and will need transportation.

John Marinucci said there are still some unknowns regarding the redistricting that the group will just not know and cannot account for.

J. Taschner asked J. Pika if students only get one chance to make a decision to choice into or choice out of CSD.

In response to J. Taschner's question, J. Pika said yes, students only get a one-time opportunity to choose if they are choicing in or out of CSD. He said they can choose to leave or stay after they make their first choice, but they will only be counted in their first choice.

C. Kelly asked the group if there were any questions or comments for tables 7 and 8 on pages 17 and 18 in the report. None were raised.

C. Kelly transitioned the discussion to Division II Funding. He asked if the group had any points for discussion and there were none.

C. Kelly moved the discussion to State Equalization Funding and asked the group to look at table 11 on page 21.

C. Kelly transitioned the discussion to the summary of state fiscal impact on page 23 of the report.

Tammy Croce reiterated J. Floore's earlier point that the report not mention the words "additional funding" because they can be misleading.

J. Floore emphasized that the word "additional" to describe funding should be completely taken out of the report. She recommended using the phrases "movement of funding" or "a shift of funding" instead.

In response to J. Floore's point, C. Kelly said the report wording will be changed to "movement of funds" or "shift in funds."

J. Pika announced to the group that the total fiscal impact of redistricting will be displayed in the local section of the report.

C. Kelly suggested that the local section displaying the total fiscal impact be moved to the front of the report.

C. Kelly transitioned the discussion to the local funding section.

C. Kelly said more assumptions need to be added to the local funding section.

C. Kelly referenced table 17 on page 25 when talking about local per pupil expenditures for RCCSD and said the group needs to figure out how it is going to account for “General with Additional Support” for PreK students, Grades 4-12 students, Basic students, Intensive students, and Complex students.

C. Kelly asked the group if the “General with Additional Support” wording is self-explanatory and the appropriate wording.

In response to C. Kelly, J. Floore said to take out “General with Additional Support” and replace it with an “Additional Support” section and a “Total” section.

J. Pika said WEIC will need additional funds to support high-needs students coming into RCCSD.

J. Pika said the reconfigured schools should focus on the extra money that the district will have allocated for them.

J. Pika transitioned the discussion to table 18 on page 26 of the report that showcases the projected local per pupil expenditures for City of Wilmington students attending CSD schools at 2016-2017 RCCSD rates. He asked J. Floore about the funding equations and she provided an explanation.

J. Pika clarified to the group that the students coming from CSD to RCCSD will have needs beyond what are being met by the federal and the state funds, so local supports will be needed.

J. Marinucci recommended that the report add a footnote for table 18 on page 26 regarding the transfer of students for the local per pupil expenditures.

J. Pika asked the group if everyone understood all the work the committee has to do for this section. In response to J. Pika’s point, C. Kelly said he will add the tax pool to the projected local per pupil expenditures section on page 26 of the report.

J. Pika called attention to the debt service section on page 31 of the report. J. Floore said that the committee will need the buildings’ debt to be presented by fiscal year, and not as outstanding totals.

C. Kelly transitioned the discussion to the match tax on page 28 of the report. He asked J. Floore to explain the match tax to the group.

In her discussion of the match tax, J. Floore said that RCCSD is only allowed to levy taxes for \$422,000. She said the assumption that the match tax cap could rise depending on student population should be added to the report. She said the match tax could perhaps increase by 15 percent if the student population for RCCSD increased by 15 percent as well, and match tax expenditures could increase by five cents.

J. Floore and K. Field Rogers both agreed to help C. Kelly draft and word the match tax section of the final report.

C. Kelly transitioned the group discussion to tuition tax on pages 28 and 29 of the report.

C. Kelly referenced tables 25 and 26 when he said the group still needs to add additional detail for tuition revenues and expenditures.

In response to C. Kelly's comment, J. Floore said the group has a lot of work to do for this section.

C. Kelly transitioned the discussion to the capital funding section on page 30 of the report. He announced to the group that Ted Amman sorted through which RCCSD facilities assessment items the group should be considering for the final report.

Next Steps

J. Pika said he and C. Kelly will discuss dates to figure out which dates work for everyone for the next committee meeting.

J. Pika ended the meeting at 11:10am.