

Wilmington Education Improvement Commission

Fiscal Impact Ad-Hoc Committee

Marshallton Education Building, Sharp Conference Room

Meeting Minutes – December 9, 2016

Dr. Joe Pika, Chair, called the meeting to order at 2:05pm.

J. Pika thanked the committee members for their commitment and facilitated greetings of the committee members participating through conference call.

Committee Update

J. Pika mentioned that the group needed to discuss setting up January committee meetings during this session. J. Pika then asked Chris Kelly to go over the meeting agenda with the committee members.

C. Kelly asked the committee members if they had any objections to the October meeting minutes and there were none. C. Kelly then went over the project proposal and budget estimates with the members. Karen Field Rogers asked C. Kelly if the Institute for Public Administration (IPA) will be signing the project proposal. C. Kelly replied yes to K. Field Rogers' question and said that IPA's director Dr. Jerome Lewis will be signing the proposal. C. Kelly asked the committee if they had any other questions about the project proposal and there were no further questions.

C. Kelly transitioned the discussion to the progress report. He announced the data collection is underway. In response to C. Kelly's announcement, J. Pika expressed concern that the completed data analysis will not be finished soon enough to be presented to the General Assembly. He mentioned that there will be a delay with the state budget this year since Delaware is going through a transition from Governor Markel to Governor Carney. J. Pika emphasized that the committee's goal is to have all the data and materials collected in time for the January committee meetings.

C. Kelly transitioned the discussion to the fiscal impact analysis and went over the outline of the report. He described what the completed report will look like and what kind of data and information it will contain. C. Kelly confirmed with Jill Floore that the match tax, tuition tax, and NCC tax pool will have their own analyses in the final report.

J. Pika mentioned that it is important to note whether Christina School District (CSD) or Red Clay Consolidated School District (RCCSD) has the higher tax rate.

C. Kelly mentioned to the committee that capital funding research on technology costs, child nutrition costs, and staff costs need to be included in the final report. In response to C. Kelly's comment, John Marinucci mentioned the complicated matter of a higher/lower pay scale. He said it is important for the committee to look at which school district's pay scale for custodial staff is higher/lower.

C. Kelly announced that the goal of this committee is to be lean with the fiscal impact analysis. He asked committee members if they had any questions on the general outline or if they felt anything was missing from it. There were no questions or concerns raised.

Working Group Updates

C. Kelly transitioned the discussion to the working group updates.

State/Federal Working Group

C. Kelly said the unit count analysis is in good shape. He asked the group if they had any questions or concerns about the unit count. There were none.

C. Kelly went over the student demographic data with the committee. He asked K. Field Rogers to explain the data. K. Field Rogers said that the data shows exactly where City of Wilmington students residing in the Christina School District go to school and which programs (PreK, K-3, Grades 4-12, Basic, Intense, and Complex) they are involved in, as well as which building the students are in.

In response to the discussion on the student demographic data, J. Pika said about half of the students listed in the data actually go to schools in the Christina School District.

Upon reviewing the student data, J. Floore expressed concern over 400 students from last year's student population missing from this year's data. She said she will discuss this concern with Bob Silber to figure out who the missing students are.

In response to J. Floore's comment, Tammy Croce said that maybe a portion of the 400 missing students moved out of the City of Wilmington, which was included in last year's WEIC analysis.

Jeff Taschner said that the committee has an obligation to the General Assembly to provide information on all the students impacted by the redistricting, and therefore the committee should take the time to look into the 400 students not accounted for in the data.

J. Pika asked J. Floore how much more student data the committee needs, and J. Floore's response was that she will touch base with Bob Silber to figure out the student demographic numbers.

C. Kelly transitioned the discussion to the working group's conference call with U.S. DOE. K. Field Rogers explained to the committee how U.S. DOE will need advance notice about Delaware DOE's plans for redistricting if it is approved. She also mentioned that there will be a new calculation for Title II funding next year.

J. Pika asked the group if they had any questions, and no one had any.

C. Kelly moved the discussion to the state equalization analysis. He said he spoke with Ed Ratledge about the state equalization formula and E. Ratledge said the formula will stay the same. There were no questions or comments about the state equalization formula.

Capital Working Group

C. Kelly said the facilities assessment is in good shape.

C. Kelly provided an overview of the first few pages of the RFP for the facilities assessment. This analysis will reflect the cost of transferring buildings from one district to another, not the cost of changing programs or the type of school (ex: elementary to middle school).

C. Kelly said Ted Ammann reached out to Delaware Department of Technology Information (DTI). He said that more information from DTI is to follow next week.

K. Field Rogers said that she has new information from the Treasurer's Office that she will send to C. Kelly.

C. Kelly announced to the committee that he is in the process of reviewing the WEIC transition plan.

J. Taschner said that a separate assessment will be needed if costs change. He said conducting a separate assessment is the honest way to go about recognizing additional and future costs.

In response to J. Taschner's comment, J. Pika acknowledged that changing and additional costs are things the committee needs to address. He then transitioned the discussion to the local working group update.

Local Working Group

J. Floore said that she and Bob Silber will need to go through the district data progress report. C. Kelly asked J. Floore if the December 22nd deadline is possible for her and B. Silber to go through the district data by. J. Floore said yes it is possible.

C. Kelly announced to the group that E. Ratledge sent the demographic trends data for impacted school districts that will predict shifts over the next ten years.

J. Floore said that local per pupil expenditures need to be looked at from different demographic trends since there are different local per pupil expenditures for different student demographics.

J. Pika asked the committee if they felt the working groups have been working well. J. Taschner responded yes and mentioned how the local working group has been talking about the NCC tax pool. In regards to the NCC tax pool, J. Floore mentioned that splitting it would be efficient and beneficial for the school districts.

Upcoming Meetings

J. Pika transitioned the discussion to upcoming committee meetings. The group approved a committee meeting for Friday, January 13 at 9-11am and for another meeting on Friday, January 20 at 2-4pm. J. Pika ended the meeting at 3:29pm.