

Redding Consortium for Educational Equity

Funding and Governance Work Group

September 10, 2020 5:00-6:30 p.m.

Meeting Minutes

Welcome & Roll Call

Eugene Young, Co-Chair of the Funding and Governance Work Group, welcomed all and reminded the attendees of the Zoom meeting protocols. Nnamdi Chukwuocha, Co-Chair of the Funding and Governance Work Group, expressed his excitement to work on their recommendations. Young requested Haley Qaissaunee, Institute of Public Administration (IPA) staff to conduct the roll call. Qaissaunee completed the roll call.

Final Review of Work Plan

Young reviewed the new timeline that reflected the Work Group's shift from governance to funding. He explained the goal was to present a deliverable to the entire Redding Consortium for Educational Equity (Redding Consortium) in December 2020. Young described the proposed work areas which included short term and long-term goals. The short-term goals focused on referendum reform, New Castle County Tax District, and research on opportunity funding and CARES Act funding.

Funding 101 Session

Qaissaunee stated the purpose of the Funding 101 presentation was to provide the Work Group Members with foundation that will guide them as they construct their recommendations. Cimone Philpotts, IPA doctoral student, explained the history of Delaware's funding education system and an overview of Delaware's student composition. Philpotts, discussed Delaware's resource allocation model and how it applies to students in different demographics. Maria Matos, Work Group member, expressed that English Learners do not receive adequate funding in Delaware.

Chris Kelly, IPA staff, explained the mechanics of Delaware's funding system. He reviewed the state, federal, and local components. During the presentation, Rick Geisenberger, Work Group member and the Delaware Secretary of Finance, added the Work Group must consider the debt and construction costs Delaware has in comparison to other states. Matos asked for clarification on special education. Kelly responded that Special Education funding spans between K-3 but is not institutionalized in the funding code permanently. Kelly briefly reviewed capital finance, Opportunity funding, and CARES Act funding. Philpotts discussed the equity challenges caused by Delaware's education funding system. Alexis Wrease, IPA, closed with research done by Bruce D. Baker, explaining the connection of school funding to student outcomes.

New Castle County District Funding Updates

Jason Hale, Work Group member and Chief Financial Officer (CFO) of Brandywine School District, covered the impacts of COVID-19 on school districts. He explained that there are funding concerns due to the pushed back enrollment counts and due to the impacts of COVID-19 on state and local funding.

Chuck Longfellow, Work Group member and CFO of Christina School District, discussed CARES Act funding. He explained that 43.5 million dollars were allocated for elementary and secondary education. He added that the districts were given 12 allowable uses for the CARES Act funding and goes over each one. Tika Hartsock, Work Group member, asked if meal programs and waivers will be impacted by CARES Act funding. Longfellow responded that those programs were funding separately by the Department of Agriculture.

Jill Floore, Work Group member and CFO of Red Clay Consolidated School District reviewed the property reassessment ruling and ACLU Funding Lawsuit. Floore explained that the property reassessment lawsuit is currently in the remedy phase. She added this case was critical for it will impact the districts and the taxpayers. She expressed that the CFO's hope for regular and reoccurring reassessment of properties.

Emily Falcon, Work Group member and CFO of Colonial School District explained opportunity funds. She stated the two parts of Opportunity Funding: flexible funding for high-needs students and funds for mental health and reading support. Falcon reviewed how the New Castle County school districts utilized the Opportunity funding. She added there is concern when the Opportunity Funds ends next year and providing additional resources for high-needs students.

Qaissaunee opened the floor for Consortium members to ask questions. Senator Anthony Delcollo, Work Group member, asked how Delaware's education system was equal but not equitable. Hale explained that the inflexibility of the funding system led to inequities. Senator Laura Sturgeon introduced a group of constituents that attended the meeting due their interest in referendum reform. She added the group was interested in the Work Group's recommendations.

Public Comment

Helga Huntley asked what the Work Group's action steps are for creating a polished policy proposal for referendum reform. She also requested to know if the Work Group will return to formulating recommendations on governance. Young responded the Work Group is designing the action steps on referendum reform and does intend to return to their work on governance.

Meeting ended at 6:48 p.m.

Attendance

Consortium Members

Nnamdi Chukwuocha—Co-chair

Eugene Young—Co-chair

Aaron Bass

Anthony Delcollo

Emily Falcon

Jill Floore

Richard Geisenberger

Dorrell Green

Jason Hale

Tika Hartsock

Linc Hohler

Chuck Longfellow

Maria Matos

Jeff Menzer

Dan Shelton

Margie Lopez Waite

Mary Nash Wilson

Institute of Public

**Administration/Delaware
State University**

Jason Bourke

Christopher Kelly

Jerome Lewis

Francis O'Malley

Cimone Philpotts

Kelly Sherretz

Haley Qaissaunee

Alexis Wrease

Public

Dwayne Bensing

James Berry

Evelyn Brady

Christine Breder

Regina Sidney-Brown

Owen Butler

Luann D'Agostino

Lisa Edler

Amy Gallagher

Helga Huntley

Lynne Howard

Laurie Jacobs

Jamie Johnstone

Ruth Ann Jones

Laurissa Schutt

Tamara Smith

John Skrobot

Laura Sturgeon

Amy Trauth

Jennie Yeow

Edna