

Redding Consortium for Educational Equity

Full Body Meeting Minutes

November 4, 2021

5:00-7:00 p.m.

Welcome & Roll Call

The virtual meeting started at 5:00 p.m. Co-chair for the Redding Consortium for Educational Equity (Redding Consortium), Matthew Denn welcomed all in attendance. Denn held a moment of silence to honor the legacy of the late, former Governor Ann Minner.

Presentation from Governor John Carney—Wilmington Learning Collaborative

Denn introduced Governor Carney. Carney stated addressing the challenges of Wilmington schools and students is a personal and public priority. Carney explained the importance of the Consortium's work in crafting recommendations for redistricting. He added the proposal that he is going to share needs to be implemented because Wilmington students cannot wait another minute.

James Simmons, Chief Equity Officer at the Delaware Department of Education presented the proposal entitled, the Wilmington Learning Collaborative (WLC). Simmons outlined the various educational challenges Wilmington schools face. He reviewed the structure, target initiatives, funding sources, and the timeline for the WLC. Simmons explained the WLC was derived from best practice research. Additionally, he emphasized that every school would remain in their same district. Carney added the WLC would be substantially state funded. He reiterated the WLC would be complimentary to the Consortium's work and recommendations.

Co-chair, Senator Tizzy Lockman, guided the question and answers section of the presentation related to the WLC. Maria Matos, Consortium member, requested the estimated budget. Carney explained they are still finalizing the budget but will share that information when it is prepared. Dawn Alexander, member of the Social Determinants Work Group, asked how charters schools will be included or benefit from the WLC. Carney said the advantage was unity and building continuity for students. The follow-up question was about how schools would be incentivized to join the WLC. Carney stated the incentive was focusing on students, community engagement, and increasing schools' capacity. Tika Hartsock, Consortium member, asked how teacher seniority would be affected. Simmons responded teacher contracts would remain the same, so teacher seniority would be unaffected. Lockman read a question from the chat about how the WLC was different from past initiatives. Carney stated the WLC actively incorporates community voices and is based on best practice research. Margie López Waite, Consortium member, inquired about the models used to form the WLC. Simmons said the models were from school districts in Waco, Texas, Denver, Colorado, South Bend, Indiana, Memphis, Tennessee, and Springfield, Massachusetts. Waite asked if the WLC Board of Trustees would have sole governance over the WLC school district. Simmons explained that had yet to be decided but would be outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). Shelly Rouser, member of the Educator Work Group, asked what elements the WLC had to promote continuity across schools and build curriculum support. Simmons said this would have to be decided with the MOU, but there will be community conversations to determine the best way to meet this need. Secretary of Education Susan Bunting added that

continued professional development and training, funded through the state was critical. Hartsock inquired if the WLC schools will be on the same calendar or follow the district calendar. Simmons said this will be decided when the MOU is finalized.

Co-Chair of the Governance Work Group, Representative Nnamdi Chukwuocha, expressed his concerns about the WLC. He stated in the past he supported a similar model, but now believes allowing schools to voluntarily participate will not work. He is concerned the WLC Board of Trustees and the school boards would not be able to work together. Carney acknowledged Chukwuocha's concerns, but said he still believes this was the best path forward. Matos extended her support for this initiative. She added this plan would be successful if it remains student-focused and schools are able to maintain autonomy.

Representative Baumbach asked in the chat, if the MOU lists the necessary criteria for the WLC Board of Trustees. Carney says that still had to be determined. Kristin Dwyer, member of the Settlement Work Group, asked if schools were going to be fully staffed before the WLC was implemented. Simmons responded this may not be viable, because of the teacher shortage issues.

Lockman and Denn thanked Governor Carney and his team for their detailed presentation.

Consortium's Recommendations for the Governor's FY23 Recommended Budget

Denn requested the co-chairs of each work group craft a proposal for any recommendations that need reoccurring funding for the Governor's budget. Superintendent Dan Shelton, member of the Funding and Governance Work Group, suggested each work group involve business managers as they finalize their budget requests. Denn said he trusts the co-chairs to create the recommendations and consult business managers. Rick Geisenberger, Consortium member, advised the co-chairs work quickly, because anything presented during the last deliberations are usually not included.

Matos asked if any portion of the Delaware Department of Education's (DDOE) budget would be for the WLC. Jon Sheehan, the Special Assistant to the Governor, responded the WLC budget is separate from DDOE budget.

Meeting Minutes

The Consortium passed a motion approving the minutes from the previous Full Body Consortium meeting.

Public Comment

Representative Ramone asked the meeting attendees to send love and prayers to the families of former Superintendent of colonial school district George Meney.

Bill Doolittle stated the WLC is a reasonable path forward, but he was concerned the current school construction formula does not account for the necessary space for high needs students. He added his frustration about not providing the resources teacher's need that contribute to teacher retention. Doolittle said that slow progress is being made because of 15 million dollars allocated for Wilmington students, 80 million dollars is actually needed.

Meeting ends at 6:18 p.m.

Attendees

Consortium Members

Dan Shelton
Lincoln Hohler
Nick Konzelman—OMB Rep
Matthew Denn
Margie López Waite
Jeffry Menzer
Stephanie Ingram
Maria Matos
Tizzy Lockman
Michael Smith
Tika Hartsock
Nnamdi Chukwuocha
Joseph Jones
Rick Geisenberger
Aaron Bass
Danya Woods
Noelle Picara
Hanifa Shabazz
Raye Jones Avery
Dorrell Green

IPA/DSU Staff

Haley Qaissaunee
Kelly Sherretz
Alexis Wrease
Cimone Philpotts
Jason Bourke

Members of the Public

Steven Davis
Daniel Rich
Chuck Longfellow
Governor John Carney
Tanya Hettler
Paul Baumbach
Tessa Wallace
Cathy Thompson
Kin W
James Simmons
Jon Sheehan
Jeff Taschner
Gwen Angalet
Bill Doolittle
Kathleen Baker
Leslee Love
Kirsten Olson
Paul Fine
Marissa Alberty
Becky Ryan
Dawn Alexander
Logan Herring
Mark Holodick
Tammy Croce
Cindy McDaniel
Alonna Berry
Emily Falcon
Joe Pika
Shelly Rouser
Kelsey Mensch
Lucinda Ross
Nanci Hersh
Sherae'a Moore
Deirdra Joyner
Karen Eller
Everett Anderson
Tom Ogden
Sorbello
Krystal
Kia Baker
Cyndie Romer
Mary Schorse

Laura Wallace
Annastasia Purinton
Sason Haberstoh
Linda Jennings
Vanessa Rose
Alex
Cora Scott
Susan Bunting
JJ Francis
Justin Richards
Sheila Grant
Michael Ramone
Laurisa Schutt
Ms. Lewis
Ihsan
Gina Moody
Equetta Jones
Deidra Joyner
Bill Doolittle
Maddie Geller