

**DRAFT: October 26, 2015, not reviewed by the Redistricting
Committee or the Commission, not for dissemination or
attribution**

Wilmington Education Improvement Commission

**REDISTRICTING IN NEW CASTLE COUNTY
A TRANSITION, RESOURCE AND
IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

**INTERIM PLAN
November 17, 2015**

**Submitted to
The Delaware State Board of Education**

Wilmington Education Historical Timeline¹

- 1897** Separate educational system is encoded in 1897 constitution.
- 1921** Delaware General Assembly (GA) requires separate but equal schools; 50 separate school districts operate in the state.
- 1954** Brown v. Board of Education; desegregation ordered, but compliance is limited.
- 1956** Evans v. Buchanan first brought to court; court orders desegregation, but implementation is delayed.
- 1957** U.S. District Court requires Delaware to develop a comprehensive desegregation plan.
- 1965** State Board of Education (SBOE) adopts resolution to close smaller schools and phase out the last “black school district.”
- 1968** GA passes Education Advancement Act, consolidates smaller districts (Wilmington excluded), and provides equalization funding.
- 1971** Education Advancement Act is challenged in U.S. Supreme Court; Evans v. Buchanan reopened.
- 1974** U.S. District Court decides Wilmington schools are segregated; Education Advancement Act declared unconstitutional.
- 1976** Evans v. Buchanan; court mandated inter-district busing, upheld through repeated appeals.
- 1978** “9–3” busing school desegregation plan is implemented.
- 1980–1981** GA passes law prompting SBOE to create four districts in New Castle County; court upholds.
- 1980–1990s** Sustained pressure to desegregate districts in Delaware, but also gradual loosening of desegregation standards nationally.
- 1993** State of Delaware requests unitary status for four districts; U.S. District Court assents (1995).
- 1995–1996** Court-ordered federal supervision of desegregation ends; busing continues largely unchanged.
- 1995** GA formally amends state constitution to abolish separate education system.

¹ Hoff, S. (2007, August 14). Delaware’s constitution and its impact on education. Eccel, J. (2012, April 1). History of public education in Delaware during past 50 years.

- 1996** Delaware School Choice Program approved (partly a response to busing).
- 1996** GA passes legislation allowing charter schools.
- 1998** Wilmington High School closes as a traditional school and building reopens with a magnet school (Cab Calloway School of the Arts) and a charter school (Charter School of Wilmington).
- 2000** Neighborhood Schools Act dramatically reduces busing.
- 2001** Report mandated by Neighborhood Schools Act titled "They Matter Most" is released; the report is adopted by Wilmington City Council with additional recommendations, but no state action is taken on the recommendations.
- 2006** Coalition of government, education, business, and community leaders establishes Vision 2015 and releases plan to develop world-class public education for Delaware.
- 2006** Hope Commission Report is produced and a new nonprofit is created; recommendations are made with no action.
- 2008** Wilmington Education Task Force convened by Senator Margaret Rose Henry; recommendations are made with no action.
- 2013** Mayor's Youth, Education and Citizenship Strategic Planning Team established but issued no formal report.
- 2014** Governor Markell creates the Wilmington Education Advisory Committee (WEAC).
- 2015** Delaware General Assembly approves and Governor Markell signs House Bill 148 establishing the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission (WEIC).
- 2015** Delaware General Assembly approves and Governor Markell signs Senate Bill 122 authorizing the State Board of Education to change boundaries of northern New Castle County school districts in a manner consistent with the WEAC final report and based on a transition, resource and implementation plan developed by the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission and submitted by December 31, 2015.
- 2015** The Commission releases interim plan for public comment on November 17, 2015.
- 2015** The Commission submits final plan to the State Board of Education on December 17, 2016.

Placeholder Page

To be provided as part of the full draft interim Plan:

Publication Page

Acknowledgements Page

List of Member of the Commission and its Committees

Table of Contents

Timetable for Commission and State Board Action

August 2015	Commission Established
August–September 2015	Commission presents to all four school district boards on WEIC and the planning process
September–November 2015	Commission conducts town hall meetings in all school districts on WEIC and the redistricting planning process
September 15, 2015	IPA reviews schedule, outline, and analysis plan with the Commission and Redistricting Committee
September 17, 2015	Commission presents to the State Board on WEIC, the redistricting plan schedule and outline, public record
October 15, 2015	Commission presents to the State Board an update on plan and its development, including the defined public record
November 5, 2015	Commission leadership meets with the State Board at the State Board of Education retreat
November 17, 2015	Commission reviews draft plan and makes it available for electronic and written public comment
November 19, 2015	Commission delivers draft plan to the State Board
Nov. 17, 2015–Jan. 14, 2016	State Board receives electronic and written public comment
Nov. 30, 2015–Dec. 4, 2015	Period for four Public Hearings
December 8, 2015	Commission meets to review possible revisions in draft plan
December 15, 2015	Commission approves Plan for submission to the State Board
December 17, 2015	Commission presents and submits Final Plan to State Board
January 21, 2016	Project date for State Board Action on Plan as a package
March 31, 2016	Commission and State Board Authority Ends

Part I: Introduction

Redistricting, above all else, will advance student learning, particularly for low-income students in Wilmington and northern New Castle County. Most of these students are black or Latino. The current arrangement of districts, after four decades, has failed to accomplish the educational outcomes it was intended to achieve. Subsequent state policies have diluted the original rationale for the four-district structure and effectively negated some of the original expected benefits. Most seriously, the existing district structure fragments responsibility for the effective governance of public education in Wilmington. As such, it constitutes a barrier to improvements in student learning. That barrier can and should be removed. Removing that barrier must start with the State Board of Education's approval of the Commission's plan as an integrated whole.

The Case for Redistricting

The evidence is indisputable that the arrangement of districts imposed by court order for the express purpose of improving the conditions of black students who had been systematically disadvantaged by segregation and unequal resources has been a failure.

- It has failed to achieve the racial integration that was its principal rationale. Wilmington schools in the four traditional school districts are among the most racially-segregated schools in Delaware and their concentration of low-income students is among the state's highest.
- It has failed to ameliorate the resource inequity that was a major motivating factor in the court-ordered district plan. The needs of students in many schools in Wilmington and northern New Castle County often far exceed what can be addressed through a standard allocation of state and local funds. In essence, *the resource inequity that typified segregated schools in Delaware is manifested in new ways with equally debilitating consequences for student learning and student lives.*
- It has failed to overcome the barriers to student learning and achievement. After forty years of experience with the current district arrangement and after four decades of educational reform efforts, thousands of Wilmington children, most of them poor, black or Latino, still do not have access to high-quality public education. As described in the final report of the 2015 Wilmington Education Advisory Committee: "Judged on most outcomes—test scores, truancy, graduation rates, college attendance, socio-emotional well-being, drug use, homelessness, arrests, and unemployment—these children have become data points for a system of failure." (p. 13)

No level of Delaware government or public referendum by past or current residents ever approved the existing district arrangement in Wilmington and northern New Castle County. Indeed, it was imposed by the federal court precisely because Delaware decision-makers at all levels failed to act on the U.S. Supreme Court's mandate from *Brown v. Board of Education*. While Delaware government refused to act on the earlier ruling, it did act over the last 20 years to dilute the impact of the four-district solution imposed by the federal court.

The 1995 legislation promoting school choice and leading to the proliferation of charter schools, most concentrated in or around Wilmington, combined with the passage of the Neighborhood Schools Act in 2001 effectively reversed most of the integration that had been achieved. These policies had the additional effect of further fragmenting the responsibility for governance of public education in Wilmington and across northern New Castle County.

The result is that today, there are 18 separate governing units responsible for delivering public education to approximately 11,500 Wilmington children with no unified plan, few efforts at collaboration, and virtually no requirements to function as a coordinated public education system. This fragmentation has no justification other than inertia.

- No reasonable body of decision-makers would conclude that it is in the best interest of the students in Wilmington to partition the city into four district zones, resembling most closely the political partition of Berlin after World War II, and then to overlay upon this partitioned structure a vo-tech district that operates largely as a separate system, and then to add to this already fractured arrangement a proliferation of charter schools that have been authorized and approved by the state with no overall plan as to how they should contribute to the net benefit of student learning.
- No reasonable body of decision-makers would try to justify a discontinuous school district with parts on different sides of New Castle County separated by nearly 20 miles of interstate highway the original purpose of which no longer is even recognized and no longer is supported by state policies.
- No reasonable body of decision-makers would try to justify a role in the governance of Wilmington public education for a school district that has no schools in the city nor any within six miles of its Wilmington students, when there are schools from three other districts in closer proximity to where those students live and when half of the Wilmington students in that district already choose to attend schools in other districts and charters.

This fragmented structure has profound impacts that extend beyond Wilmington and affect public education throughout New Castle County. The current fragmentation encourages competition and displacement among district, vo-tech and charter schools. Cooperation, collaboration and shared learning across the sub-systems are the exception rather than the norm. Efforts to improve student learning seldom follow a unified or coordinated strategy across districts and charters and even when such strategies are proposed, coordinated implementation is rare—and often resisted. Increasingly, public resources are dispersed among competing units at growing public expense. Perhaps most disconcerting, when a district or charter does succeed, it is virtually impossible to scale-up that success to the public education system as a whole. Indeed, the operation of this system has become increasingly contentious and there is rarely any vision projected of how the complex and often competing arrangement of districts and charters will result in stronger public education for all students. Rather than serving the best interests of all children, the system follows a logic of serving its own fraction of children.

Students are losing opportunities. Delaware, Wilmington, and New Castle County students should be better off having a rich diversity of educational assets—traditional schools, vo-tech schools, magnet schools, charter schools and many different programs and options within schools, but much of that potential benefit is being squandered because the focus of efforts now is on the parts and not the whole. Taking best advantage of these assets is not easy and at times not even possible. Even the process of producing this redistricting plan has been influenced by the fragmented responsibilities for Wilmington public education—the Commission separately engaged school districts which, quite naturally, focus on the benefits and impacts for each district rather than on how the sum of the separate district decisions will impact the overall strengthening of public education for all students in Wilmington and northern New Castle County. This is not the product of indifference on the part of district leaders or boards, but quite the contrary, the product of dutifully carrying out their designated and separate responsibilities under the current arrangement of public education. Even so, the Commission has no interest in promoting winners and losers among the components of the public education system nor in exercising fidelity to the interest of one district over others; our interest is strengthening the overall performance of the public education system on behalf of all students.

Every public education system in the world that has made significant progress in accelerating learning for all of its students has a coherent and responsive governance arrangement, one that can

- focus responsibility for leadership,
- help students and parents benefit to the maximum degree from all the assets in the system,
- maximize the benefits of public investment in support of the overall improvement of public education, and
- measure progress not by the relative and transient standing among the uncoordinated and competing parts but, instead, by the effectiveness of the system as a whole in supporting higher levels of learning for all students.

Achieving these goals requires actions that go far beyond an alteration of boundaries among traditional school districts. Most of all, the change in boundaries must be accompanied by a new vision, backed by common commitment, on strengthening public education in Wilmington and northern New Castle County—and by extension all of Delaware. That outlook must focus on all facets of the system, including how Vo-Tech and charter schools may better enrich the overall performance of the public education system rather than largely function as publicly-financed alternatives. It must also be accompanied by the resources needed to address the challenges facing schools with high concentrations of low-income students and other students at risk. And it must mobilize the capacity of all sectors and all facets of our communities in stronger, more sustained and more coordinated support of all of our schools. These are essential ingredients of a system that will strengthen student learning in a continuous and sustainable fashion.

Redistricting is the critical starting point for a more coherent and responsive system of public education governance that can better address the learning needs of all students in Wilmington and northern New Castle County. The Delaware General Assembly, with large bipartisan majorities, and Governor Jack Markell have given the State Board of Education the authority to embark on a new pathway for public education in Wilmington and northern New Castle County. This is the first and only affirmation of the need for action on redistricting by the Delaware State Government since *Brown v. Board of Education* in 1954. The State Board of Education has a unique opportunity. Approval of this redistricting plan will take advantage of this opportunity. It is time to act.

State Board Action on the Comprehensive Redistricting Plan

The redistricting plan is a complex undertaking that must be viewed as an integrated whole. The parts of the plan are interconnected and interdependent, and intendedly so. Simply altering district boundaries without other critical changes in resources, cross-sector community support, and the development and application of stronger educational and learning models will be insufficient and should be unacceptable. The State Board has spoken loud and clear: it expects that changes in district boundaries should improve student learning. The Commission agrees and the *comprehensive and integrated redistricting plan* is designed to meet that expectation.

Under the provisions of SB122, the State Board has the authority to act upon the plan submitted by the Commission in its entirety. The redistricting resolution that follows enables the State Board to approve the submitted plan in its entirety, inclusive of all provisions in the body of this document.

The State Board's authority to approve the plan is separate and distinct from the authority required to carry out the plan. Virtually all public-education plans require the actions of many institutions and individuals to bring about the prescribed changes. In approving the plan, the State Board is affirming the full framework for redistricting, inclusive of the student, personnel, resource, facilities and related provisions needed to assure that implementation can reliably result in higher levels of student learning. Carrying out the plan requires actions by many institutions over a period of three to four years.

- The **school districts** must develop and carry out their own more detailed plans to reassign students in a manner that is *minimally disruptive and enhances learning opportunities for all students*.
- The **Board of Elections** must *adjust nominating districts for the election of school board members* reflecting the changes in district boundaries and resulting population shifts.
- The **district administrations** working with **local bargaining units** must make *equitable adjustments in the assignments of educators, administrators and other personnel consistent with collective bargaining agreements*.
- The **Governor and General Assembly** and the **school districts** must *allocate the resources needed to support the redistricting transition and provide for the equitable*

and effective education of all students and for the support of schools with high concentrations of low-income students and English Language Learners. Institutions from all sectors, including **higher education, nonprofit and community service organizations, foundations and the private sector** must mobilize support for Wilmington schools and students.

- **Educators, staff, parents, district personnel, and community institutions and members from all sectors** must be engaged to accomplish the multi-year transition process in order to enhance student learning.
- The **Wilmington Education Improvement Commission** must monitor and facilitate the various stages of implementation, working with all those who are central to implementing the plan and reporting on progress to the Governor, General Assembly and the State Board of Education.

All of this and more will be set in motion by the State Board's approval of this plan and the subsequent confirmation of that approval by the passage of a Joint Resolution by the General Assembly then signed by the Governor. Upon State Board approval, the Commission will initiate the set of concurrent actions needed for the next stage of implementation in 2016-2017. This will include:

- submission of legislative proposals for funding,
- coordination with the Department of Education (DOE) and districts of the detailed planning for all impacted schools, including those schools previously designated by DOE as *priority schools*,
- mobilization of support from partner institutions, including higher education, nonprofit and community institutions, Student Success 2025, the Access to Justice Commission, the State's Education Funding Improvement Commission, and others, and
- Commission engagement with the districts and other partners in support of all facets of the next stage of implementation.

Each year the WEIC will facilitate implementation and undertake a parallel process of public engagement. The Commission will report back to the State Board on a continuing basis on the progress of each stage of implementation, and confirm whether the needed decisions, resources and institutional supports are in place to move forward at each stage of the process.

Organization of the Plan

This introduction is followed by the Redistricting Resolution for State Board action. Approval of the Redistricting Resolution will signify adoption of all parts of the Plan.

Part II of the Plan presents the foundations for State Board action, beginning with the analysis and recommendations of the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission, the resulting and applicable legislation, and the work of the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission. Part II concludes with a profile of the demographic and other

characteristics of Wilmington and New Castle County students and families as well as a description of schools and enrollments.

Part III reviews the specific redistricting recommendations in the final report of WEAC. The analysis in Part III then focuses on each of those recommendations, beginning with the recommendation that the Christina School District should no longer serve Wilmington students and that the Red Clay Consolidated District should take responsibility for the Wilmington students and schools now in the Christina School District. Part III then addresses the WEAC recommendation that the Colonial School District should no longer serve Wilmington students. The Commission's recommendations on both of these changes form the basis for the subsequent sections of the transition, resource and implementation plan.

Part IV illustrates the likely impacts of redistricting on the demographic and enrollment characteristics of all four New Castle County traditional districts and considers as well the ways in which choice, charter and vo-tech enrollment may influence these impacts.²

Part V addresses the resources needed to fund student success, beginning with the need for funding that addresses the needs of students in poverty, English Language Learners and other students at risk. Part IV reviews the resources needed for the redistricting transition and for student success after the transition. The analysis also addresses key actions needed to strengthen the revenue structure and capacity at both the state and local levels and the priority of support for early childhood education and college and career readiness.

Part VI addresses community and institutional support resources needed for the success of schools with high concentrations of low-income students, English Language Learners and other students at risk. It describes how the work of the Commission, through its committees on meeting the needs of students in poverty, charter-district collaboration, and parent, educator and community engagement will mobilize support needed for these schools and students. Part VI identifies concurrent Delaware initiatives that align with the changes proposed by the Commission and that will positively reinforce the student learning outcomes from the recommended changes.

Part VII provides a transition plan for redistricting between the Christina and Red Clay districts that addresses all requirements stipulated in the legislation and also describes how the transition will be conducted with minimal disruption to students, parents and educators and with strong collaboration between the two districts. Part VII is based on the extensive work of the two districts and is fully consistent with the framework for planning developed by each district that has been reviewed and endorsed by the [this is pending the actions over the next two weeks Christina and Red Clay Boards of Education. The framework for planning of each district is included, in its entirety, as Appendix B and C.

Part VIII will provide a transition plan for redistricting impacting the Colonial School District once the path forward on this component of redistricting is resolved. This section will be completed once the current discussions with the Colonial School Board and administration

² Note: The illustrations in this section use data for 2013 and will be updated once a new data-set is available and analyzed.

and other impacted school boards and administration are completed and the path forward is resolved and then reviewed by the Redistricting Committee and confirmed by the Commission.

Part IX provides full narrative and graphic descriptions of the current boundaries of the four New Castle County districts. These boundaries have been confirmed with each of the districts. Part VIII also provides full narrative and graphic descriptions of the altered boundaries to be approved by the State Board of Education.

The appendices to the Plan are of particular importance since they contain much of the documentation supporting key facets of redistricting action. The appendices include the history of legislation, the transition plans developed by the Christina and Red Clay Consolidated School Districts, the record of activities and actions by the Commission, the description of the information constituting the public record and other documentation and evidence of consequence to the State Board's action.

Redistricting Resolution

The Full Resolution will be inserted in the final copy of the plan.

WHEREAS, 14 Del. C. § 1026(d) authorizes the Board of Education of the State of Delaware (the “Board of Education”) to alter school district boundaries in New Castle County “in a manner consistent with some or all of the redistricting recommendations made by the Wilmington Education Advisory Committee in the report issued March 31, 2015 (the “Report”);

WHEREAS, the Board of Education has reviewed the plan (the “Plan”) of redistricting for the school districts located in New Castle County proposed by the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission, and provided comments and suggestions on the Plan;

WHEREAS, such public hearings regarding the Plan, as required by 14 Del. C. § 1026(d)(2) have been conducted;

WHEREAS, the Board of Education has found that the Plan is consistent with the Report;

WHEREAS, the Board of Education has found that the Plan is in the best interests of the students served by the districts in New Castle County;

WHEREAS, Governor and the General Assembly are also required to pass a Joint Resolution supporting the Plan;

BE IT RESOLVED by the State Board of Education, after careful consideration that:

1. The full and complete Plan as specified in all sections of this document is hereby adopted. The full and complete Plan is attached hereto.
2. The boundaries of the school districts in New Castle County shall be confirmed as described in the Plan.
3. Upon State Board approval the Plan shall be submitted to the Governor and the General Assembly for the passage of a joint resolution supporting the Plan.
4. Upon passage of the Joint Resolution of the Governor and the General Assembly, the Plan shall be effective.

Part II: The Foundations for State Board Action

Part II of the implementation plan provides a framework for action by the State Board, focusing on four key foundational elements: (1) The work of the Wilmington Education Advisory Committee; (2) The legislative framework for action including a description of the elements of the plan specified to be submitted to the State Board; (3) The work of the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission in reviewing the recommendations of the WEAC final report and obtaining additional input and analysis to inform its recommendations regarding redistricting and the transition, resource, and implementation plan to be submitted to the State Board of Education as the basis for its decision; and (4) The demographic characteristics of Wilmington and New Castle County students and families including a profile of student enrollment in Wilmington and New Castle County schools.

Foundation One: Wilmington Education Advisory Committee

The recommendations of the Wilmington Education Advisory Committee (WEAC) serve as the foundation of the redistricting plan. In September 2014, Governor Jack Markell formed the Wilmington Educational Advisory Committee to recommend how to strengthen the public education system for all Wilmington students. The Advisory Committee's mandate was to recommend how to strengthen the public education system for all Wilmington students. Governor Markell charged the Advisory Committee with addressing the underlying challenges facing public education in Wilmington and proposing actions that will propel continuous improvements in Wilmington schools.

The starting point for the work of the Advisory Committee was the documented failure of public education for many Wilmington students combined with the absence of acceptance of collective responsibility for that failure.

“Today, thousands of Wilmington children, most of them poor, black, or Latino, still do not have access to high-quality public education. Judged on most outcomes—test scores, truancy, graduation rates, college attendance, socio-emotional well-being, drug use, homelessness, arrests, and unemployment—these children have become data points for a system of failure. Various groups address these challenges by blaming each other; government officials, parents, educational advocates, community and business leaders, unions, educational administrators, teachers, and, at times, even the children themselves are blamed for the failures of public education. This confrontational dialogue, which has generally focused on how one group can hold another group accountable, is now an embedded feature of Wilmington education.” (Strengthening Wilmington Education: An Action Agenda, p.13)

The Advisory Committee affirmed that “the simple and undeniable historical fact is that our entire Delaware community is responsible for the conditions that currently exist” and “only the entire community, acting together, will change these conditions, and even then it will not be easy.”

While diverse in membership, the Advisory Committee had shared expectations and agreement on the following guiding principles.

- “Delivering high-quality public education to all children, including those who are low-income, black or Latino, is not only a Wilmington problem. It is a challenge facing all of Delaware.
- All Wilmington schools should meet high and rising standards for student learning in Delaware and across the globe. There should be agreed-upon measures for student success in meeting those standards that apply to all schools.
- Parent and family engagement is critical to the effectiveness of public education, and we must establish a strong Wilmington education partnership between schools and the families they serve.
- All Wilmington students should have access to high-quality educators who are prepared to meet their diverse needs, and to the human and financial resources needed to support student success.
- Wilmington schools should be seen as community assets and must have allies to address the complex challenges of educating the city’s children. These allies include engaged families, community and business partners, early childhood educators, mental and physical health providers, institutions of higher education, and social service providers.
- Wilmington students should continue to be served by a combination of district, charter, and vo-tech schools. Policies and practices for Wilmington schools should promote collaboration, shared learning, and a mutual commitment to improvements that serve all students.” (WEAC final report, p.15)

The Advisory Committee reviewed the work of earlier commissions addressing the challenges of Wilmington education (Appendix XXX). The Advisory Committee’s deliberations also were framed by the longer history of Wilmington education, and the changes in conditions since 2001, when the first of the earlier commission reports on Wilmington education was issued. The Advisory Committee met with state and local government officials, including the Wilmington delegation of the General Assembly as well as legislators from other parts of New Castle County, the chairs of the Education Committees of the Delaware House of Representatives and Senate, Wilmington’s mayor and city council president and several members of Wilmington and New Castle County Councils. Presentations have been made to the Delaware House of Representatives and Senate Education Committees and the Wilmington City Council Education Committee. The Advisory Committee also met with state and district education officials, charter school leaders and advocates, and community advocates for education and made a presentation to the State Board of Education. In addition, educators, parents, and community members have attended our regular meetings. Beyond these meetings, the Advisory Committee solicited broad public input and commentary. The Advisory Committee’s interim report was made public on January 26, 2015, and comment was received from the Delaware community through the subsequent six weeks. The Advisory

Committee received input from the families, citizens, and leaders of Wilmington and from the districts and other institutions that would be impacted by our recommendations (see Appendix D of the WEAC final report).

The analysis and action agenda of the Advisory Committee focused on four areas: (1) Creating Responsive Governance, (2) Meeting Wilmington Student Needs, (3) Funding Student Success, and (4) Implementing Change. The Advisory Committee proposed that Strengthening Wilmington education requires that the proposed actions in all four areas be carried out in a systematic and coordinated fashion. "The effectiveness of the action agenda in each of the four areas", the Advisory Committee proposed, "is highly dependent upon the implementation of the action agenda in the other areas" (p.17).

Portions of the analysis and action agenda in the Advisory Committee's final report are referenced in the various portions of this Plan. Indeed the recommendations in the final report, *Strengthening Wilmington Education: An Action Agenda*, are the baseline for the work of the Commission and a key foundation upon which this Plan was developed.

Foundation Two: The Legislative Framework

As a result of the WEAC recommendations, WEAC supported five pieces of legislation during the 2015 legislative session. Two pieces were developed to create responsive governance. Both passed the General Assembly. Senate Bill 122 authorized the redistricting work and House Bill 56 placed a moratorium on charter school approval. One piece of legislation addressed implementing change, creating the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission, House Bill 148, passed. Two pieces of legislation aimed at meeting Wilmington student needs and funding student success were introduced but tabled. They were House Bill 30 expanding special education funding and House Bill 117 in relation to low-income student funding. All pieces of legislation can be found in Appendix __ Both SB122 and HB 148 are instrumental to the redistricting process.

House Bill 148 (HB 148) establishes the 23-member Wilmington Education Improvement Commission (WEIC) and mandates that it "shall advise the Governor and General Assembly on the planning, recommending, and implementing of improvement to the quality and availability of education for children Pre-K through grade 12 in the City of Wilmington and for which such changes may be instructive for addressing needs of all schools within the State with high concentrations of children living in poverty, English language learners, or both" (see appendix XX.) The Commission was initially proposed by the Wilmington Education Advisory Committee (WEAC) to recommend how to strengthen public education for all Wilmington students. The final report of WEAC, *Strengthening Wilmington Education: An Action Agenda*, was submitted to the Governor and General Assembly on March 31, 2015, and recommended the establishment of a "broadly-representative, cross-sector commission, outside of the current agencies of state government" to lead the planning and implementation of the recommendations in the report. Consistent with this recommendation, HB 148 mandates the Commission "to work

with and across all government agencies, educational entities, and private and nonprofit institutions to promote and support the implementation of all recommended changes from the Wilmington Education Advisory Committee (WEAC).” The legislation further directs the Commission “to monitor the progress of implementation and recommend policies and actions to the Governor and General Assembly to facilitate progress and to promote the continuous improvement of public education.” HB 148 explicitly directs the Commission to develop a “transition, resource, and implementation plan” to “effectively implement school district realignment” in a manner consistent with the recommendations of the WEAC final report and to submit that report to the State Board of Education by December 31, 2015.

Senate Bill 122(SB 122) amends Title 14, Chapter 10 of the Delaware Code relating to education and the reorganization and changing of school district boundaries (see Appendix XXX). The legislation stipulates that “the State Board of Education may change or alter the boundaries of school districts in New Castle County in a manner consistent with some or all of the redistricting recommendations made by the Wilmington Education Advisory Committee in the report issued on March 31, 2015, provided that the General Assembly passes, and the Governor signs, a Joint Resolution supporting the proposed changes.” The law further stipulates that in “its decision or order to change or alter a school district boundary,” the State Board of Education “shall adopt a transition, resource and implementation plan” that shall be developed by the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission. The Commission’s plan for presentation to and approval by the State Board is directed by the legislation to address, at a minimum, the following provisions:

- “(1) the orderly and minimally disruptive reassignment of students affected by the boundary change and the reassignment of governance responsibilities,
- (2) implications for educators, administrators, and other personnel that may lead to equitable adjustments to local collective bargaining agreements,
- (3) resources that will be required, from state, district, and local sources, to support the redistricting transition and provide for the effective ongoing education of all affected students, and for the support of schools with high concentrations of low income students and English Language Learners,
- (4) student transportation,
- (5) distribution of capital assets, and
- (6) engagement of educators, staff, parents, district personnel, and community members through-out the transition. (see Appendix XXX)”

The law is explicit that the plan “shall permit students to continue their attendance at the school they attended prior to the boundary change, with tuition payments by the sending

district as provided in Chapter 6 of this title, until such time as the pupils complete the grade levels offered in that school.”

The legislation is explicit that the State Board “shall base its decision to change or alter school district boundaries on a record developed in compliance with state open meeting laws.” Further, if the State Board “does not approve the plan as submitted by the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission, it shall notify the chairperson of the Commission in writing, given reasons why the plan was not approved, and allow the Commission to resubmit the plan within 60 days of the chairperson receiving the notice of denial.” The authority of the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission and the State Board of Education to act under the provisions of SB122 terminates on March 31, 2016.

The Commission’s transition, resource and implementation plan addresses all provisions stipulated in SB122. It contains additional information and analysis to inform the State Board’s decision and to promote effective implementation of school district realignment in Wilmington and northern New Castle County.

Foundation Three: The Wilmington Education Improvement Commission

One of the key recommendations in the final report of the Wilmington Education Advisory Committee was that a broadly representative, cross-sector commission, outside of the current agencies of state government, should lead the planning and implementation of the recommendations in this report. The Wilmington Education Improvement Commission, established by HB148, has acted as community-based council outside of state agencies, working across all governmental units, educational entities, and private and nonprofit institutions to support the implementation of all recommended changes from the final report of the Wilmington Education Advisory Committee.

The membership of the commission is limited to 23 members from Wilmington and New Castle County, most designated by position. It includes district, charter, parent, teacher, student, legislative, and community representatives. In addition membership includes the presidents of all four school districts. Much of the work of the Commission is carried out by its five committees that prepare recommendations for the review of the Commission: 1) redistricting; 2) charter and district collaboration; 3) meeting the needs of students in poverty; 4) funding; and 5) parent, educator, and community engagement.

The Redistricting and Funding Committees were responsible for most of the contributions to the redistricting plan but, all of the committees charges are aligned with the objectives of redistricting. These committees met multiple times a month, weekly and bi-weekly in many cases. All committee and commission meetings are open to the public.

Meeting the Needs of Students in Poverty

The charge to this committee is to develop a comprehensive plan for the integration of services for low-income children and families, and for schools with high concentrations of

poverty; apply a developmental model from birth through college and the workforce; and revitalize the existing policy infrastructure to implement the comprehensive plan.

Charter and District Collaboration

The overall charge of this committee is to support the development of a statewide plan for the configuration of schools; promote shared capacity and collaboration among district, charter, and vo-tech schools within the state and recommend the application of national best practices for the overall improvement of public education in Delaware.

Parent, Educator, and Community Engagement

The Parent, Educator, and Community Engagement committee assisted with setting-up and attending Town Halls. In addition the committee is charged with strengthening parent and family engagement in public education; supporting schools as community assets with allies from all sectors; and promoting ongoing, effective, two-way communication with parents, educators, and community residents.

Funding Committee

The funding committee used the WEAC recommendations as the initial basis of their work. Those funding issues fall into four categories: (1) an allocation formula, such as weighted students funding, for public school operating funds that responds to the added resource needs of schools with high percentages of low-income students, English Language Learners and other students at risk, (2) a sufficient revenue base to support the overall rising costs of the public education system, (3) an array of transition and capital resources needed to effectively implement the proposed district realignment, and (4) an allocation of funding for the additional programs and services, such as high-quality early childhood programs, required to meet the needs of students in poverty.

Redistricting Committee

The Redistricting Committee has been responsible for overseeing the development of the Commission's transition, resource, and implementation plan for redistricting. The committee has worked directly with the leadership of the impacted districts, who are represented among its members, with reports presented from the districts at each meeting. The Redistricting Committee and IPA staff developed the framework for the redistricting plan and the development and review of drafts of the plan. .

Public Understanding and Engagement

Public engagement with parents, students, educators and community members has been a key priority in the work for the Commission. All members of the community have been encouraged to attend Commission and committee meetings. In addition, the Commission has promoted public understanding and engagement in the following ways.

- Made presentations to the scheduled meetings of the Boards of Education of all four northern New Castle County Districts

- Hosted town halls for parents and community members in each school district
- Participated in invited presentations to numerous community organizations and groups, ranging from the Delaware State Education Association Executive Committee and Presidents, to the Latino Summit sponsored by the Delaware Hispanic Commission
- Engaged with over 2,000 participants with the Commission's Facebook page, Solutions for Wilmington Schools
- Established the website, solutionsfordelawareschools@gmail.com for posting of all schedules and minutes of Commission and committee meetings plus all written materials and resources used by the Commission
- Created the basis for the public record for State Board action that includes opportunities for public comment electronically, in writing or at four scheduled Public Hearings for which transcriptions will be made and submitted to the State Board

The Commission's work in the development of this transition, resource and implementation plan for redistricting is described in each of the following sections.

Foundation Four: Profile of Demographics

[All data will be updated for the final report with data from September 30, 2015]

Table 1: Profile of New Castle County Students and Families, 2013

[A profile of New Castle County demographics will be inserted here based on Census data. It will be similar to the Wilmington Students and Families 2013 Profile.]

Table 2: Profile of City of Wilmington Students and Families, 2013

Wilmington Population: 71,143

Race and Ethnicity³	
White	37%
Black or African American	56%
American Indian and Alaska Native	0.5%
Asian	0.5%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0%
Other	3%
Two or More Races	3%
Identify as Hispanic/Latino Ethnicity	8%

Income	
Median Household Income	38,727
Percentage of Children Ages 0 to 18 in Poverty	34%
Percent of Wilmington Students Classified as Low-Income in 2014	70%
Unemployment Rate	13.5%

Households	
Female Householder, No Husband Present	25.30%
Male Householder, No Wife Present	6.40%
Married-Couple Family	22.80%

Educational Attainment, 25 Years and Over	46,741
Less than 9th grade	5.80%
9th to 12th grade, No Diploma	12.70%
High School Graduate (includes equivalency)	33.40%
Some College, No Degree	18.80%
Associate's Degree	4.40%
Bachelor's Degree	14.60%
Graduate or Professional Degree	10.30%

Wilmington Students Enrolled in School, 3 Years and Over	17,782
Nursery School, Preschool	1,395
Kindergarten to 12th Grade (including private school enrollment)	12,445
College, Undergraduate	3,078
Graduate, Professional School	864

Public School Enrollment (2014–15 School Year)	11, 595
Number of Wilmington Students in Traditional Public Schools	8,457
Number of Wilmington Students in Charter Schools	2,475
Number of Wilmington Students in Vo-Tech Schools	643

Graduation Rate of Wilmington Students in 2014	68%
Delaware High School Dropouts from Wilmington in 2014	16%

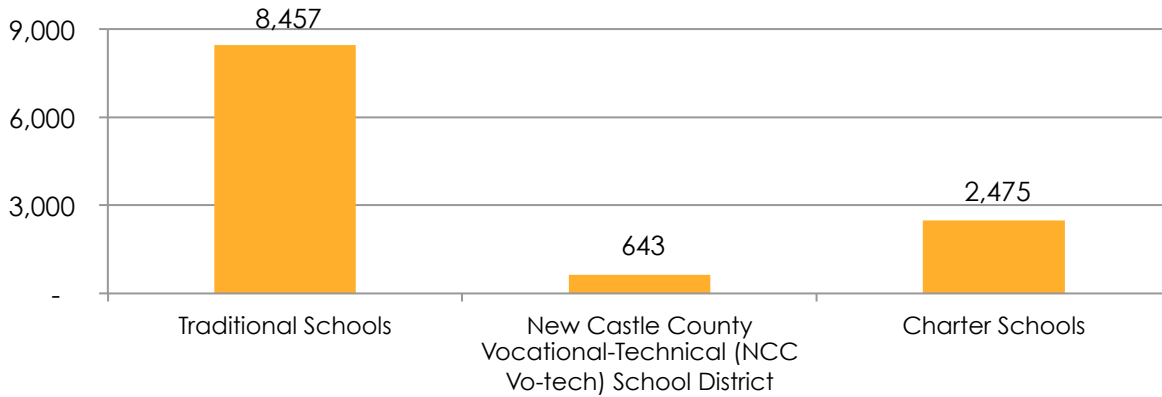
Sources: 2013 American Community Survey 5-Year Data and Delaware Department of Education Data Set, 2014-15 School Year

³ These percentages are only partially comparable to the census information on the city since the Department of Education reports Hispanic as a racial category, and the census reports it only as an ethnicity identifier.

Table 3: Wilmington Students Enrollment, 2014–15 Profile

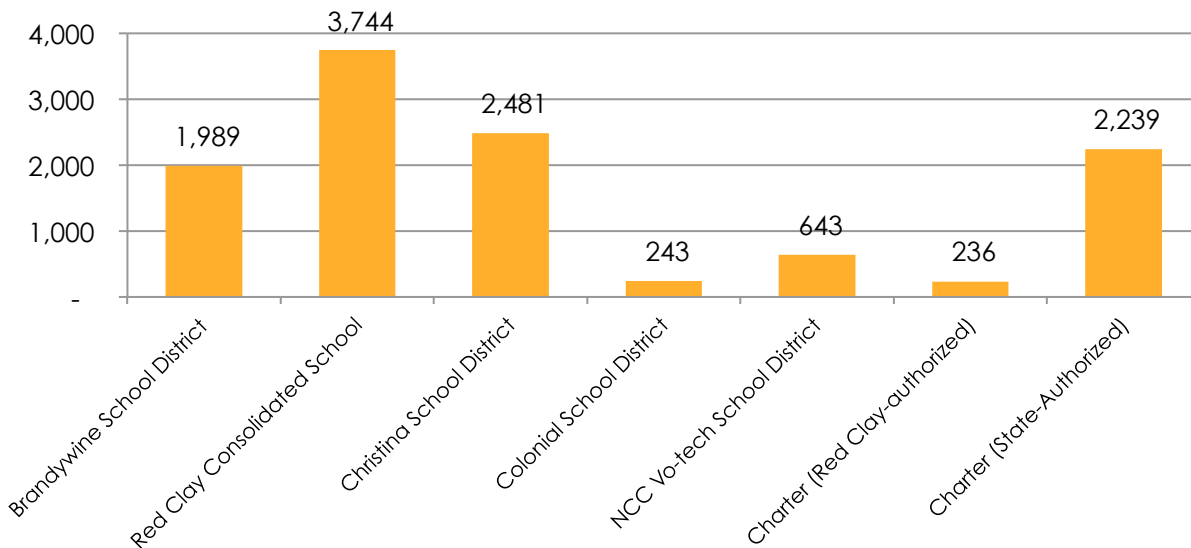
Wilmington Students in Public Schools, 2014–15: 11,595⁴
74% African American, 18% Hispanic, 7% White
70% Low-Income
Students in Public Schools Located in Wilmington, 2014–15: 11,233

Figure 1: Wilmington Student Enrollment by Public School Type, 2014–15 School Year



Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Set, 2014-15 School Year

Figure 2: Wilmington Student Enrollment, 2014–15 School Year



Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Set, 2014-15 School Year

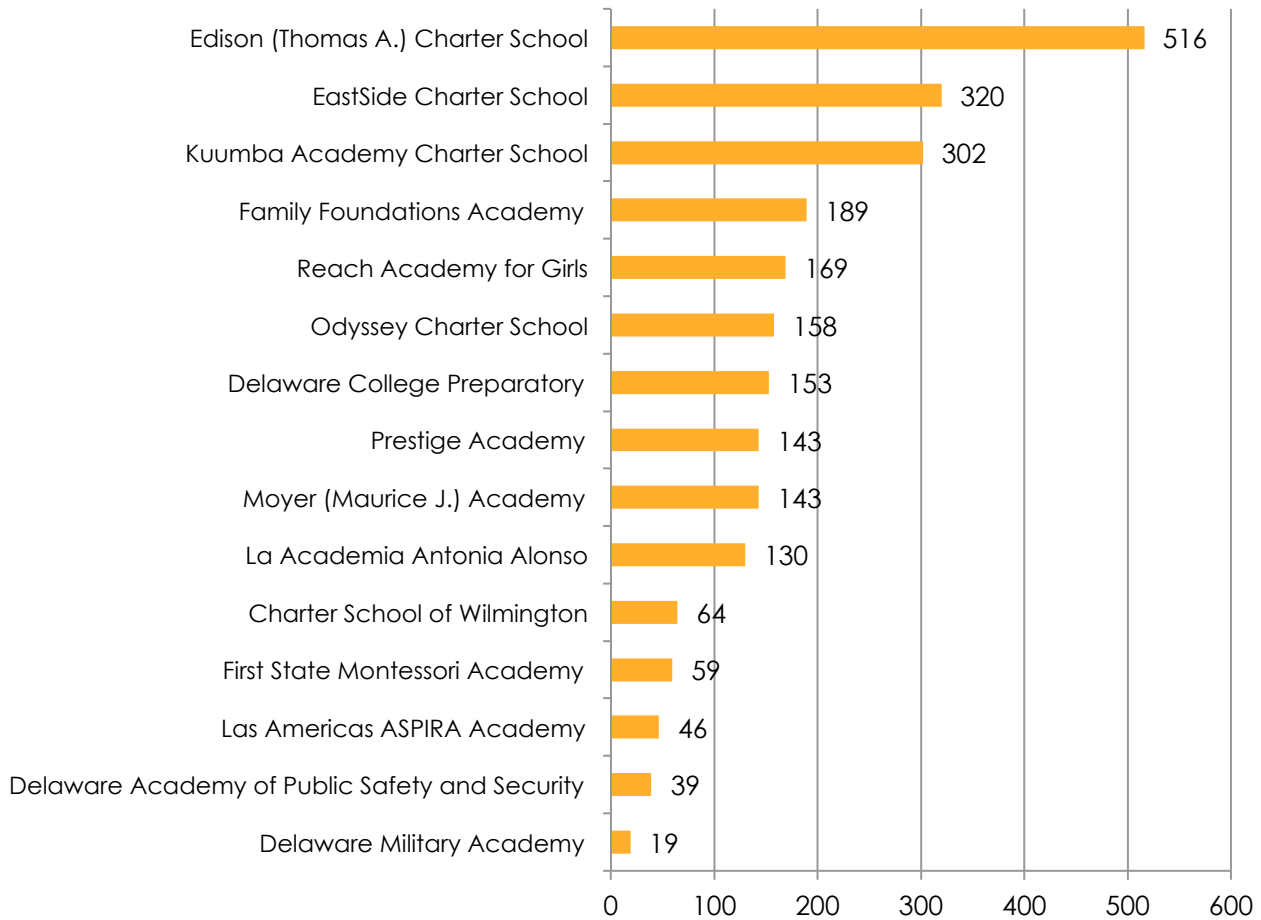
⁴ Enrollment numbers are determined by the September 30 count according to Delaware Department of Education. *Strengthening Wilmington Education: An Interim Report* cited 10,634 as the number of Wilmington students in 2013–14. This number represented the total enrollment of schools located in the city limits and did not include Wilmington residents who may be attending schools outside the city limits. Subsequently acquired data allow for a more accurate picture of Wilmington students based on residency. Accordingly, the number of students who lived within City of Wilmington limits was 11,437 in 2013–14 and is 11,595 in 2014–15.

Table 4: Wilmington Student Enrollment, 2014–15 School Year

Red Clay Consolidated School District*	3,744
Christina School District	2,481
Brandywine School District	1,989
NCC Vo-tech School District	643
Edison (Thomas A.) Charter School	516
EastSide Charter School	320
Kuumba Academy Charter School	302
Colonial School District	243
Family Foundations Academy	189
Reach Academy for Girls	169
Odyssey Charter School	158
Delaware College Preparatory Academy*	154
Prestige Academy	143
Moyer (Maurice J.) Academic Institute	143
Academia Antonia Alonso	130
Charter School of Wilmington*	64
First State Montessori Academy	59
Las Americas ASPIRA Academy	46
Delaware Academy of Public Safety and Security	39
Delaware Military Academy*	19
MOT Charter School	<15
Gateway Lab School	<15
Early College High School at Delaware State University (DSU)	<15
Silver Lake Elementary School (Appoquinimink School District)	<15
Middletown High School (Appoquinimink School District)	<15
Loss (Olive B.) Elementary School (Appoquinimink School District)	<15
W. Reily Brown Elementary School (Caesar Rodney School District)	<15
Dover High School (Capital School District)	<15

Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Set, 2014-15 School Year
 Note: * Red Clay-authorized charter schools are listed separately.

Figure 3: Wilmington Student Enrollment in Charter Schools, 2014–15 School Year



Source: Delaware Department of Education Data Set, 2014-15 School Year

Note: * Gateway Lab School, Early College High School at DSU, and MOT Charter School were not reported because fewer than 15 students are enrolled at each of these schools.

Table 5: Educational Attainment, Population 25 Years and Over, 2013

Educational Attainment	Wilmington	NCC	Delaware	United States
Less than a High School Diploma	18.5%	10.7%	12.3%	13.9%
High School Graduate (includes equivalency)	33.4%	29.1%	31.7%	28.1%
Some College, No Degree	18.8%	19.7%	19.9%	21.2%
Associate's Degree	4.4%	6.8%	7.3%	7.8%
Bachelor's Degree	14.6%	19.9%	17.2%	18.0%
Graduate or Professional Degree	10.3%	13.9%	11.7%	10.8%

Source: 2013 American Community Survey 5-Year Data

Figure 4: 2013 DCAS, All Students by District (Grade Level Aggregated)

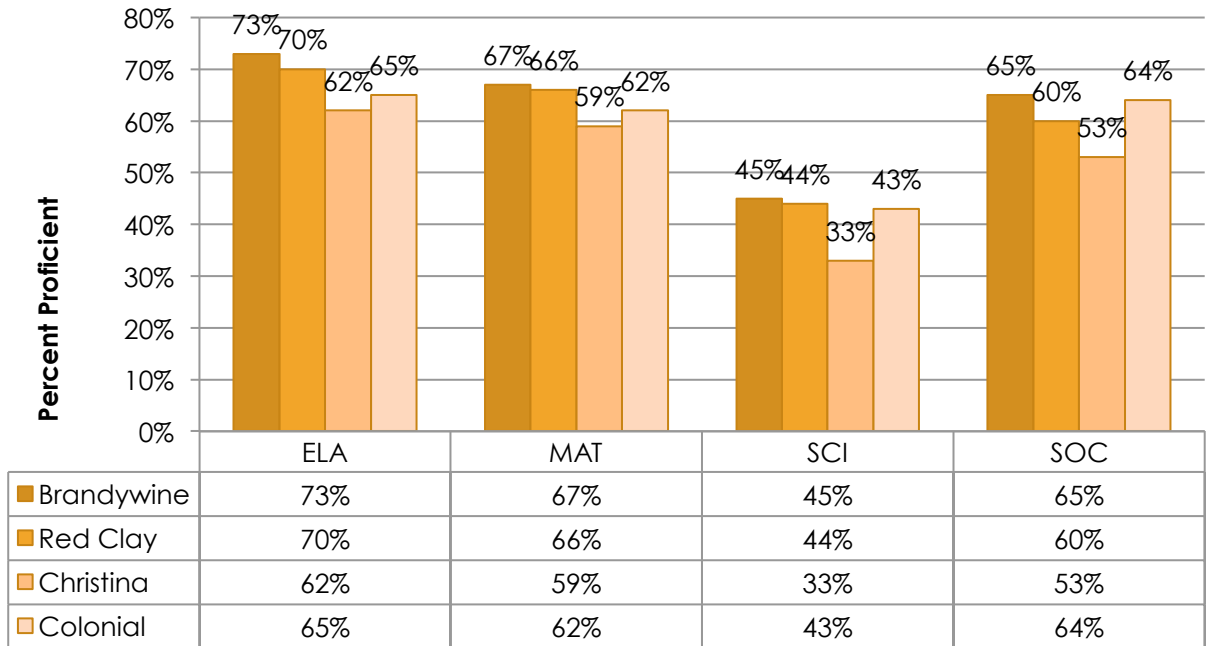


Figure 5: 2013 DCAS, All Low-Income Students by District (Grade Level Aggregated)

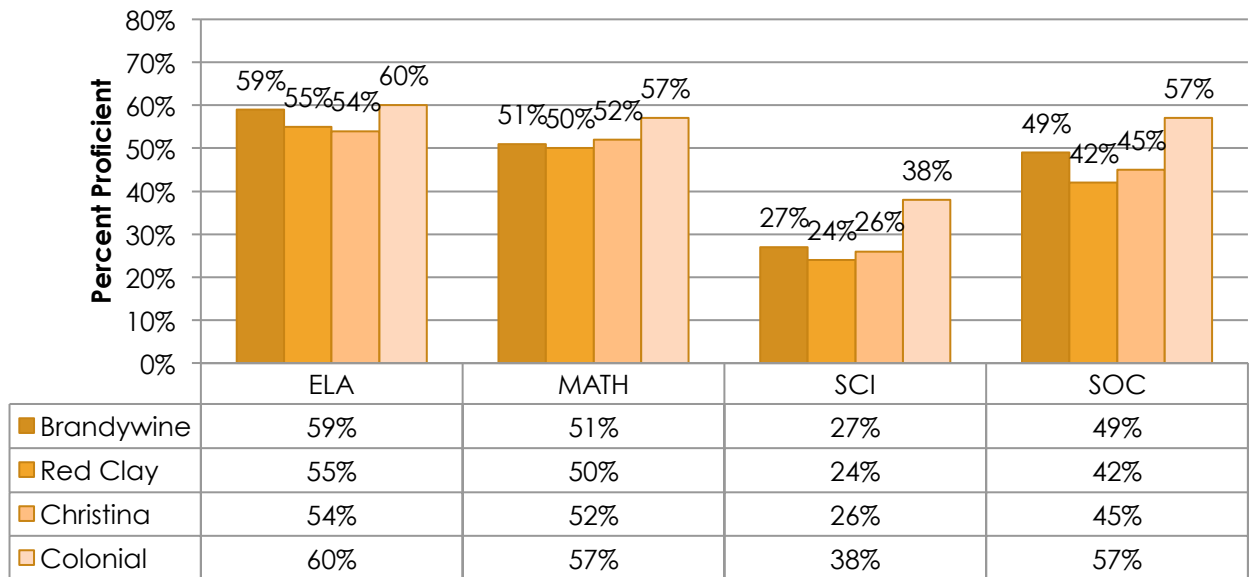


Figure 6 2013 DCAS, City of Wilmington Students by District (Grade Level Aggregated)

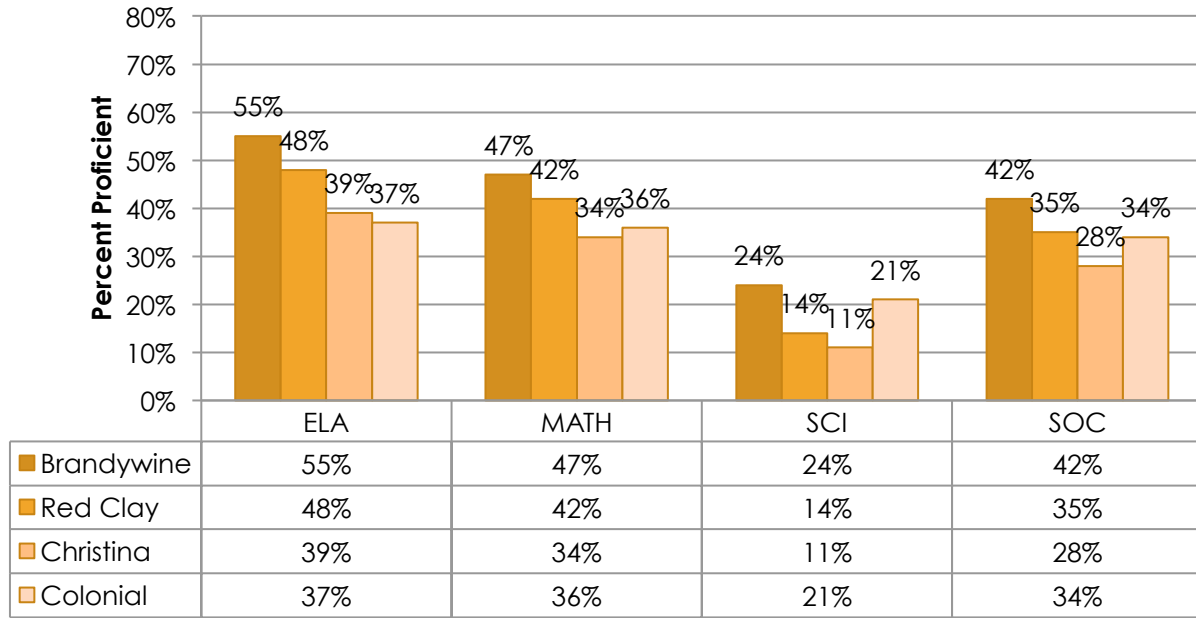


Figure 7: 2013 DCAS, Low-Income City of Wilmington Students by District (Grade Level Aggregated)

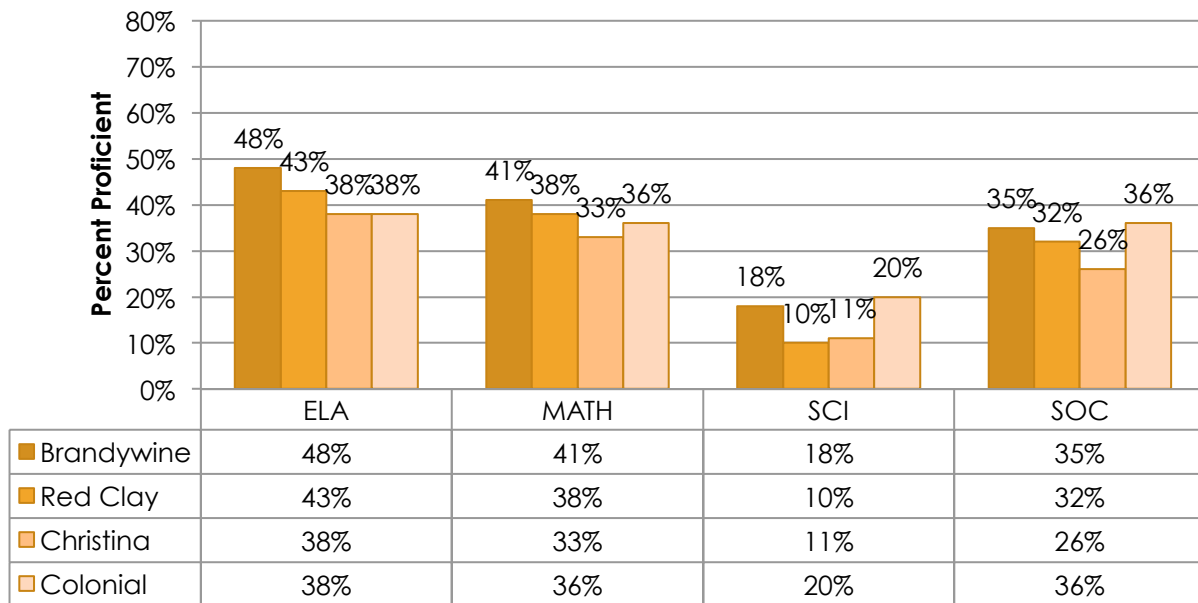


Figure 8: 2014 DCAS, All Students by District (Grade Level Aggregated)

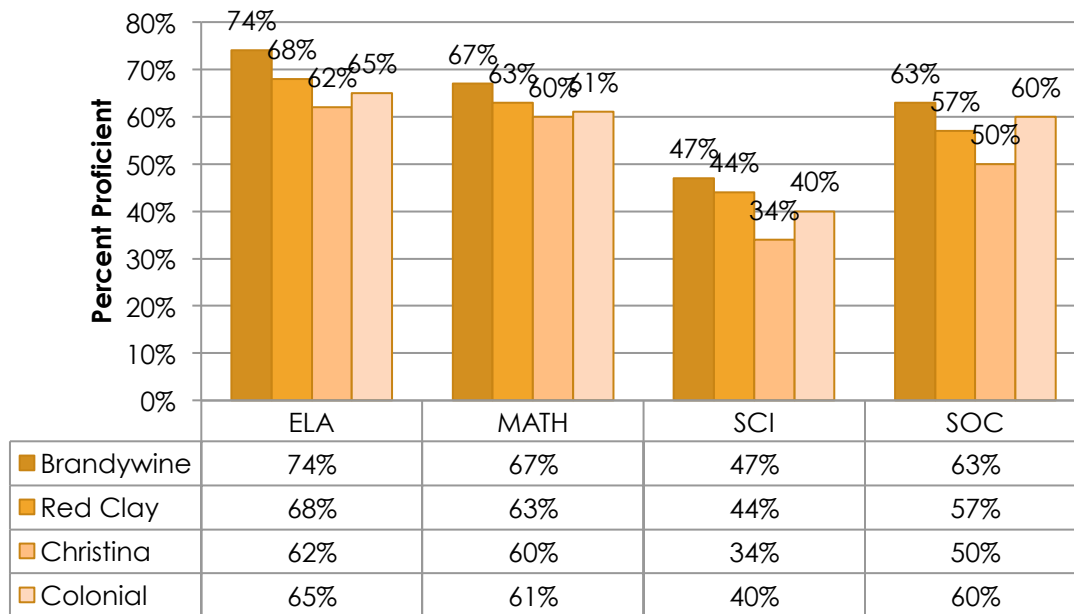


Figure 9: 2014 DCAS, Low-Income Students by District (Grade Level Aggregated)

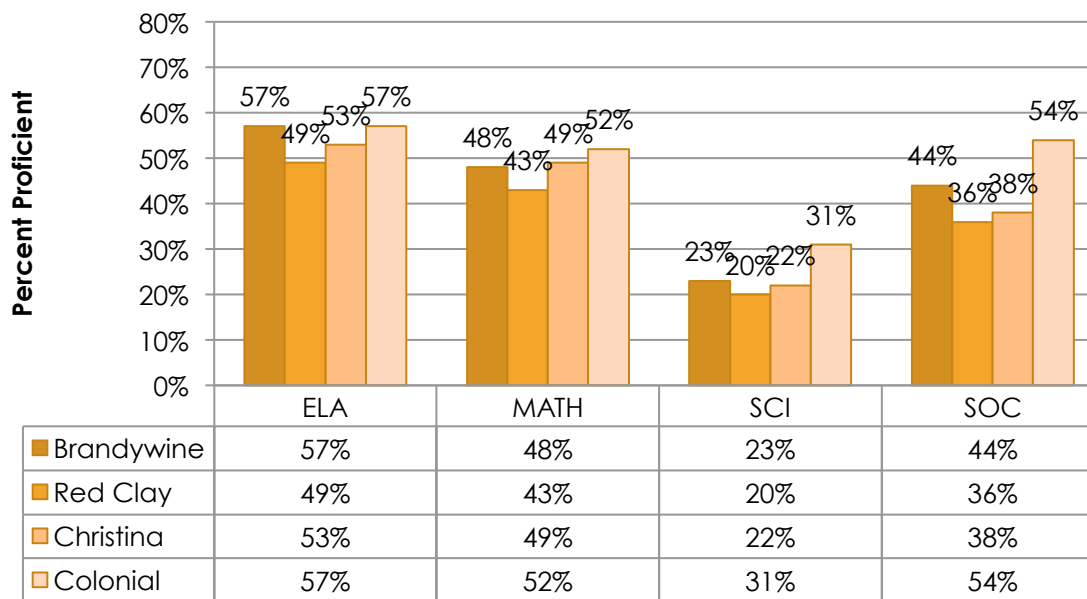
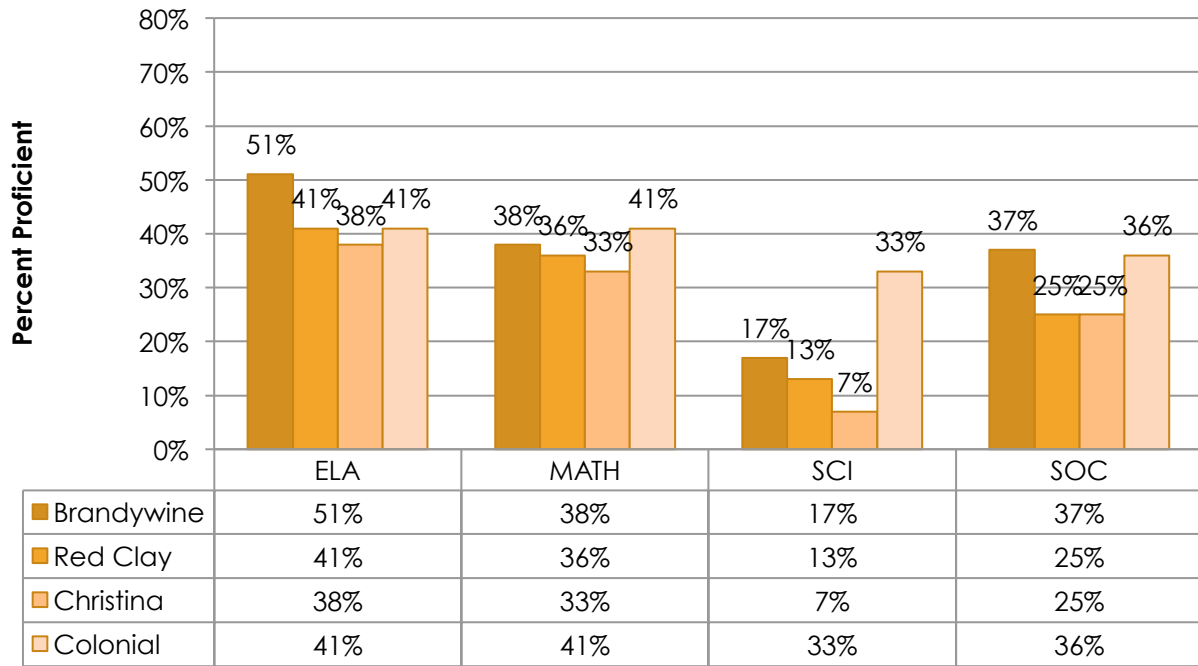


Figure 10: 2014 DCAS, Low-Income City of Wilmington Students (Grade Level Aggregated)



Foundation Five: Milestones and Measures of Success

Part III: Redistricting Recommendations

The baseline for State Board action on redistricting is the final report of the Wilmington Education Advisory Committee, **Strengthening Wilmington Education: An Action Agenda**. The enabling legislation, SB122, authorizes the State Board to alter or change the boundaries of school districts in New Castle County “in a manner consistent with some or all of the redistricting recommendations made by the Wilmington Education Advisory Committee” in that report. This section of the Plan begins with a review of the analysis and redistricting recommendations contained in the WEAC final report.

The analysis then focuses on each of those recommendations, beginning with the recommendation that the Christina School District should no longer serve Wilmington students and that the Red Clay Consolidated District should take responsibility for the Wilmington students and schools now in the Christina School District. The basis for this recommendation and the documentation of the proposed change in boundaries is reviewed in detail. This recommendation has received significant support from both school districts. Indeed, the process for approval and implementation of the recommended redistricting changes between the Christina School District and the Red Clay Consolidated School District is moving forward in a consistent, deliberate and supportive fashion. The collaborations, district board support, and planning frameworks are all in place for State Board approval and implementation of the recommended redistricting.

By contrast with the redistricting recommendation for Christina and Red Clay, the WEAC recommendation that the Colonial School District should no longer serve Wilmington students has not yet resulted in consistent support or a clear path forward. On October 13, the Colonial School Board resolved to continue to serve Wilmington students and preserve its current boundary in the City of Wilmington. Discussions are underway with the Commission to consider alternatives that might garner the support of both the Colonial School Board and the Commission and that would serve the best interests of the students. The issues and circumstances are described in the final section of Part III. It is anticipated that we will come to a shared position for inclusion in the final Plan submitted to the State Board.

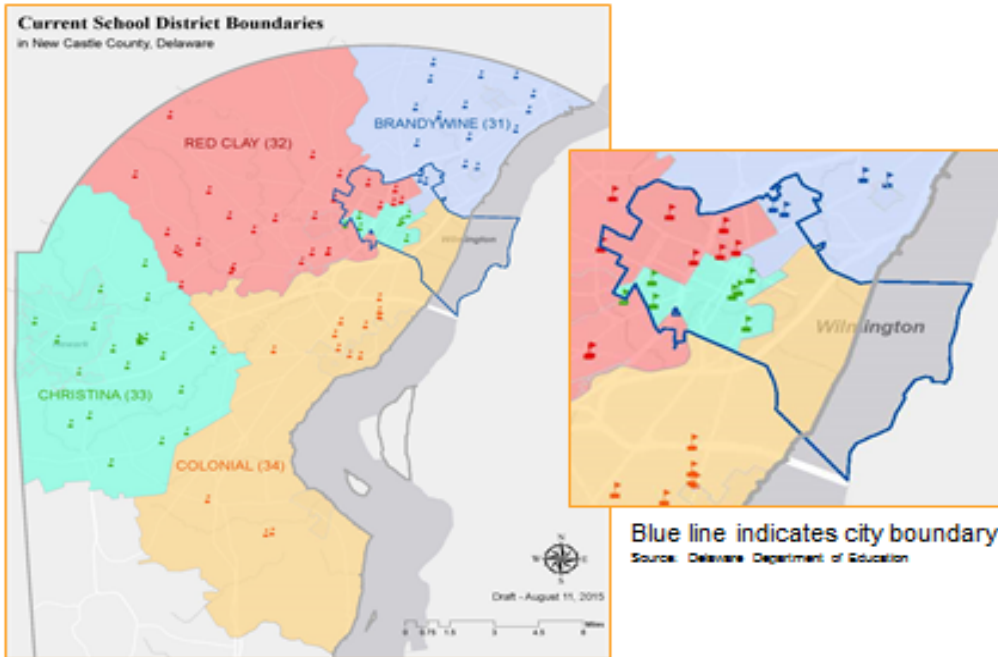
The Brandywine School District, as per WEAC, was to continue serving students living in its portion of Wilmington. The Brandywine School Board and administration have [placeholder.]

Redistricting Analysis and Recommendations of the WEAC Final Report

Strengthening Wilmington education requires more coherent and responsive governance of Wilmington public schools. Improved governance will not solve all the problems facing public education in Wilmington, but it should be the starting point. Without changing the governance of Wilmington public education, all other improvements will be made more difficult or simply not possible. This has been the conclusion of every working group focused on Wilmington education since 2001. All have proposed the need to create a system of

governance that is streamlined, more responsive to the needs of Wilmington's children and their families, and more deeply connected with the community that it serves. A range of proposals has been offered—from district consolidation to the creation of a Wilmington charter district—but none has been implemented. Indeed, the fragmentation of Wilmington public education governance has become more acute. (WEAC final report, p.19)

Figure 11: School District Boundaries in Northern New Castle County



In 2001, the Wilmington Neighborhood Schools committee report recommended the consolidation of governance responsibilities for Wilmington public education. Subsequent commissions have echoed this recommendation (**Will add summary of previous commission recommendations**). Despite this, the fragmentation of governance responsibilities for Wilmington public education actually has become more acute since 2001. In the fall of 2015, responsibility for the governance of Wilmington public education is divided among four traditional school districts, one vo-tech district, and twelve charter schools (check totals on charter schools) (see Table XXX4). In addition to these seventeen governing units, charters schools outside of Wilmington draw Wilmington students (see Table 4). These seventeen units do not include the Delaware Department of Education and the State Board of Education, both of which have mandated oversight roles in public education governance. As the WEAC report points out, “the groups that are not included among the governing units of Wilmington public education, however, are the community it serves and the city government that represents that community. Neither has a formal role in the governance of the schools that educate its children.” (Page 18, WEAC)

Table 6: Public Schools Serving Wilmington Students, Fall 2015
Table to be updated for Fall 2015

Schools Located within City of Wilmington Limits			
District	Elementary	Middle	High
Brandywine	Harlan Elementary School	P.S. duPont Middle School	N/A
Christina	Bancroft Elementary School Elbert-Palmer Elementary School Pulaski Elementary School Stubbs Elementary School	Bayard Middle School	N/A
Colonial	N/A	N/A	N/A
Red Clay Consolidated	Delaware College Preparatory Academy** Highlands Elementary School Lewis Dual Language Elementary School Shortlidge Academy Warner Elementary School	Cab Calloway School of the Arts*	Delaware Military Academy** (not located within Wilmington) Cab Calloway School of the Arts* Charter School of Wilmington**
New Castle County Vocational Technical (NCC Vo-tech)	N/A	N/A	Howard High School of Technology
State-Authorized Charter Schools (Grade Levels Vary) within City of Wilmington Limits			
EastSide Charter School Edison Charter School First State Montessori Academy Freire Charter School		Great Oaks Charter School Kuumba Academy La Academia Antonia Alonso Prestige Academy The Delaware MET	
Additional State-Authorized Charter Schools Serving Wilmington Students			
Delaware Academy of Public Safety Delaware Design Lab High School Early College High School at Delaware State University First State Military Academy		Gateway Lab School Las Americas ASPIRA Academy MOT Charter School Odyssey Charter School	

Notes: Independent governing units are bolded. This table does not include alternative schools located in the city. Moyer Academic Institute and Reach Academy for Girls are not included, as they are proposed for closure.
 *Magnet School.
 ** Charter schools authorized by Red Clay Consolidated School District.
 Source: Delaware Department of Education. (2015) School Profiles.

The Advisory Committee pointed out that the fragmentation of governance responsibilities is no accident and that it is the product of State and federal policies and practices, some

four decades old, that have created or encouraged this condition (see Wilmington Education Historical Timeline on page x).

“Some of these policies and practices also encourage competition and displacement among district, vo-tech, and charter schools rather than collaboration and mutual commitment to improvements for all Wilmington schools. As a result, Wilmington now has an arrangement of public education in which traditional districts, a vo-tech district, and charter schools operate as largely disconnected subsystems, funded at rising public expense but with no acceptance of shared responsibility for the education of all Wilmington students...”(p.21).

The Advisory Committee is clear that this situation must change. “Wilmington children can no longer afford to pay the price for this fractured, disconnected, and increasingly dysfunctional system. Wilmington teachers and other educators should not have to work in this contentious and unsupportive environment. Wilmington citizens and Delaware taxpayers should not be expected to pay the rising costs—social as well as financial—of maintaining such a system” (p.21).

To address these challenges, the Advisory Committee proposed that all public schools must be guided by a vision of responsibility for the overall effectiveness of public education, and traditional school districts operating in Wilmington should have a more streamlined configuration that better addresses the needs of Wilmington students and more fully supports continuous improvement and community responsiveness.

Changing the current configuration of school districts in Wilmington and northern New Castle County does not reverse any action by Delaware government, nor counter any choice made by public referendum. The partition of Wilmington among four districts with split responsibilities is a product of a forty-year-old federal court decision to achieve metropolitan school desegregation. That federal court's objective has not been met. Indeed, the original rationale for the current configuration has been overtaken by State policies, specifically the development of options to promote charters and choice (1996) and the Neighborhood Schools Act (2000)⁵.

“Wilmington students were expected to benefit from this configuration, which includes one of only four discontinuous districts among the 14,000 districts in the nation.⁶ In fact, Wilmington students have experienced—and still experience—the greatest burden from this configuration. (p. 22).

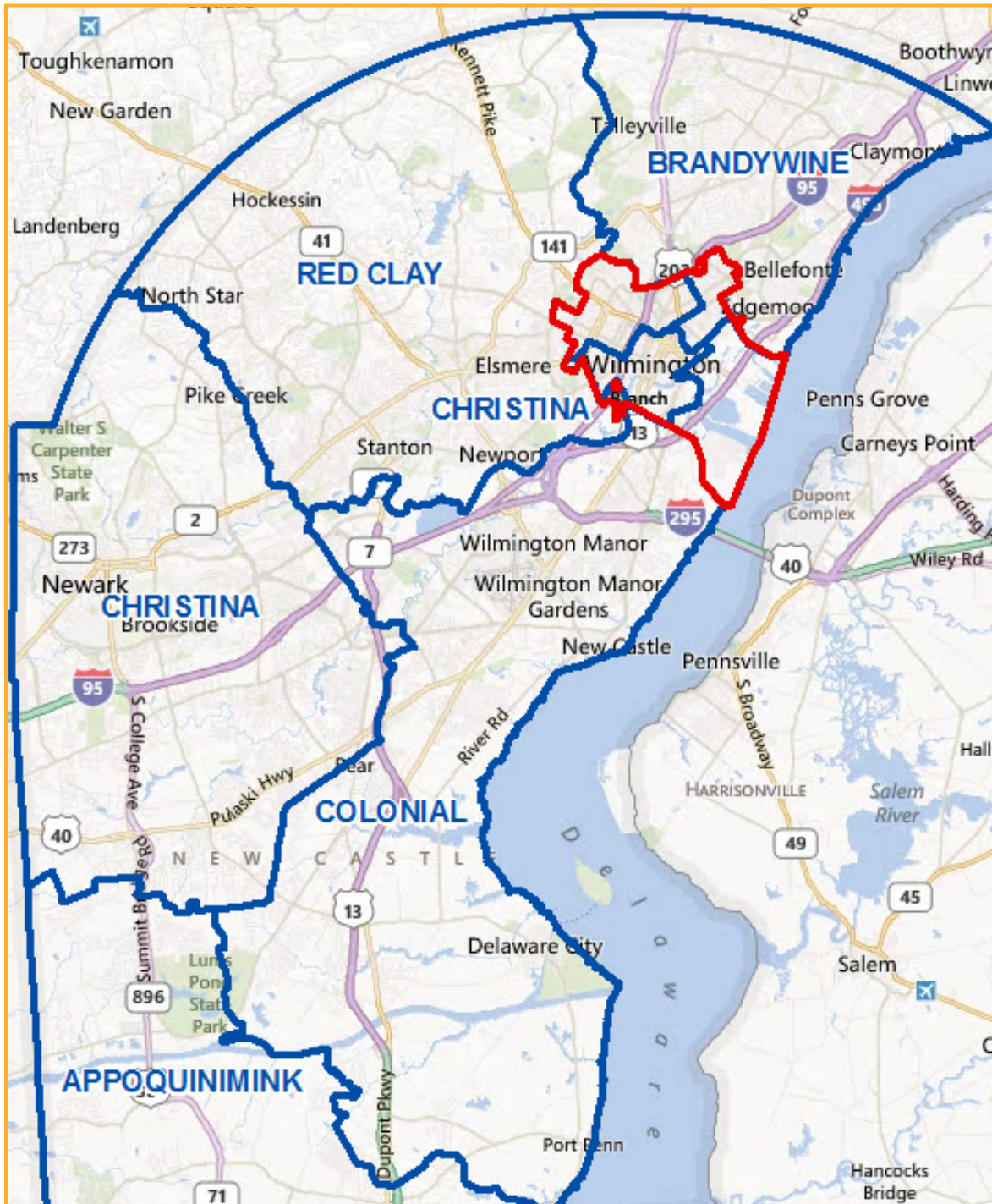
The Advisory Committee's report is clear that the current arrangement largely precludes the capacity to effectively address the educational needs of Wilmington students and to systematically improve the learning and educational opportunities for these students.

⁵ Neighborhood Schools Act of 2000, 72 Del. Laws, c.287 §2 (2000). School Choice Act of 1996, 70 Del. Laws, c.180 §3 (1996). Charter School Act of 1995, 70 Del. Laws, c.179 §5 (1996).

⁶ Other districts are Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District in California, Fulton School District in Georgia, and Keystone Oaks School District in Pennsylvania.

Today, the report proposes, “thousands of Wilmington children, most of them poor, black, or Latino, still do not have access to high-quality public education. Judged on most outcomes—test scores, truancy, graduation rates, college attendance, socio-emotional well-being, drug use, homelessness, arrests, and unemployment—these children have become data points for a system of failure” (p.13).

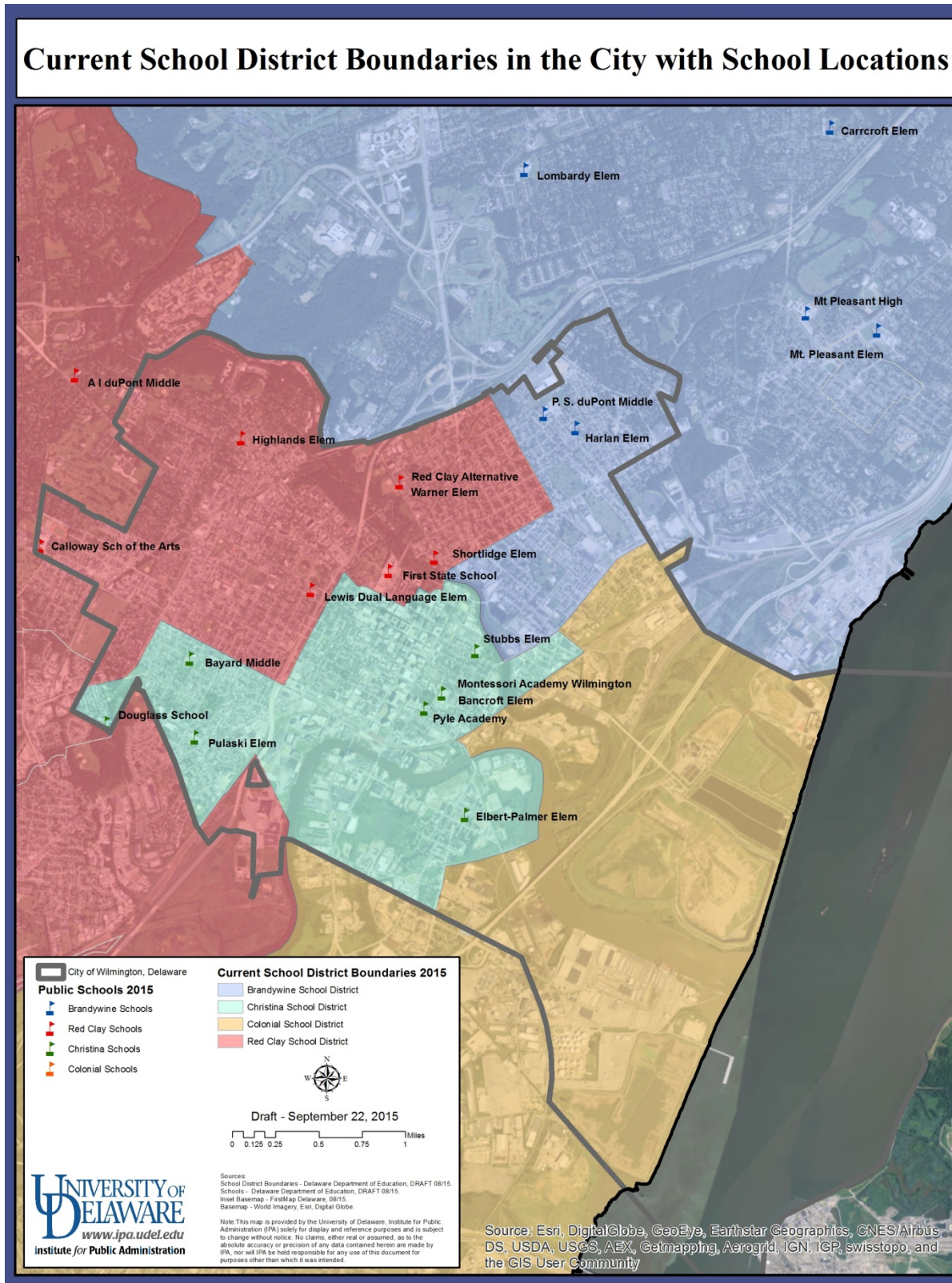
Figure 12: City of Wilmington District Map



After forty years of a district configuration that was established to more effectively and equitably support the education of Wilmington students, most low-income students living in the City of Wilmington are below educational proficiency in all areas. The Advisory Committee concluded that *“the current configuration does not effectively address the acute educational challenges faced by many Wilmington students. Indeed, the split of responsibilities makes addressing those challenges more difficult. The citizens and families of the city are not well served by a disconnected arrangement of school governance that makes their own engagement with education more cumbersome—and often beyond their practical reach (p.22).*

In evaluating options the Advisory Committee recognized that it must consider many factors and that any change in the configurations of districts serving students in the City of Wilmington will have implications for students and families in other parts of northern New Castle County.

Figure 13: Map of Current School District Boundaries in the City with School Locations



Further, any change must contribute to the long-term, continuous improvement of educational opportunities and learning for students in Wilmington and across the county. The Advisory Committee reviewed several options, including a Wilmington school district, a county-wide metropolitan school district (which was the original court-ordered action to achieve desegregation but was shortly after abandoned), and a charter school district. All of these posed serious challenges ranging from a rearrangement of all governance responsibilities across the county or across charter schools to the creation of a district that would be challenged by its isolation and fiscal unsustainability.

The Advisory Committee proposed that district reconfiguration would best meet the objective of streamlining district governance in a manner that would more effectively support the long-term and continuous educational improvement of students in Wilmington and across northern New Castle County.

Because the WEAC redistricting recommendations are a baseline for the State Board's action, they are included below as they appear in the final report, **Strengthening Wilmington Education: An Action Agenda**, pages 25-27.

Action Agenda

1. *The Christina School District should leave the City of Wilmington and no longer serve Wilmington students. The current configuration of the Christina School District has no educational rationale other than the inertia of a forty-year-old decision that no longer serves the function for which it was originally intended.*
 - *The Christina School District should concentrate on serving students in Newark and other communities in western New Castle County. In that proposed configuration, it will be more responsive to the needs of the students in those communities.*
 - *Wilmington students currently served by Christina schools outside of Wilmington should continue to attend those schools until a comprehensive relocation plan can be developed and implemented. While the transition of Christina out of Wilmington should begin with the 2016–2017 school year, it should continue until all Wilmington students have the opportunity to graduate from the schools in which they are enrolled.*
 - *Transitional funding adjustments will be needed to implement this reconfiguration (see section on Funding Student Success on page 57).*
2. *The Colonial School District, which has no school facilities in the City of Wilmington, should no longer serve Wilmington students. The Colonial School District currently serves about 243 Wilmington students as of the fall of 2014 (see Figure 2).⁷ The transition of Wilmington students out of Colonial should begin with the 2016–2017 school year and continue until all Wilmington students have the opportunity to graduate from the schools in which they are*

⁷ Based on Department of Education unit counts September 30, 2014. There are some other calculated totals from both the state and the school district that report fewer than 243 students from the city in Colonial School District.

enrolled.

- Transitional funding adjustments will be needed to implement this change (see section on Funding Student Success on page 57).
3. Two school districts, Red Clay Consolidated and Brandywine, should continue to serve Wilmington children. Red Clay should take responsibility for all of the Wilmington schools currently under the Christina School District and for Wilmington students currently served by the Colonial School District. This expanded role for Red Clay is desirable for several reasons.
 - Red Clay already has a core role in the city and operates as a metropolitan school district.
 - Red Clay has a plan for addressing the challenges of some of the city's priority schools. It makes sense for all priority schools to be part of a single plan.
 - Red Clay is the only district in the state with direct experience in authorizing and working with charter schools, and that experience should enable Red Clay to be effective in collaborating with the growing number of charter schools in Wilmington. Red Clay's role in bridging traditional and charter schools is critical to the long-term coherence and stability of public education governance in Wilmington.
 - The proposed expansion of Red Clay's responsibilities carries with it an expectation that the district will play a leadership role in the overall improvement of Wilmington public education. The key to that leadership role is achieving greater student success in schools with high concentrations of poverty. The district should affirm its commitment to that objective and should be supported in fulfilling that commitment by the state and all sectors of the Wilmington and New Castle County communities. An initial step is for the district to build upon and extend its priority schools plan through the introduction of best practices for all schools with high concentrations of poverty.
 - The effective fulfillment of Red Clay's leadership role depends upon the implementation of the Advisory Committee's recommendations on funding student success (see page 60).
 4. The New Castle County Vocational-Technical School District (NCC Vo-tech) should actively collaborate with the Red Clay Consolidated and Brandywine School Districts and with the Wilmington charter schools to expand vocational education opportunities for Wilmington students. We recommend the development of joint programs among NCC Vo-tech, district high schools, Wilmington charter high schools, Delaware Technical Community College, and Delaware businesses to facilitate coordinated pathways for students from all high schools to employment opportunities and advanced technical training. The NCC Vo-tech district should take the lead in developing a comprehensive plan for this new vocational education partnership and presenting it to the governor, secretary of education, and state legislature by January 2016.

Figure 14: Map of Current School District Boundaries

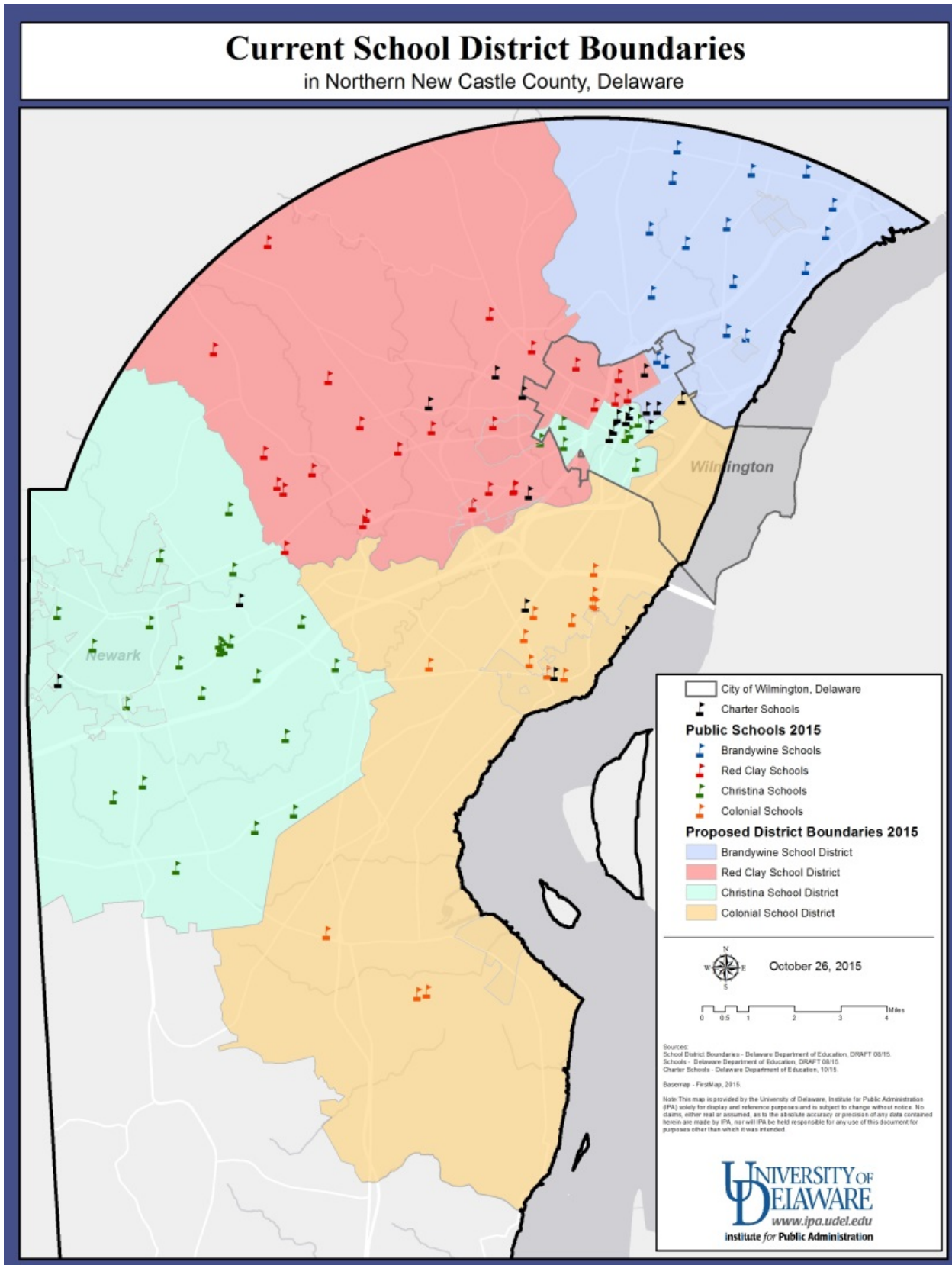
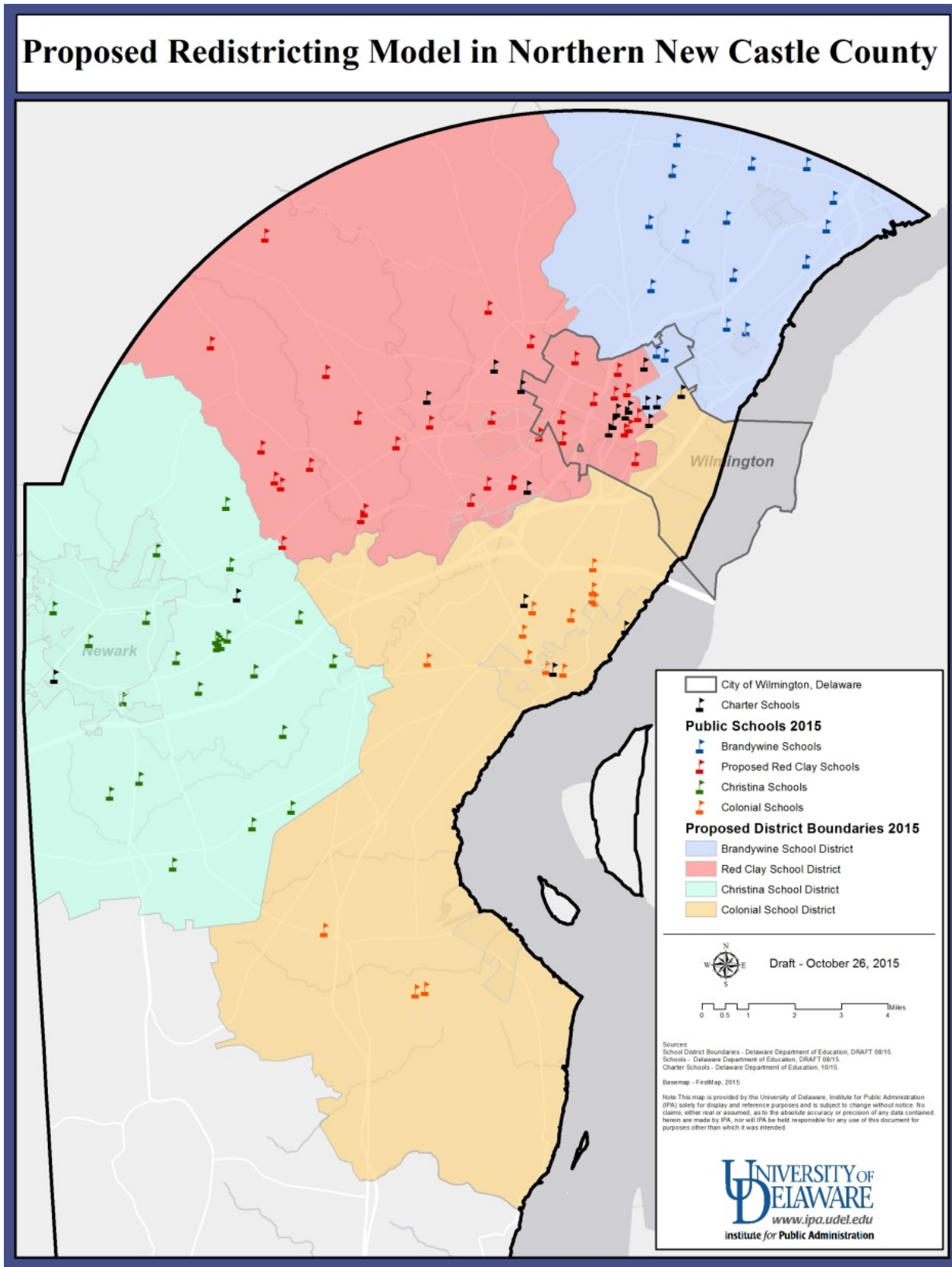


Figure 15: Map of Proposed Redistricting Model in Northern New Castle County



Redistricting for the Christina and Red Clay Consolidated School Districts

The process for approval and implementation of the recommended redistricting changes between the Christina School District and the Red Clay Consolidated School District is moving forward in a consistent, deliberate and supportive fashion. The collaborations, district board support, and planning frameworks are all in place for State Board approval and implementation of the recommended redistricting. The Christina and Red Clay school boards have affirmed support through the following actions.

- In response to the WEAC interim report issued in January 2015, the Christina School District Board voted 5-2 to support all of the recommendations, including that the district no longer serve the City of Wilmington.
- On April 15, 2015, the Board of the Red Clay Consolidated School District passed a resolution supporting the redistricting recommendations in the WEAC final report provided that there was a clear funding path and commitment before any such recommendations are implemented, there was adequate time to implement any and all necessary changes, and that there was participation from Red Clay in the transition efforts needed to move forward.
- On October 21, 2015, the Board of the Red Clay Consolidated School District voted 7-0 to reaffirm its support of the redistricting recommendations with the same three conditions stipulated earlier.
- On October 27, 2015, the Christina School Board reviewed and XXXXXX the framework for planning developed by the Christina administrative staff in collaboration with the staff of the Red Clay School District (Appendix B).
- On November XXX, the Red Clay Board, XXXXX

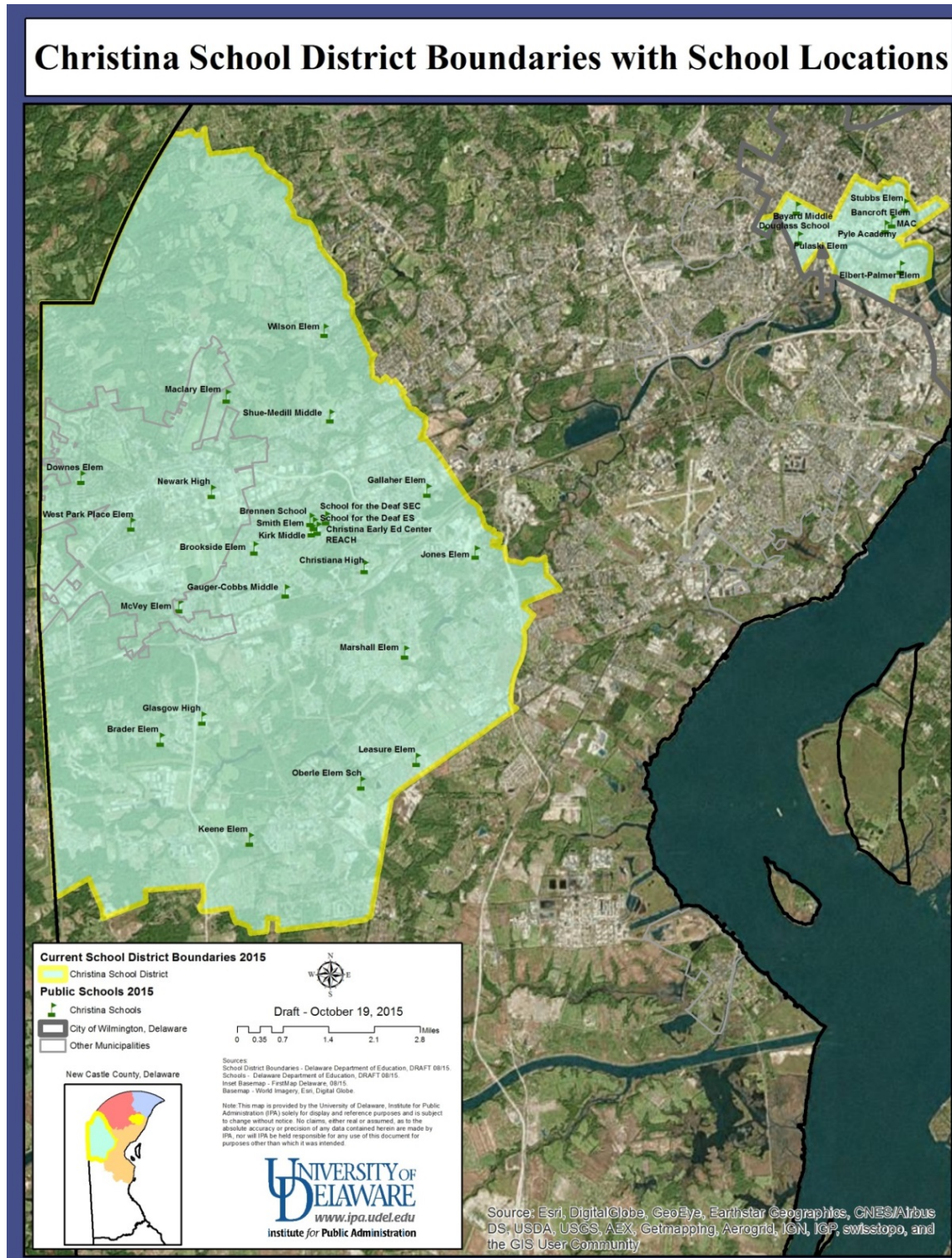
After SB122 was signed into law on August 4, 2015, the two district administrations began collaborating intensively on frameworks for planning the implementation of the recommended redistricting. Those initial frameworks for planning are complete and have been posted as public documents; they will be updated as the process moves forward. These frameworks for planning are included in the Plan as Appendix B for Christina and Appendix C for Red Clay. These frameworks were developed in accord with the overall guidelines provided by the IPA staff for the Commission to assure consistency with the Commission's overall Plan, with the guidelines within the enabling legislation, and with the expectations of the State Board. These plans are drawn upon and referenced in all subsequent sections of the Commission's Plan.

Changing Christina and Red Clay District Boundaries

The Christina School District is one of a small number of school districts across the nation that is discontinuous. The western segment of the district is separated from the eastern segment by 16 to 20 miles, with parts of the Red Clay and Colonial districts occupying the space between the two Christina segments. The current boundaries of the Christina School

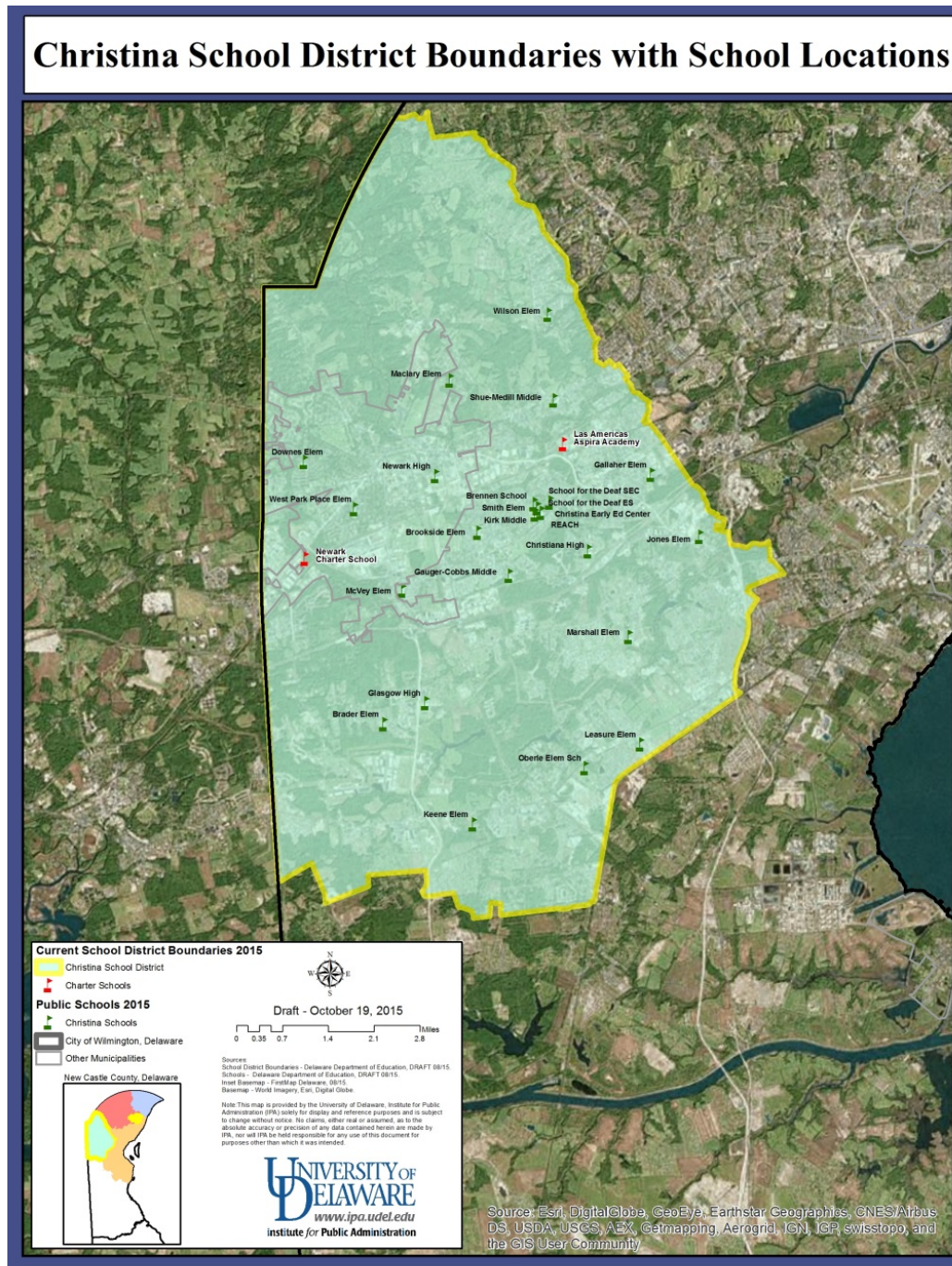
District are depicted in MAP CSD-1; the detailed narrative description of these boundaries and the current boundaries of the other three northern New Castle County districts is included in Part IX.

Figure 16: Map CSD-1, Christina School District Boundaries with School Locations



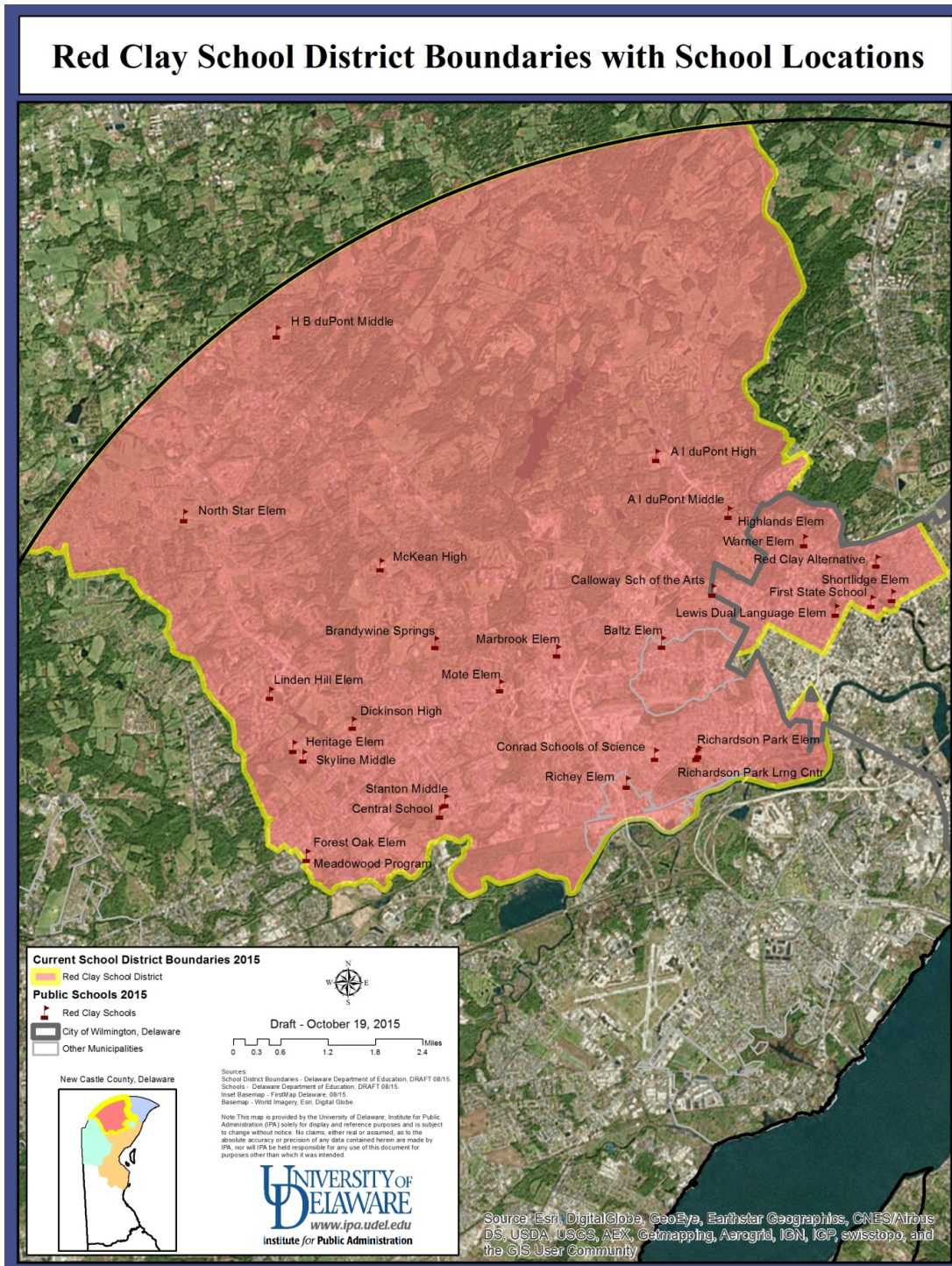
Changing the Christina School District's boundaries in a manner consistent with the recommendations of the WEAC final report and in congruence with the subsequent planning of the Commission and the Christina School Board is straightforward since the western segment of the district will not change and the eastern segment in its entirety will move to the Red Clay Consolidated School District. This changed configuration is depicted in MAP CSD-2.

Figure 17: Map CSD-2, Christina School District Boundaries with School Locations



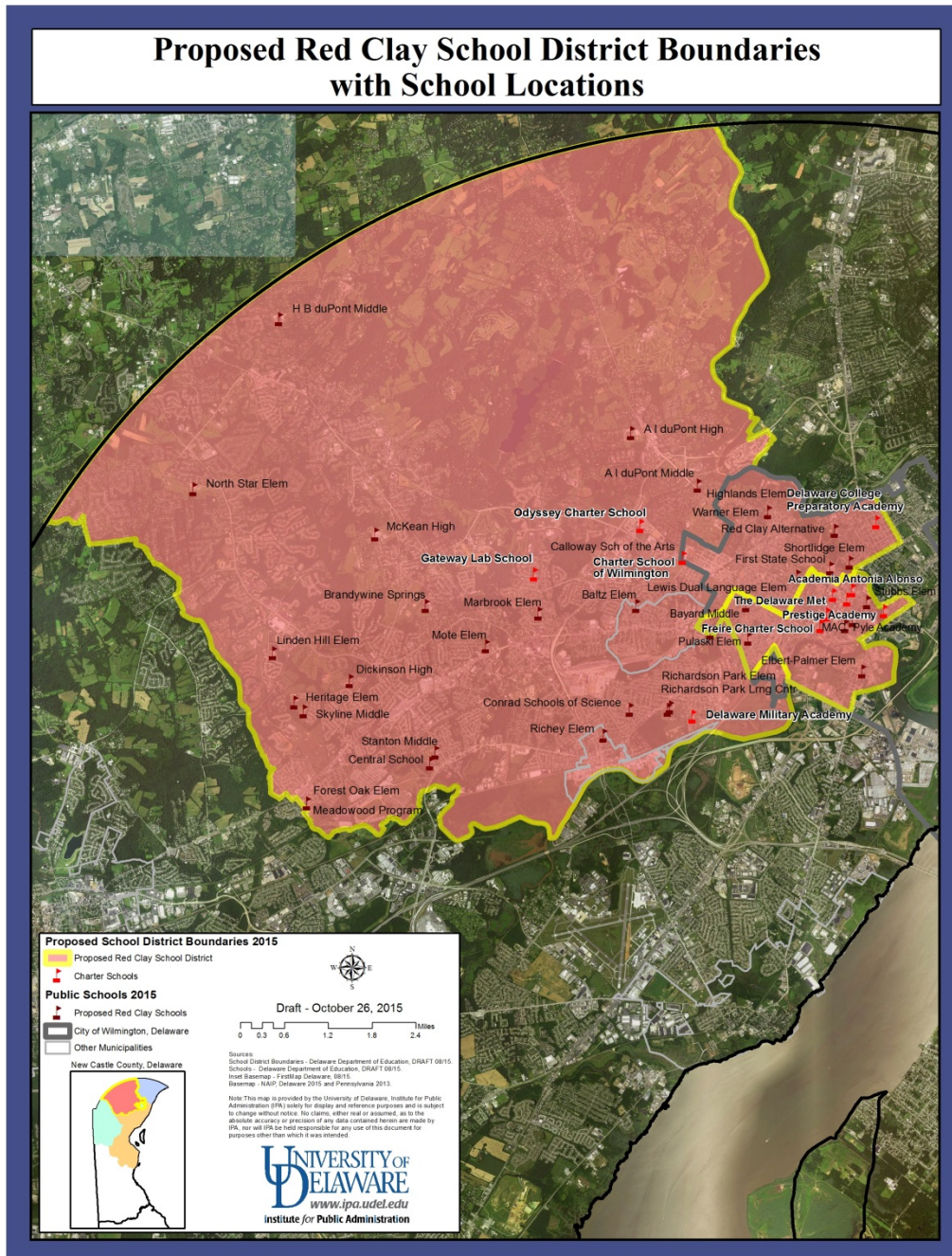
The Red Clay Consolidated School District boundaries now are contiguous with the eastern segment of the Christina School District. The current boundaries of the Red Clay Consolidated School District are depicted in MAP RC-1; the detailed narrative description of these boundaries is included in Part IX.

Figure 18: Map RC-1, Red Clay School District Boundaries with School Locations



Changing the Red Clay boundaries in a manner consistent with the recommendation of the WEAC final report and in congruence with the subsequent planning of the Commission and the School District expands the Red Clay boundary on the southeast. This changed configuration is depicted in MAP RC-2

Figure 19: Map RC-2, Proposed Red Clay School District Boundaries with School Locations

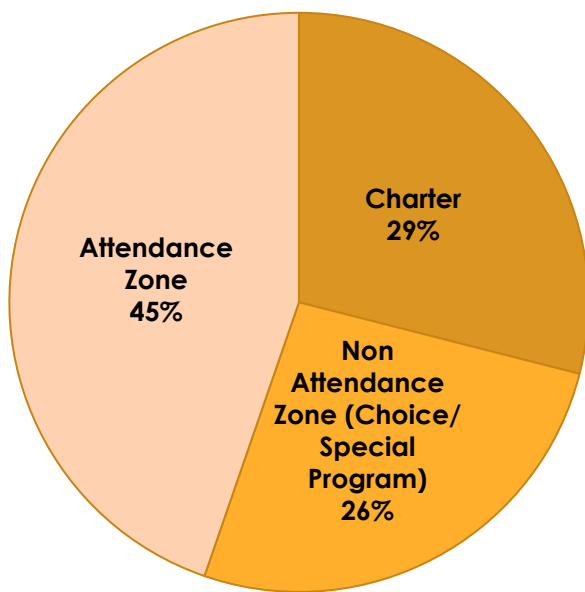


Developing the Transition, Resource and Implementation Plan

While the change in district boundaries between Christina and Red Clay is not complex, the issues that must be addressed in carrying out that change of boundaries are complex, involving the transfer of responsibilities for students, the assignment and reassignment of educators and other personnel, and the transfer of buildings and other assets. Addressing these issues is the purpose of this transition, resource and implementation plan.

While the details regarding the transfer of students, personnel and facilities are provided in subsequent sections of this Plan, it is useful to frame the scope of the changes. Of the total number of Wilmington students currently in the Christina School District, 2040 are enrolled in their attendance zone school within that district. However, a majority of the Wilmington students living in the Christina School District area do not attend their attendance zone school: 1322 attend a Charter School, and 1201 attend a traditional school through choice or a special program (such as Douglas, or Sarah Pyle Academy) (Red Clay Interim Framework, Appendix B, p.5).

Figure 20: WEIC-CSD Students by School Attendance



The recommended change in boundaries also will involve a transfer of responsibilities for schools and other district facilities. As a result of the WEIC implementations, a number of buildings will transition to Red Clay Consolidated School District. The capacities, enrollments and staff of these buildings as provided by Christiana School District as of 9/30/15 are shown below.

Table 7: Facility Additions to Red Clay as a result of WEIC

Building	Square Footage	Enrollment/Units	Capacity	Non-traditional classroom use	Current Use
Bancroft	131,268	338/21.48	1018	2 Reach 2 PreK 1 DAP 2 Montessori	PreK-5
Elbert-Palmer	40,761	228/15.28	376	2 PreK	PreK-5
Pulaski	73,017	428/29.52	566	1 Prek	PreK-5
Stubbs	72,332	321/20.38	482	2 SC (therapeutic) 2 PreK	PreK-5
Bayard	138,689	416/30.52	1058	1 DAP 1 therapeutic 2 Reach 1 ESL	6-8
Douglas	29,979				Alternative
Pyle	32,356				Unique Option
Drew	48,100				Admin. Space

Source: (Red Clay Interim Framework, Appendix B, p. 2)

Approximate Staff Counts

Custodian Units: 34
 Child Nutrition Services: 31 Cafeteria employees, 2 Managerial employees
 Transportation: 11-20 employees (spec. ed. bus routes)
 Teachers:
 Admin: 10 building level
 Paras:
 Secretaries: 7 (not including Drew)

The transition, resource, and implementation plan was developed by the IPA staff for the Commission working in close collaboration with the administrative staff of the Christina and Red Clay districts. The IPA staff developed an outline template for the transition, resource and implementation plan based on the recommendations in the WEAC final report and the stipulations in the enabling legislation, SB122. The legislation specifically requires that the Plan provide for: “(1) the orderly and minimally disruptive reassignment of students affected by the boundary change and the reassignment of governance responsibilities, (2) implications for educators, administrators, and other personnel that may lead to equitable adjustments to local collective bargaining agreements, (3) resources that will be required, from state, district, and local sources, to support the redistricting transition and provide for the effective ongoing education of all affected students, and for the support

of schools with high concentrations of low income students and English Language Learners, (4) student transportation, (5) distribution of capital assets, and (6) engagement of educators, staff, parents, district personnel, and community members through-out the transition.” (see Appendix A). Discussions with the administrative staff of the districts identified other issues and items to be included in the Plan, such as the responsibilities for special schools and programs, the administration of choice options and policies, the compatibility of technology, child nutrition services, and the alignment and sharing of curricular materials. The template for planning also was designed to correspond to expectations discussed with the State Board about the format for addressing transition items. That format includes a statement of guiding principles and central issues as well as the actions to be taken, responsibility for the actions, a timeline, and any budget impact.

The detailed frameworks for planning developed by the Christina and Red Clay administrations have been posted as public documents and reviewed by their respective School Boards. These are working documents and will be updated as the process moves forward. These district frameworks for planning are the foundation on which the Commission’s transition, resource and implementation plan was developed, and the Commission’s plan is fully congruent with the district plans. These details are provided in Parts V, VI, and VII.

The Timetable for Implementation

While the Commission and the Christina and Red Clay school districts are in accord with the WEAC recommendations with regard to boundary changes and the transition, resource and implementation plans to carry out those changes effectively, there is a major difference recommended in the timetable. The WEAC final report recommends that implementation begin in 2016-2017.

As a practical matter, the 2016-2017 school year has been viewed by both the Commission staff and District administrative staff as a planning year. Initially, it was expected that the actual implementation for students and attendant changes would be at the start of the fall 2017. There is now agreement that this start date is not feasible or desirable. Given the timetable for the approval of the State Board and the confirmation by Joint Resolution of the Delaware General Assembly and the Governor, the districts would not be able to initiate implementation planning until late summer and then would be pressed to begin making adjustment decisions within only a few months. This is not enough time to ensure that all the facets of the transition, resource and implementation plan can be carried out effectively, without disruption to students, families, educators and other personnel. It also is not enough time to develop enriched learning models, or to confirm and obtain the resources needed at each stage (see Part V) or mobilize community supports and partnerships (see Part VI) to accompany redistricting. Further, since Wilmington students will be able to remain enrolled at their current schools until they graduate, the full process could not be completed for at least three years after approval.

To be most effective in achieving a smooth and responsive transition that serves the interests of all those affected and that maximizes the opportunity to improve student learning outcomes, implementation needs to be carried out in four stages: approval, planning, transition and full implementation. Those four stages are reflected in the timetable below that was developed in collaboration with the districts and which WEIC supports as fundamental. The timetable lists the key milestones for each stage of the process.

Approval, Planning, Transition and Implementation Timetable and Milestones

- **January 2016–June 2016 (Approval Stage)**
 - State Board Approval
 - Legislative Approval
 - Finalize MOUs regarding collective bargaining groups
 - Commitment to funding transition and change
 - Beginning of programmatic change planning
 - Ongoing transition planning
- **July 2016–June 2017 (Planning Stage)**
 - Identify programmatic changes, attendance zone changes
 - Identify Staffing needs
 - Facilities assessment
 - Implementation of new funding (phased in)
 - Approval of major capital improvement funding
- **July 2017–June 2018 (Transition Stage)**
 - Implementation of major capital improvement (3 years)
 - Student assignment and Choice for implementation
 - Administrative Staffing (November 2017)
 - Non Administrative Staffing (February 2018)
 - Professional Development for transitioning staff begins
 - Transfer of assets, contracts, accounts
 - Purchase of curriculum materials and other assets necessary for transition
 - Implications for District Governance (Board nominating districts) resolve by Department of Elections
- **July 2018–June 2019 (Full Implementation)**
 - First year of implementation
 - Ongoing professional development
 - Ongoing Major Capital Improvement (year 2)

The Colonial School District: Redistricting Issues and Options

One might expect that the WEAC redistricting recommendation with regard to the Colonial School District would be less controversial and much easier to approve and implement than the Christina/Red Clay changes. There are no Colonial schools or other facilities in the City of Wilmington subject to transfer as a result of redistricting. The number of students affected is much smaller. As of September 1, 2015, there were 178 Wilmington students attending Colonial schools. However, the Colonial School District has proposed that the low-income Wilmington students served by schools in its district are performing at a level at or above other districts based on DCAS test scores for 2013 and 2014 (see XXX in Part II). On this basis, on October 13, the Colonial School District's Board passed a resolution to retain its Wilmington students and its current district boundaries. The Commission appreciates the Colonial School Board's affirmation of its desire to continue to serve Wilmington students living in the district. Most importantly, we agree with the Colonial School Board's affirmation that what is best for students should be the key factor in any recommendation and decision about district responsibilities. In that regard, conversations are underway to discuss the issues and to review options that could become the basis for agreement on a path forward supported by both the Colonial School District and the Commission as in the best interests of the students. These conversations will continue with the objective of setting an agreed path forward in the final version of the Commission Plan submitted to the State Board on December 17, 2015.

The Colonial School District occupies a portion of the City of Wilmington that includes a large industrial area in the southeast portion of the city. The current boundaries of the Colonial School District are depicted in MAP COL-1; the detailed narrative description of these is included in Part IX.

While the Colonial School District includes a large geographic segment of the City of Wilmington, most of that area is industrial and has no resident population. Wilmington students served by the Colonial School District live in a very small portion of the district's area within the City of Wilmington, as displayed by [Figure XXX](#).

About half of all Wilmington students in the Colonial School District, including more than half of the elementary school students, already choose out to public schools outside of Colonial. Colonial's Wilmington students live closer to schools in the three other districts and to public charter schools than to any school in the Colonial School District. Indeed, the nearest Colonial school is outside of Wilmington and six miles from where these students live ([see Figure XXX](#)).

Figure 21: Map COL-1, Colonial School District Boundaries with School Locations

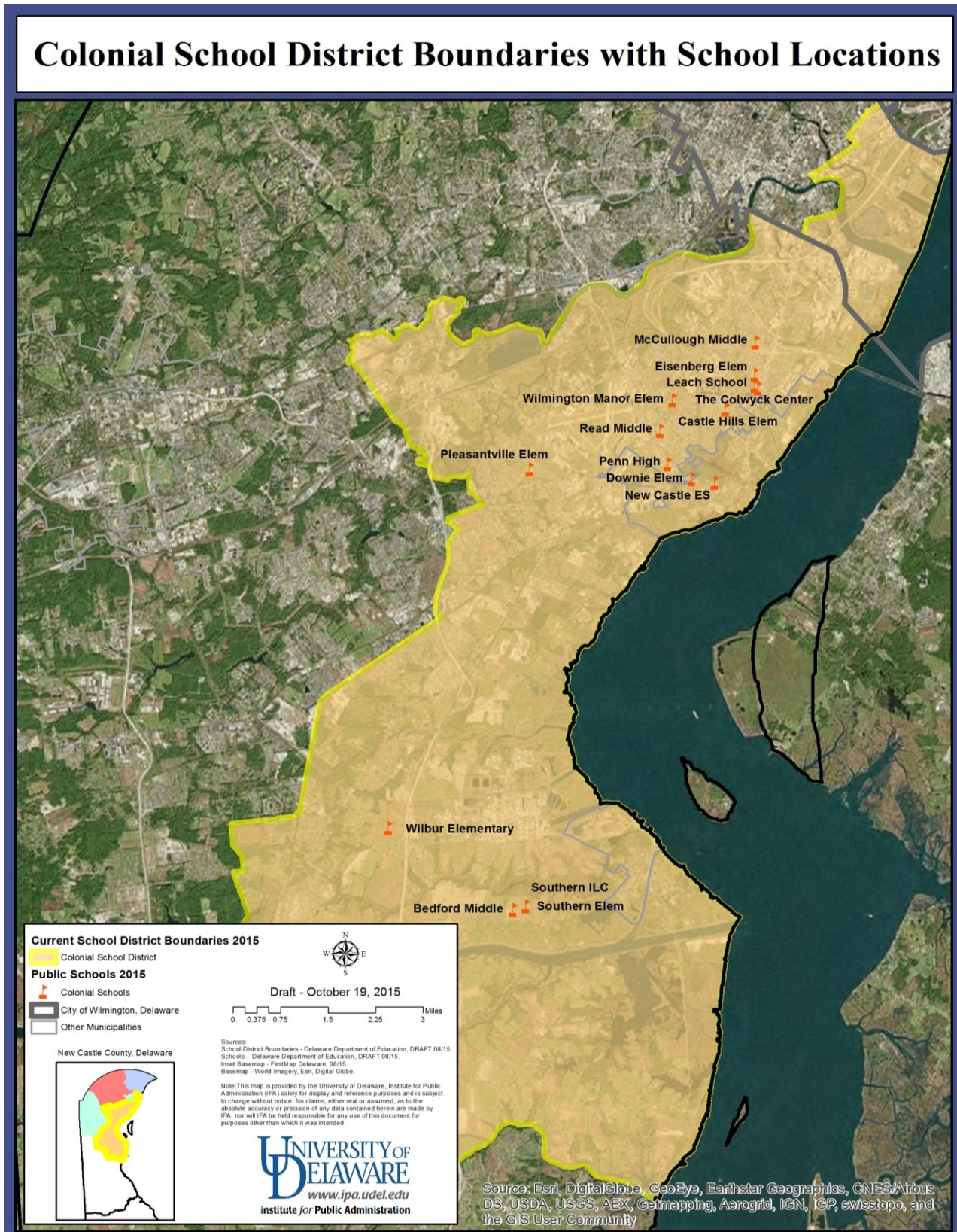


Figure 22: Map of Wilmington Students Currently Served by the Colonial School District with School Locations, Northern New Castle County, Delaware

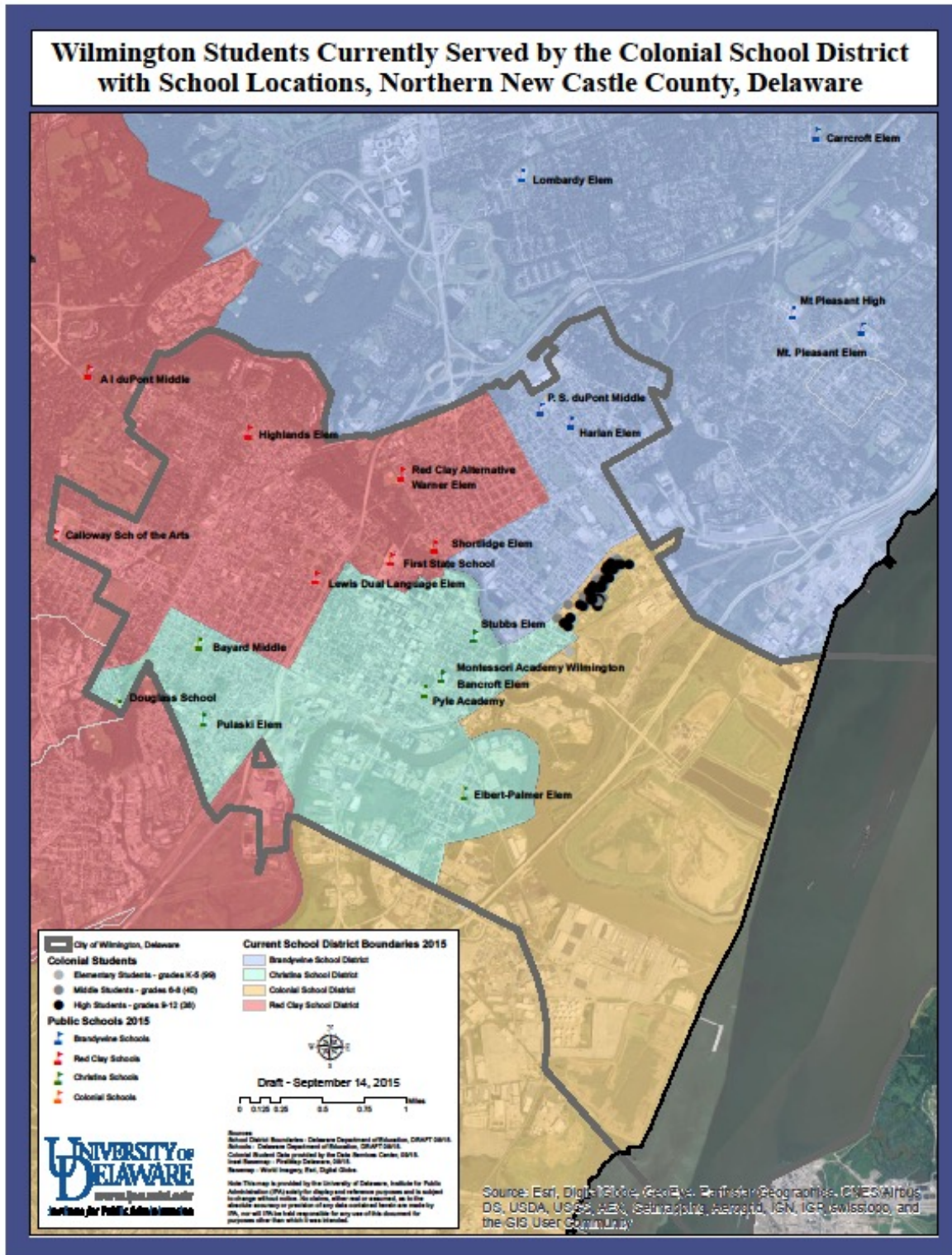
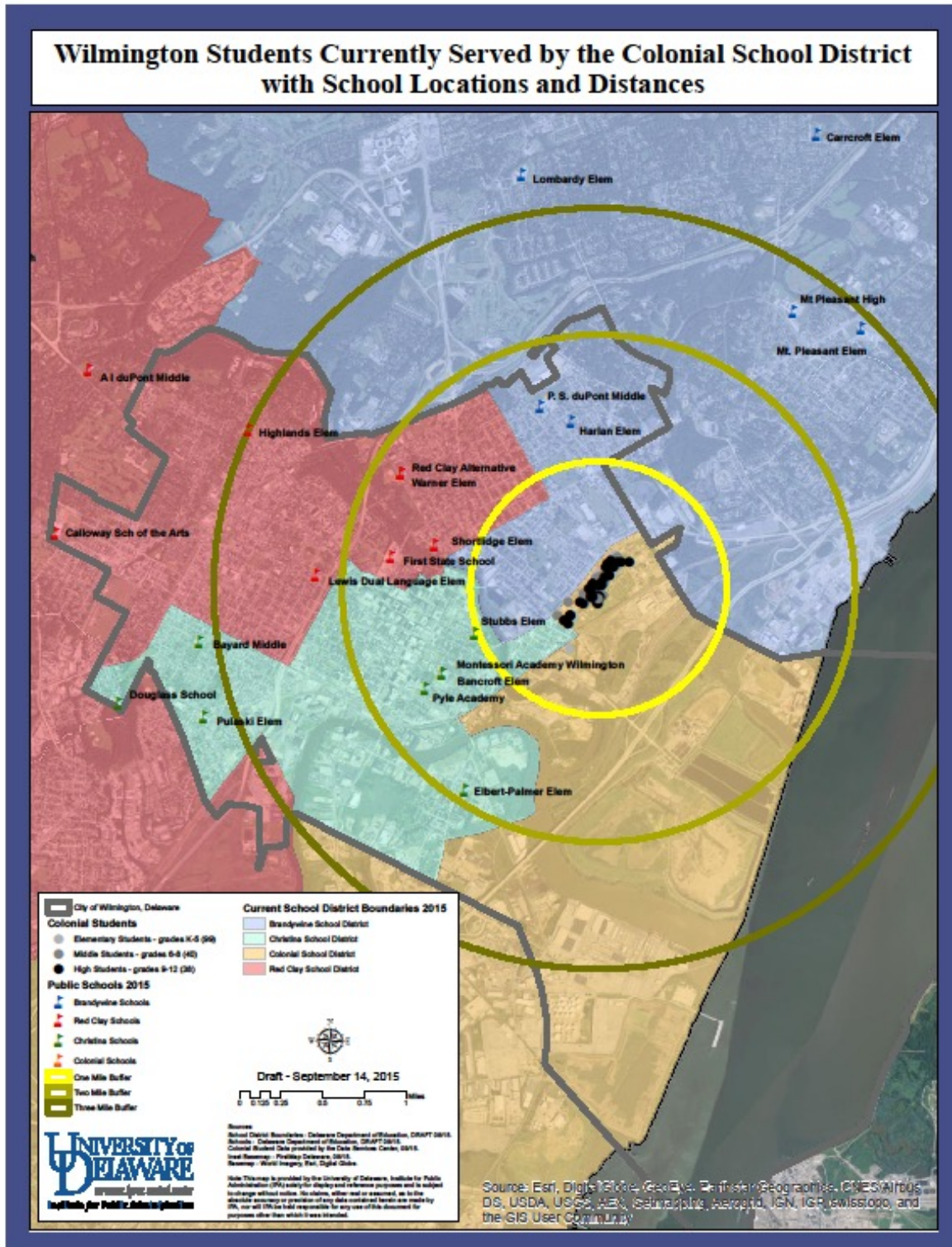


Figure 23: Wilmington Students Currently Served by the Colonial School District with School Locations and Distanced.



While the Colonial Board's resolution to continue to serve Wilmington students reflects its concern for the educational well being of these students, the action does not address the basis for the recommendation in the WEAC final report. If the Colonial School District continues to serve Wilmington students, an important opportunity to reduce the fragmented structure of public education in the city will be lost. Since 2001, four separate task forces have concluded that long-term, sustained educational achievement requires a more coherent, responsive governance system. The WEAC recommendation that the Colonial School District no longer should serve Wilmington students was based on the need for coherent governance and not based on the test scores of segments of Wilmington students. While the Board has affirmed its desire to "keep its kids," the district actually has had a diminishing role in the education of Wilmington students. Indeed, the actual presence of the Colonial School District in the education of Wilmington students has been shrinking as students choose to attend non-district schools. The majority of the district's Wilmington elementary school students are now attending schools out of the district, specifically schools that are much closer to where those students live. **(Chart and data will be added here).**

An analysis of 2013 and 2014 DCAS test scores for low-income students residing in Wilmington leads to the conclusion that none of the four school districts has been effective in supporting the success of most of their low-income Wilmington students (see DCAS figures in Part II). This data demonstrates that low-income Wilmington students have test scores below those for all four districts as a whole, and also below those for all low-income students in all four districts. With one exception, test scores in all subject areas in all districts in both years document that less than 50% of low-income Wilmington students are proficient. In some cases Colonial test scores for Wilmington students are above those of other districts. These indicate important progress. Even so, less than 50% of Colonial low-income Wilmington students are proficient on all tests.

Conversations between representatives of the Commission and the leadership of the Colonial School Board and administration are underway to identify options that might best serve the Wilmington students in the district. Prospectively, these may include options not considered earlier by either WEAC or the district.

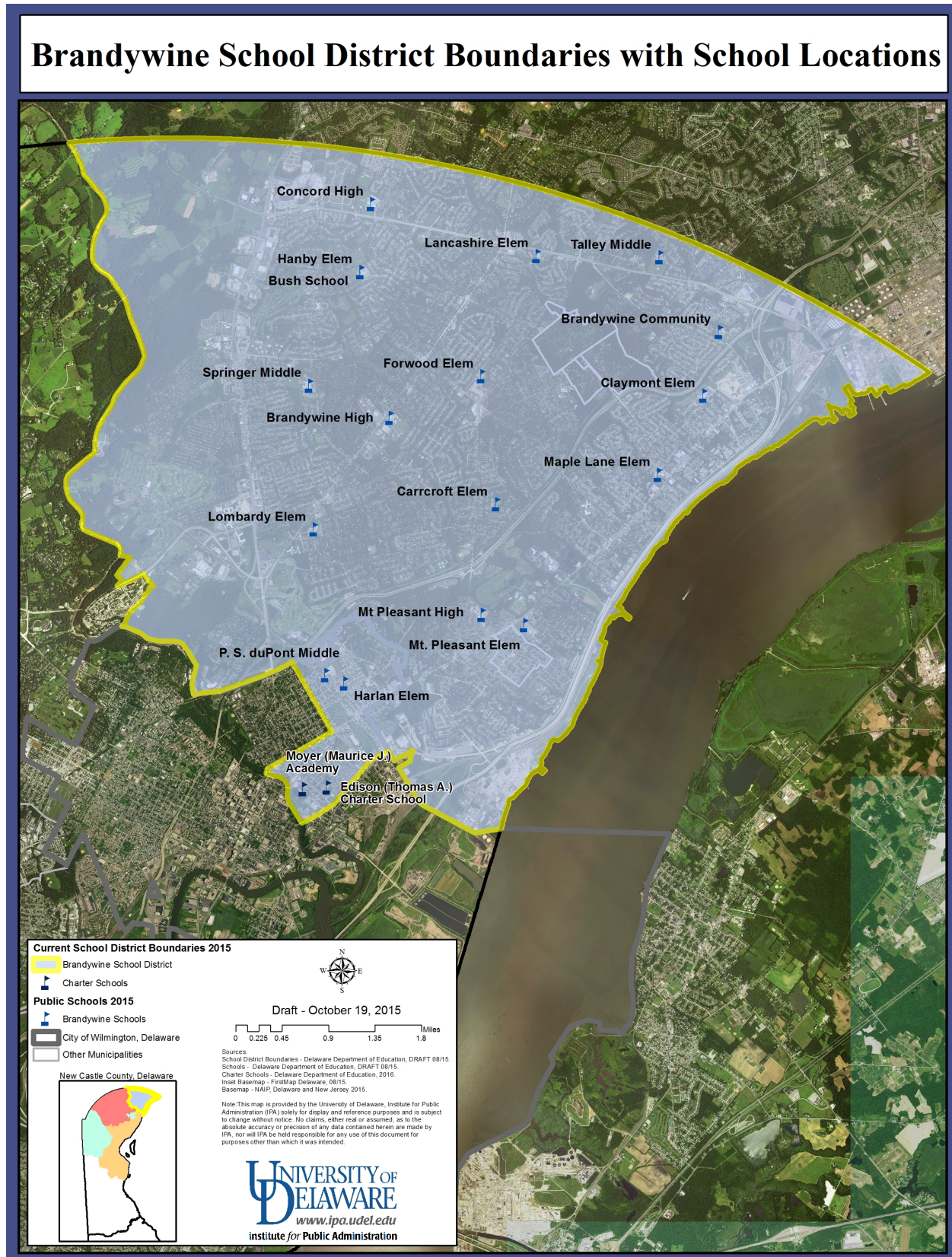
The Brandywine School District: Redistricting Issues and Options

The Brandywine School District occupies the northeast of the county with a segment in the City of Wilmington that is adjacent to all three other districts. The current boundaries of the Brandywine School District are depicted in MAP BR-1; the detailed narrative description of these boundaries is included in Part IX.

The WEAC final report recommends that the Brandywine School District continue to serve students in the City of Wilmington, and does not recommend any change of that district's boundaries. At a presentation to the Brandywine School Board on September 21, members of the Commission requested that the district consider expanding its district

boundary to the south. A portion of the current Brandywine boundary in the City of Wilmington is adjacent to the area in which the students currently served by the Colonial School District are living (see figure XXX above). The Brandywine School District was invited by the Commission to consider changing its boundary to serve those City of Wilmington students now in the Colonial School District. The Brandywine School Board did review this option at a board workshop. No formal communication has been received by the Commission from the Brandywine School Board about this option, although informal support was expressed for the Colonial School District's resolution to keep its current boundaries and students in the City of Wilmington. No further action is expected by the Brandywine School District at this time, given that conversations are underway with the Colonial School District to consider a number of options. Under any circumstances, the Brandywine School District is expected to continue to serve students in the City of Wilmington.

Figure 24: Map of Brandywine School District Boundaries with School Locations



APPENDICES

Appendix A: Legislation

Appendix B: Christina School District Framework for Planning

Appendix C: Red Clay School District Framework for Planning