

# Wilmington Education Improvement Commission

## Fact Sheet

### Wilmington Education Improvement Commission (WEIC)

- Established by state law HB148 to advise the Governor and General Assembly on:
  - Improvements to the quality and availability of education for children in Pre-K through grade 12 in the City of Wilmington and New Castle County (NCC);
  - Actions to address the needs of all Delaware schools with high concentrations of children living in poverty and English language learners (ELLs);
  - Recommended policies and actions to promote the continuous improvement of public education.
- A community-based council outside of state agencies, mandated to work 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 (WEAC), *Strengthening Wilmington Education: An Action Agenda*.
- Will submit an annual report to the Governor and General Assembly and will sunset on June 30, 2021.

### Commission membership

- Limited to 23 members from Wilmington and NCC, most designated by position.
- Includes district, charter, parent, teacher, student, and community representatives.

### Commission leadership

- Appointed by Governor Markell: Chairperson Tony Allen (banking executive, Wilmington resident); Vice-Chairperson Elizabeth “Tizzy” Lockman (parent and education advocate); and Vice-Chairperson Kenneth Rivera (President of Red Clay Consolidated School Board and Brandywine teacher).
- Policy Director Dan Rich (University of Delaware)
- Administrative support is provided by the University of Delaware’s Institute for Public Administration.

### Commission committees

- Will prepare recommendations to the Commission.
- The initial committees include: 1) redistricting; 2) charter and district collaboration; 3) meeting the needs of students in poverty; 4) funding; and 5) parent, educator, and community engagement.

### Commission redistricting responsibilities

- SB122 authorizes the State Board of Education to alter boundaries of school districts in NCC in a manner consistent with the recommendations made in the final WEAC report.
- The State Board’s action must be based on a transition, resource, and implementation plan prepared by WEIC.
- The General Assembly must pass, and the Governor sign, a Joint Resolution supporting the proposed changes.

### The redistricting plan shall include and provide for

- Orderly and minimally disruptive reassignment of students affected by the boundary change and the reassignment of governance responsibilities;
- Implications for educators, administrators, and other personnel that may lead to equitable adjustments to local collective bargaining agreements;
- Funding resources to support the redistricting transition and provide effective education for all affected students, and for the support of schools with high concentrations of low income students and ELLs,
- Student transportation;
- Distribution of capital assets; and
- Engagement of educators, staff, parents, district personnel, and community members.
- Students to continue their attendance at the school they attended prior to the boundary change, with tuition payments by the sending district, until such time as the pupils complete the grade levels offered in that school.

[www.solutionsfordelawareschools.com](http://www.solutionsfordelawareschools.com)

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Prepared by the University of Delaware’s Institute for Public Administration, August 26, 2015.

## Q & A for the Christina School District

### Has the decision to change district boundaries already been made?

- **No.** The State Board of Education can only make that decision, after it reviews WEIC's implementation plan.
- The WEIC implementation plan is due by December 31, 2015.
- The authority of the State Board to act under the provisions of SB122 ends on March 31, 2016.
- The General Assembly must pass, and the Governor must sign, a Joint Resolution supporting the proposed changes.

### Will the implementation plan recommended by WEIC be limited to redrawing boundaries?

- **No.** Simply redistricting is of no value without a comprehensive plan for school reform.
- The WEIC plan must include funding, parent and community engagement, and wraparound services.
- The WEIC plan will present a comprehensive package and ask the State Board to approve the entire package.

### Will Christina no longer serve Wilmington students?

- That is the recommendation from the WEAC final report and it serves as the basis for developing the redistricting plan, but no decision has been made.
- On January 26, 2015, the Christina School Board passed a resolution expressing support for the initial recommendations of WEAC.

### How is Christina represented on WEIC?

- Christina will be represented and involved in all stages of the process.
- Christina Board President Harrie Ellen Minnehan will be on the Commission.
- Christina teacher Karen Eller and Christina parent and advocate Eve Buckley will be on WEIC. Eve Buckley will co-chair the Charter and District Collaboration Committee.
- The Christina Superintendent and another member of the Christina administration as well as Board President Minnehan will serve on the redistricting committee.
- Other committees will include additional Christina representatives: administrators, teachers, principals, parents, and community members

### What will be the roles and responsibilities of Christina in developing the plan for transition and implementation of redistricting?

- Christina is being asked to coordinate with WEIC and other districts in developing a transition, resource, and implementation plan for the changes in responsibilities associated with the proposed alteration of its boundaries. The plan will include the logistics and timetable for implementation as well as the resource adjustments needed for the process to be successful.

### Will WEIC support Christina's development of the transition, resource, and implementation plan?

- **Yes.** WEIC's role is to support the work of all districts in developing their transition, resource, and implementation plans; to ensure that the district plans are coordinated and complimentary; and to present the full picture of the redistricting process to the State Board and to the General Assembly and Governor.

### How will Christina communicate with the parents and residents?

- Christina will maintain communication throughout the process with parents, educators, and community members.
- A series of Christina town halls and community meetings should be scheduled collaboratively by the District and WEIC. Information should be made available on the Christina website, and information also should be shared directly with parents and residents in the Christina newsletter/publications.
- WEIC will support communication efforts via a WEIC website (in development) and existing Facebook page.

### If redistricting of the Wilmington portion of Christina occurs, how will that affect Christina's remaining district boundaries?

- The district boundaries outside of Christina's Wilmington portion will not be affected. The Christina School District will retain responsibility for school attendance and feeder patterns in the current, remaining portions of the District, consistent with the same guidelines as now exist.

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## Wilmington Education Improvement Commission Membership

Tony Allen, Ph.D., Chairperson  
Wilmington resident and senior executive with  
Bank of America

Kenny Rivera, Vice-Chairperson  
President, Red Clay School Board and Teacher,  
Brandywine High School

Elizabeth Lockman, Vice-Chairperson  
Wilmington Parent, Education Advocate, and Public  
Allies Alumna

Eve Buckley, Ph.D.  
Parent and Education Advocate, Christina School  
District

The Honorable Nnamdi Chukwuocha  
Chair, Education, Youth & Families Committee,  
Wilmington City Council

Rosa Colon-Kolacko, Ph.D.  
Chief of Diversity Officer, Christiana Care

Karen Eller  
Teacher, Christina School District and Member of  
Wilmington Education Advisory Committee

Reverend Meredith Griffin  
Chairperson, Education Committee  
Interdenominational Ministers Action Council

Frederika Jenner  
President, Delaware State Education Association

Yvonne Johnson  
Parent and Education Advocate, Red Clay  
Consolidated School District

Joseph T. Laws  
President, Colonial School Board

Margie Lopez Waite  
Head of School, L'Aspira Academy Charter School

Aretha Miller  
Executive Director, Community Education Building

Harrie Ellen Minnehan  
President, Christina School Board

Joe Pika, Ph.D.  
Former President, State Board of Education

Chandra Pitts  
Parent and Executive Director, One Village Alliance

The Honorable Charles Potter, Jr.  
Representative, Delaware General Assembly

Vicki Seifred  
Teacher, H.B. duPont Middle School, Red Clay  
Consolidated School District

John Skrobot  
President, Brandywine School Board

The Honorable David Sokola  
Senator, Delaware General Assembly

Michelle Taylor  
President, United Way of Delaware

High School Student  
Red Clay School District

Breyonna Williams  
Student, Colonial School District

## Wilmington Education Improvement Commission Support

Provided by the University of Delaware's Institute for Public Administration

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## **Wilmington Education Improvement Commission Committee Chairs**

### **Redistricting Committee**

Joe Pika, Ph.D., Former President, State Board of Education

Henry Harper, Ph.D., Former Superintendent, Appoquinimink School District

### **Charter and District Collaboration Committee**

Eve Buckley, Ph.D., Parent and Education Advocate, Christina School District

Aretha Miller, Executive Director, Community Education Building

### **Meeting the Needs of Students in Poverty Committee**

The Honorable Chandlee Kuhn, Former Chief Judge, Family Court

Michelle Taylor, President, United Way of Delaware

Jackie Jenkins, Ed.D., Education Advisor, Office of the Mayor of the City of Wilmington

### **Funding Student Success Committee**

Jill Floore, Chief Financial Officer, Red Clay Consolidated School District

Mike Jackson, Deputy Comptroller-General, State of Delaware

### **Parent, Educator, and Community Engagement Committee**

Yvonne Johnson, Parent and Education Advocate, Red Clay Consolidated School District

Chandra Pitts, Parent and Executive Director, One Village Alliance