

Marsha Carter
213 West 18th Street
Wilmington, DE 19802

December 7, 2015

Wilmington Education Improvement Commission
C/O The Institute for Public Administration
111 Academy Street
Newark, DE 19716

Dear Dr. Tony Allen and WEAC/WEIC Members,

All information has been obtained from Delaware Department of Education (DDOE) School Profiles. Information reflects 2014/2015 school year except where noted.

Let me first state that adopting WEAC/WEIC recommendations should include 1 to 2 additional board member seats for residents in the City of Wilmington as a prerequisite.

Red Clay School district serves 15 Elementary Schools whereas 47% did not meet annual yearly progress (AYP). Compare this to Christina School District where they served 19 elementary schools and 21% did not meet AYP. About half of the elementary schools in Red Clay that did not meet AYP are in the City of Wilmington compared to three-quarters for Christina.

The middle and high schools have a different trend. However, it appears that the charters within Red Clay help change the game. For example, 3 out of 5 high schools in Red Clay met AYP yet 2 of them were charters. In essence when looking outside of the charter population, Red Clay only had one high school meeting AYP while Christina had none. Clearly, this is a concern.

Red Clay already has more students than Christina. For 2015, Red Clay had 18,046 students while Christina had 16,255. So, why would we add an additional 3,000 plus students to Red Clay? That would involve ***increasing their numbers by more than a tenth for a population that Red Clay continues to struggle with.*** For example, DDOE reported that for both Warner and Shortlidge ***less than 2 out of 10 third graders met the standards in math and reading.*** The number gets worst for fifth graders.

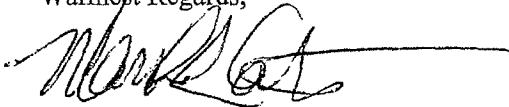
Why would we take schools from Christina (where 21% of their elementary schools are failing) and place them with Red Clay (where 47% of their elementary schools are failing)? Although impossible to prove, I personally wonder if this plan is about privatizing education (particularly in Wilmington) by your decision to choose a district that is amenable to the charter market. Red Clay has demonstrated that they are unable to bridge the education gap for current students. It appears we are justifying Red Clay failing our students by increasing funding to them. ***Instead, your plan should include a criterion to ensure administrators that have historically failed our students are asked to resign (or not be rehired).***

Furthermore, the possibility of reassessing property homes or raising property taxes may leave an undue hardship on the families we intend to assist.

Lastly, we have yet to discuss specific variables that may directly impact a student's academic performance—discrepancies in school disciplinary, curriculum and instruction, design of the school day, teacher dynamics, diversity in the schools, textbooks/resources (or lack thereof). These specific variables, which can aid in bridging the education gap, have been left out of the conversation. *Consequently, I say we should oppose implementing these changes until a more comprehensive plan outlining how Red Clay proposes to directly improve student performance for both current and proposed students to be reassigned as recommended by WEIC.*

I can be reached by phone at (302) 407-9966 or by email at MarshaCarterSpeaks@gmail.com.

Warmest Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Marsha Carter', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Marsha Carter