

Redding Consortium for Educational Equity Funding and Governance Work Group Update

Work Group Co-Chairs

Nnamdi Chukwuocha, State Representative, Representative District 1
Eugene Young, President, Metropolitan Wilmington Urban League

Recap

Due to COVID-19, the Work Group conversations about designing a path forward for redistricting were halted. At the Redding Consortium for Educational Equity meeting in May 2020, Consortium and Work Group leadership decided to shift focus from redistricting to the education funding system and how the Work Group and Consortium can create student-focused recommendations that promote equity.

The Funding and Governance work group began meeting again in August 2020 and outlined these focus areas for their work:

- **Short-term funding focus:**
 - Referendum reform
 - New Castle County Tax District
- **Background research:**
 - Opportunity funds—monitoring and making information transparent
 - CARES Act funds—monitoring and making information transparent
- **Long-term funding focus:**
 - Financial needs for high poverty schools (adequacy)
 - Systemic issues in the Delaware education funding system

Goals

Between August-October 2020, the majority of Work Group meetings focused on referendum reform. The goal for the referendum reform work is to use research, data, and stakeholder engagement to create a deliverable that outlines how the Work Group would like to see the referendum process change. The ultimate goals for the Work Group are to:

- **Create a deliverable that informs a piece of legislation on referendum reform** to be introduced in the 2021 legislative session.
- **Create an engagement strategy focused on referendum reform** to (1) ensure the Work Group hears from the community and uses their opinions to inform their work and (2) communicate about the Work Group's approach in a clear, concise and transparent way that conveys why referendum reform is important, what our goals are, and the impact this change will have on individuals and the community.

Update

One of the first Work Group meetings was a Delaware Public Education Funding 101 session that outlined the funding system in Delaware at the local, state, and federal level. The purpose of this session was to provide a clear overview of the funding system, ensure all Work Group

members were on the same page regarding concepts and terminology, and to engage and inform the public.

The remaining meetings in September-October focused on **referendum reform**. At these meetings, Work Group members and the public discussed recent efforts for referendum reform, specifically House Bill 129: <https://legis.delaware.gov/BillDetail/47402>. These meetings also focused on why referendum reform is related to equity. In addition, at this meeting the executive directors of the Delaware State Education Association, Delaware School Boards Association, and the Delaware Association of School Administrators, along with the Chief Financial Officer from Red Clay Consolidated School District, offered their thoughts on referendum reform. This input was invaluable and we look forward to continuing to engage these groups and others in future conversations and meetings. The next meetings will be structured to allow the Work Group to craft their deliverable and develop an engagement strategy related to referendum reform.

Upcoming Work Group Meeting Dates

The upcoming Work Group meeting dates are:

- Thursday, November 5, 5:00-6:30 p.m.
- Thursday, November 19, 5:00-6:30 p.m.
- Thursday, December 3, 5:00-6:30 p.m.