

REDDING CONSORTIUM PROPOSED SPENDING PLAN

Spending plan approved by the Redding Consortium voting members on June 5, 2023

The Redding Consortium is required by language in the state's budget epilogue to submit a spending plan for its use of state funds. That spending plan must be approved by the Office of Management and Budget, and Controller General's Office, and the chairs of the Joint Finance Committee.

Spending plans in prior years have closely tracked cost estimates that were approved by the Redding Consortium in its original spending recommendations made to the Governor and General Assembly. This year's spending plan is slightly different for three reasons. First, it involves the expenditure of both operating funds expected to be approved in the state's FY24 budget, and unspent funds that were appropriated in prior state budgets. Second, it involves expenditures on a new category (Middle School/High School OST) that was not included in the Consortium's initial set of recommendations. Addition of this category was recommended by the Social Determinants Work Group. Finally, it ratifies expansions in two spending categories – scholarships and professional development – that had been recommended by the Consortium in its original recommendations but are now being supported at higher levels than originally recommended.

The vast majority of the unspent Redding funds are in three categories: Pre-K slots, professional development, and the data dashboard. The unspent funds in the Pre-K category are the result of (a) a small number of providers applying for the Pre-K funds in the first year they were made available, and (b) the Department of Education delaying solicitation of additional providers in order to synchronize applications between the Redding program and the state's broader ECAP program. The number of recipients of Redding Pre-K slots is now at a level where there is no expectation that carryover funds will exist.

The following is the recommendation of the Consortium's chairs for spending of the Consortium's operating funds and carryover funds. The chairs also recommend that the Consortium approve the reallocation of \$200,000 in carryover funds if a recommendation for such is received during the fiscal year from the Social Determinants Work Group and the funds are still available.

1. **Redding Pre-K Slots.** Proposed funding: \$3.7 million, all in operating funds. These funds support the Consortium's recommendation that the state support full-day Pre-K slots for children in feeder patterns for high-poverty elementary schools in the City of Wilmington, with enhanced reimbursements for front-line staff to allow for improved recruitment and retention of Pre-K workers. This sum reflects the fact that the organizations that applied for these funds did so on the assumption that they would be made available on an annual basis for a period of three years. Therefore, it is important that all funds be included

in the operating budget so they are included in the state's base budget and provide a reliable funding support for the providers who entered this program.

2. State Support of Developmental Screening at Early Childhood

Facilities: Proposed funding: \$150,000, all in operating funds. These funds are to be used by the Department of Education to (1) pay for training of early childhood providers in the use of the developmental screening tool the providers are now required to use, and (2) to pay for the cost of the screening tool itself.

3. Outside School Time Services and In-School Health Services:

Proposed funding: \$5,740,000 in operating funds, \$2,174,637 in carryover funds. The Consortium's original recommendations to the General Assembly and Governor contemplated ambitious outside school time programs that would be more effective than the more limited programs that schools could implement with existing state funds. Because the state made prior awards for this program in a lump sum, the state has the ability in the coming year to make grants to new schools with large percentages of elementary school aged children living in poverty, and to allow two New Castle County schools that received lump sum grants to seek to extend and expand their programs. This combination of operating funds and carryover funds will allow for the funding of at least three new three-year programs, and the continuation/expansion for a total three-year period of the two existing programs in New Castle County. It is the intent of the Redding Consortium that, if appropriate proposals are received by DOE, the funding for new programs be awarded to a small number of new schools (ideally three), rather than divided into smaller amounts among a larger number of schools, in order to ensure that ambitious model programs can be implemented, and that schools are made aware in the RFA that they may submit proposals of up to \$1.9 million/year. The recommendation of \$5,740,000 in operating funds reflects an intention that the funding of these programs, though they are to be awarded as three-year programs, be included on an annual basis in the state's operating budget.

4. Scholarships. Proposed funding: \$370,000, all in operating funds. These funds pay for scholarships for faculty and staff at high-poverty schools to enhance their skills and professional credentials. This amount is double the sum that the program has spent to date, based on the Education Work Group co-chair's estimate of the likely growth in the program. It is recommended to fund this growth through operating funds in order to ensure that scholarship funds become part of the state's base budget.

5. Whole School Professional Development. Proposed funding: \$1.6 million, all in carryover funds. The Education Work Group has been allocated a total of \$800,000 in one-time funds since Redding's first state appropriation that began in July, 2021, and to date has not spent these funds. This allocation of \$1.6 million in carryover funds would allow the

Education Work Group to retain all of the \$800,000 that it has yet to spend, and have the capacity to do a second round of PD programs at such point that it designs and completes the first round.

6. **Racial Equity Data Dashboard:** Proposed funding: \$1,404,500 million, all in carryover funds. This reflects one-time costs that will be incurred by the Department of Education for the construction of the data dashboard, a model of which was shared with the Consortium at its last meeting.

7. **Middle School/High School OST Programming (“Boost” Program):** Proposed funding: \$640,000 in carryover funds. This would provide two years of state funding for the existing Boost program to continue at its current level of operation and to expand by an additional staff person to support more students.

8. **UD/DSU Staff Support for the Redding Consortium:** Proposed funding: \$240,000 in operating funds.