

**Redding Consortium for Educational Equity**  
**Full Body Meeting**  
**September 27, 2023**  
**Meeting Minutes**

The Redding Consortium full body meeting convened at 5:40 p.m. at Delaware State University (DSU) at the Riverfront in Wilmington, Delaware. Senator Elizabeth Lockman, co-chair of the Redding Consortium, welcomed all in attendance.

**I. Approval of Meeting Minutes**

Maria Matos, Consortium member, motioned to approve the June 5, 2023, full-body meeting minutes. Aaron Bass, Consortium member, seconded the motion. All members voted in favor of approving the meeting minutes for the full body meeting on June 5, 2023, as submitted.

**II. Redding Consortium Co-Chair Update**

Redding Consortium co-chairs Senator Lockman and Matt Denn presented a status update about the Redding Consortium's top priorities. Over the year, Consortium members participated in facilitated exercises and collaborative discussions focused on identifying, ranking, and advancing the priorities of the Redding Consortium. The co-chairs reviewed the progress made by the Consortium this year to achieve its stated goals and priorities.

The number one goal identified by the Redding Consortium members included fulfilling the charges mandated by the Consortium and following through on initiatives that are already underway. The action items taken by the Consortium include expanding full-day state-supported ECAP for Wilmington students, developing and expanding wraparound services for Wilmington students and their families, and providing scholarships for educators at Redding schools. Senator Lockman mentioned another top priority of the Consortium is to develop and publish a yearly data report on the educational progress and outcomes of City of Wilmington students. As the Redding Consortium continues to work on these priorities, Senator Lockman noted there are a few action items that are currently in the planning process, which include the coordination of whole school professional development with the Wilmington Learning Collaborative and the creation of a Redding data dashboard focused on Wilmington students.

The second goal identified by the Redding Consortium members entailed defining the relationship between the Redding Consortium and the Wilmington Learning Collaborative (WLC). Senator Lockman shared with the Consortium members that an alignment document

about the Redding Consortium and the WLC has been created by staff and shared with each leadership team. To that end, Senator Lockman mentioned that the Redding Consortium co-chairs and the WLC Executive Director have regularly scheduled monthly check-in meetings. In terms of additional alignment priorities, the Redding Consortium is currently working on coordinating with the WLC regarding a joint effort for whole-school professional development.

The third goal ranked as a priority by the Redding Consortium members is for the Consortium to collaborate with organizations and community partners on issues related to public education. The Consortium has worked with the Delaware Department of Education (DDOE) on coordinating the funding for full-day state-funded Pre-K, the Redding scholarships, and whole-school professional development. Currently, there is also coordination underway between the DDOE and the Data Service Center (DSC) on the creation of a Redding data dashboard. Additionally, Senator Lockman shared that there is coordination of wraparound services with the Bancroft School, the Bayard School, and Kuumba Academy Charter School. The Redding Consortium has also supported and partnered with the following community organizations in Wilmington on full-day Pre-K: Kingswood Community Center, Latin American Community Center, A Leap of Faith Child Development Center, and St. Michael's School Nursery.

Matt Denn, Redding Consortium co-chair, provided an overview of the substantive work of the Consortium by presenting the Redding Consortium Impact Report. Denn shared that \$30 million in state funding has been invested since 2020 by the Redding Consortium towards Wilmington students, families, and educators. Most of this funding has been invested in the Redding-supported programs, such as the outside-of-school time services, state-funded Pre-K program, and the Redding scholarship. \$10.2 million has been secured by the Consortium in recurring funds in the Delaware budget to support Wilmington school communities. Denn mentioned how most of these programs and supports have been created, developed, or expanded in schools as a result of the Redding Consortium's work. Additionally, Denn emphasized that Redding funds have helped expand state-funded full-day pre-k seats for 499 Wilmington children and that the Redding ECAP model was adopted statewide. The full-day component and the compensation for the frontline workers are important progress that has been made possible by the Redding Consortium. Denn shared that the numbers highlighted in the Impact Report contextualize how many students and educators have been impacted by the Redding-supported programs and the difference the funding is making on the ground in schools.

### **III. Community Update: Wilmington Learning Collaborative**

Dr. Laura Burgos, the inaugural Executive Director of the Wilmington Learning Collaborative, formally introduced herself to Redding Consortium members and shared community updates

about the WLC. She shared that the WLC is working on various priorities, including the hiring process for the four positions of the WLC leadership team, the WLC's operational budget narrative, and their work on reviewing proposals for a landscape analysis of WLC schools. Additionally, Dr. Burgos announced information about the October monthly meeting of WLC school principals for a day-long retreat, focusing on collaboration with the principals across the nine WLC schools. In addition, Dr. Burgos mentioned the upcoming Educator Leader Team (ELT) innovation project launch, where school leaders will propose and co-create solutions to implement in their schools.

#### **IV. Redding/ ECAP Update**

Caitlin Gleason, the Associate Secretary of Early Childhood Support in the Delaware Department of Education, presented a Redding/ECAP update to the Redding Consortium. Gleason discussed how the program has successfully helped expand access to state-funded full-day Pre-K for 3-year-old and 4-year-old children residing in the city of Wilmington. The Redding pilot program has shown that teachers with higher-quality interactions have had positive impacts on students' educational development. The Redding pilot program in the City of Wilmington has been expanded to the entire state. The Pre-K slots are now classified as contracted state-funded Pre-K seats. After hearing recommendations from partnering providers and reviewing the success of the program during its pilot year, Gleason and her team have worked to coordinate and improve the Pre-K program. For example, the full-day preschool program has included programming for up to 7.5 hours per day, required at least 50% of teachers to attain their bachelor's degree, and has competitively compensated the teachers working in these partnering Pre-K programs with salaries comparable to public school districts.

Secretary Geisenberger asked about the funding and inquired about the number of slots for the state-funded Pre-K program. Caitlin Gleason followed by saying that there were smaller numbers with the pilot program; however, since this program has been expanded statewide, they are blending and braiding the funds. The Delaware Department of Education has been operating the program by blending three different funding sources: the Redding funding, ECAP funding, and the federal Preschool Development Funds Grant. The difference between the number of Pre-K seats of 499 seats for Wilmington children listed on the Redding Impacts Report and 311 seats listed as the number of slots of 3-year-old and 4-year-old seats meeting Redding requirements in the City of Wilmington on the presentation is that 311 seats are the slots by only funded by the Redding Consortium for program partners meeting Redding requirements and serving students residing in the City of Wilmington. The Consortium has funded as many Pre-K slots as possible for children residing in the City of Wilmington, and the difference is that the rest of the slots are funded by ECAP and federal preschool development

funds. Maria Matos asked if the program would still follow Head Start standards. Gleason confirmed that this is still the case in addition to state requirements listed for the program.

Tika Hartsock asked about how the Department of Education has worked to resolve the issues raised by partnering community providers during the Redding full body meeting on June 5th, 2023, regarding the gaps in funding for Redding and ECAP for part-day programming for 9 months versus 12 months. Gleason responded by sharing that her team worked with providers to resolve those funding and programming issues over the summer. Councilman Street thanked Gleason and her team for her work over the past few months with providers. Maria Matos asked about a list of the community partners who are involved with the program across the state and inquired about how many are operating with a similar curriculum. Secretary Mark Holodick recommended maximizing funds for full-day programs since they are more impactful. Secretary Holodick also mentioned how it is essential that the DDOE team continue to work with providers. He noted the importance of DDOE's work with active troubleshooting and there should be active communication amongst the partner sites to see if they have the same technical issues. Gleason responded that there is a technical assistance team for the program.

## **V. Work Group Updates**

Kristi Pelezo, Director of the DDOE Office of Technology, and Katey Semmel, Executive Director of the Data Service Center, explained and provided an overview of the status of the Redding data dashboard. The work for the data dashboard contains three major phases: defining requirements, gathering the data, and developing the data dashboard. The first phase discusses what the Dashboard should look like and ideas for choosing data. There is currently a data dashboard prototype to help inform the development of the program. Over the last two months, there have been meetings with focus groups to define what the data dashboard should look like. The second phase discussed is the difficult process of gathering data and analyzing the gaps in the existing data. The data would be from the City of Wilmington geocode student data by county, city, and district. A priority for phase 2 was working on creating a geotag that aligns with each student. Pelezo and Semmel estimated that the timeline for tagging students and creating educator data and visualizations would take 4 to 6 months.

Maria Matos asked if the dashboard would be able to include information about identifying and tagging students of color for gifted and talented programs. Aaron Bass stated that Delaware is one of the few states that does not have requirements for gifted or talented programs or funding. Superintendents Joseph Jones and Dorrell Green inquired about gathering tracking data for transient students and developing a cohort model for the data. Jea Street also asked if there will be safeguards put in place to prevent the data from being misused or exaggerated

along with who would be able to access the data. The final question from Secretary Rick Geisenberger was about whether a pilot program student's identification number would travel with them if they switched schools. Pelezo and Semmel stated that the public would not have access to the raw data and that there were no safeguards in place to prevent discriminatory misconduct. However, the possibility of data misuse is now something that they are aware of. Students who have ID numbers will continue to have their tags, regardless if they go to different schools in different districts.

Noelle Picara, Educator Work Group Co-Chair, shared that the work group will not formally reconvene. The Educator Work Group Co-Chairs have been focused on the implementation of the work group recommendations regarding the recruitment and retention of educators and professional development planning. There have been 136 scholarships awarded since fall 2022 and 71 scholarships since summer and fall of 2023. The Delaware Department of Education recently launched a new financial support webpage for Delaware educators, which is a one-stop shop for the Redding scholarship information. The DDOE has many resources and scholarship opportunities for educators looking to receive a higher education. The application deadline for scholarships closes after the semester of the post-secondary school begins. The eligibility criteria reviewed by the Delaware Higher Education Office (DHEO) helped alleviate questions from the previous quarter, employment verification, and degree verification in the enrollment process. Institutions of Higher Education wait for universities to release funding and the numbered scholarships. Shelley Rouser, a member of the Educator Work Group and a Redding staff support member from Delaware State University, emphasized that this scholarship program has been a success, and the DDOE has been very responsive to the needs and aiding the process.

Some of the current challenges include applicants applying for the scholarship but not enrolling in classes. Another challenge includes scholarship candidates who are applying after the deadline due date and the need for more coordinated communication from DHEO and the Consortium to ensure that applicants are applying before enrolling in courses and making sure the resources are getting allocated correctly. Secretary Rick Geisenberger asked how to track applicants in the program and how to incentivize applicants, who are current teachers and staff, to remain at their current schools. Superintendent Green also inquired about the coordination with HR directors at the schools and districts to identify viable candidates and develop a mechanism for the recruitment and retention of educators and staff that can be potentially replicated at the district level.

## **VII. Redistricting Update**

Senator Lockman and Councilman Street shared an update about the path forward on redistricting. Senator Lockman mentioned that the Consortium is mandated to work on redistricting and that there needs to be a clear conversation to strategize a redistricting plan. Additionally, Senator Lockman suggested how the Funding and Governance Work Group co-chairs have consulted previous plans around governance change with the Institute of Public Administration (IPA) and Delaware State University (DSU). Senator Lockman shared that there needs to be a plan to begin developing the proposal and the expectation that there will be engagement with Consortium members and stakeholders. Superintendent Lincoln Hohler asked about the process for input and collaboration on the development of the redistricting proposal. Tika Hartsock requested that Redding Consortium members be informed of the progress of the proposal and that Consortium members be provided with the opportunity to provide feedback on the proposal. Tika shared that standing committees should be considered as part of the development. Since the General Assembly is currently out of session, the work group co-chairs need to be prepared and generate a tentative plan.

**There was no public comment. Joseph Jones made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Maria Matos seconded it at 7:30 p.m.**

## Attendance

### Redding Consortium Members

Senator Elizabeth Lockman, Co-Chair  
Matt Denn, Co-Chair  
Aaron Bass  
Sen. Eric Buckson  
Valeria Coverdale, Proxy for Rep. Nnamdi Chukwuocha  
Dorrell Green  
Tika Hartsock  
Lincoln Hohler  
Raye Jones Avery  
Joseph Jones  
Margie López Waite  
Maria Matos  
Jeffrey Menzer  
Xavia Mills  
Jon Neubauer, Proxy for Stephanie Ingram  
Noelle Picara  
Dan Shelton  
Jennifer Thompkins  
Secretary Rick Geisenberger - *Ex Officio*  
Secretary Mark Holodick - *Ex Officio*  
Nicholas Konzelman - *Ex Officio*

### Members of the Public:

Eric Braunstein  
Laura Burgos  
Shanika Dickerson  
Paul Dunford  
Karen Eller  
Caitlin Gleason  
Eric Hansen  
Susan Huffman

### IPA/DSU Staff

Haley Burns  
Destiny Carmona  
Grace Diehl  
Alaina Robinson  
Shelley Rouser  
Kelly Sherretz