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**Sponsor:**

**Council  
Member  
Mills**

**WHEREAS**, the Wilmington City Council’s 2022-2025 Strategic Plan goal of fostering a “Wilmington for All Ages” prioritizes advocacy and support for Wilmington's youth in the educational process; and

**WHEREAS**, § 401, Title 14 of the State Code establishes the School District Enrollment Choice Program as a means to “maximize parental choice in obtaining access to educational opportunities for their children” to attend public schools in any reorganized school district, vocational-technical school districts, or charter schools if they reside in this State; and

**WHEREAS**, despite the advantages the Choice Program affords to Delaware children, parents and children in the City of Wilmington still face disproportionate disparities when compared with other areas of our State; and

**WHEREAS**, the Delaware Environmental Public Health Tracking Network, produces a State Area Deprivation Index that measures socioeconomic deprivation in neighborhoods in terms of income, education, employment, and housing quality, with a score of 10 indicating the worst deprivation. Wilmington zip codes 19801, 19802, and 19805 carry deprivation scores of 9, 8, and 8, respectively. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) Social Vulnerability Index (SVI), which also analyzes factors related to socioeconomic disadvantage, such as poverty, access to transportation, and crowded housing, rates census tracts within these three zip codes as being among the most disadvantaged and sensitive to the impacts of hazardous events; and

**WHEREAS**, nearly one-quarter of residents in the 19801, 19802, and 19805 zip codes are under the age of 18. Given the substantial barriers to socioeconomic well-being that these children and their parents face, it is essential that there is further consideration of how the

current lottery practices for selecting students for acceptance into high-demand receiving local education agencies can be better leveraged to disrupt existing cycles of poverty in these critical areas of our City; and

**WHEREAS**, schools like the Cab Calloway School of the Arts, the Conrad Schools of Science, North Star Elementary School, and Wilmington Charter School are all among the top-performing schools in our State. Students from disadvantaged backgrounds that are pervasive in the 19801, 19802, and 19805 zip codes are less likely to gain acceptance based on the “Criteria for Approval or Disapproval” enumerated in § 405 of Title 14, which include being a returning student, having siblings attending the school, or having a parent employed by the receiving local agency; and

**WHEREAS**, eliminating educational inequities in our City and State requires that a conscious effort is made to ensure students in underserved areas are not excluded from high-demand schools by the existing school choice lottery process.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WILMINGTON** that this Legislative body earnestly appeals to the Brandywine, Christina, and Red Clay Consolidated School Districts that are most accessible to the parents and children of the most disadvantaged communities in our City, County, and State to give their fullest consideration to including geographical characteristics into educational lottery formulas for high-demand schools to the extent allowable by § 405 of Title 14 of the Delaware Code.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that this Council recognizes the role that access to quality education plays in disrupting the poverty cycles experienced by children located in the City’s most vulnerable areas, such as those within zip codes 19801, 19802, and 19805 and hereby seeks to support this critical work in any way possible.

Passed by City Council,

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk

**SYNOPSIS:** This Resolution urges the Brandywine, Christina, and Red Clay Consolidated School Districts to give their fullest consideration to including geographical characteristics into educational lottery formulas for high-demand schools, particularly with regards to school-aged youth in the City’s underserved zip codes: 19801, 19802, and 19805. This Resolution is in alignment with the 2022-2025 Strategic Plan goal of “Wilmington for All Ages” and the sub priority of facilitating “Advocacy and Support for Wilmington’s Youth in the Educational Process.”

DRAFT