

The Wilmington Interagency Collaboration Presents...

Fixing A Broken System

Why Redistricting?

Objectives

By the end of today's presentation, participants will understand:

- Historical Context and the challenges facing Wilmington's education system
- Why redistricting is an important step in fixing the fragmentation
- The current status of redistricting efforts and next steps
- The ASK for groups supporting Wilmington students

Redistricting Historical Context

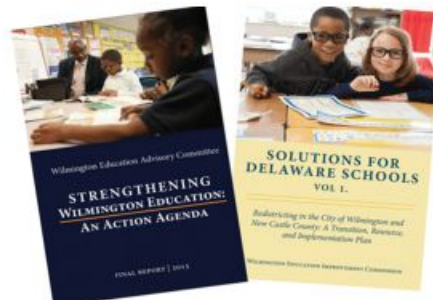
There are **18 public schools** located in the **city of Wilmington**, serving about **11,000 students**.

Over the years, school leaders and community members have worked together to help improve education for Wilmington students. Today, the system is still too complex, and we need a **more unified way to support all students and schools**.

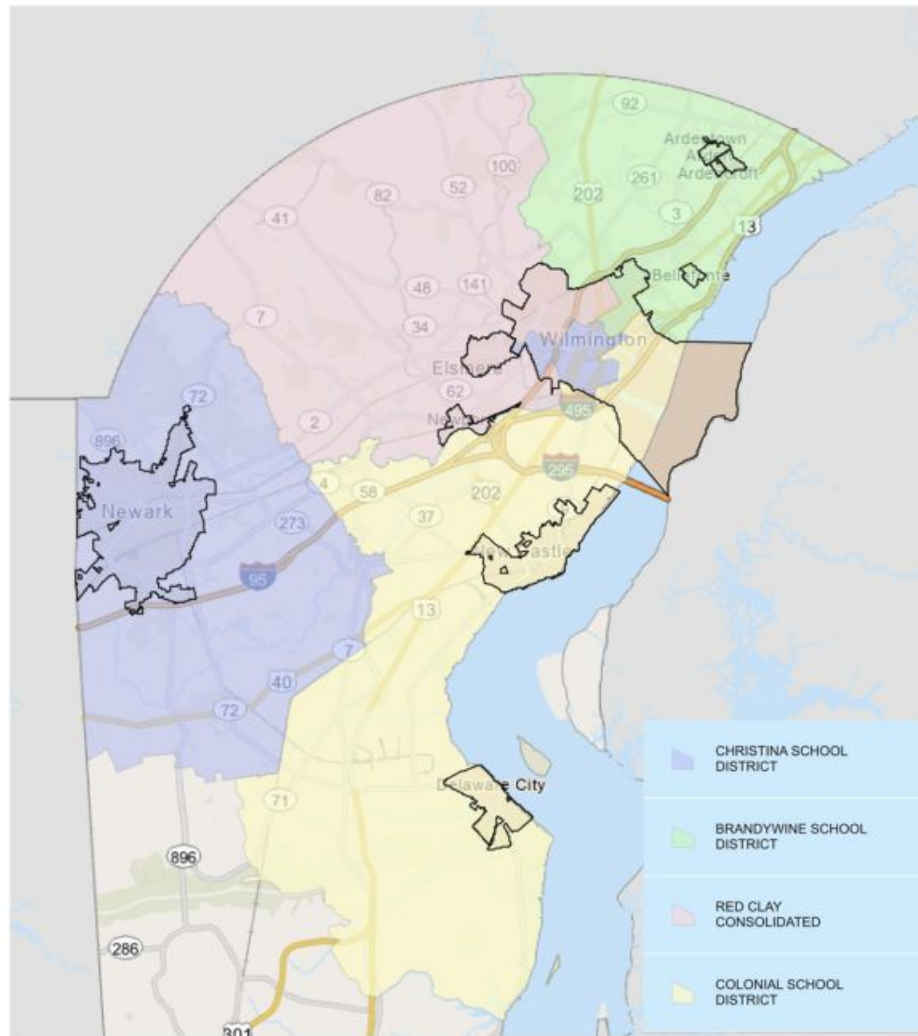
The Redding Consortium is using **over 20 years of reports** and **community input** to guide our work.

Decades of Past Redistricting Efforts:

- Wilmington Neighborhood Schools Committee (2001)
- Wilmington Education Task Force (2008)
- Wilmington Education Advisory Committee (2015)
- Wilmington Education Improvement Commission (2016)



Current City of Wilmington School District Boundaries



— Municipal Boundary Line

Brandywine

Christina

Colonial

Red Clay

CHRISTINA SCHOOL DISTRICT

BRANDYWINE SCHOOL DISTRICT

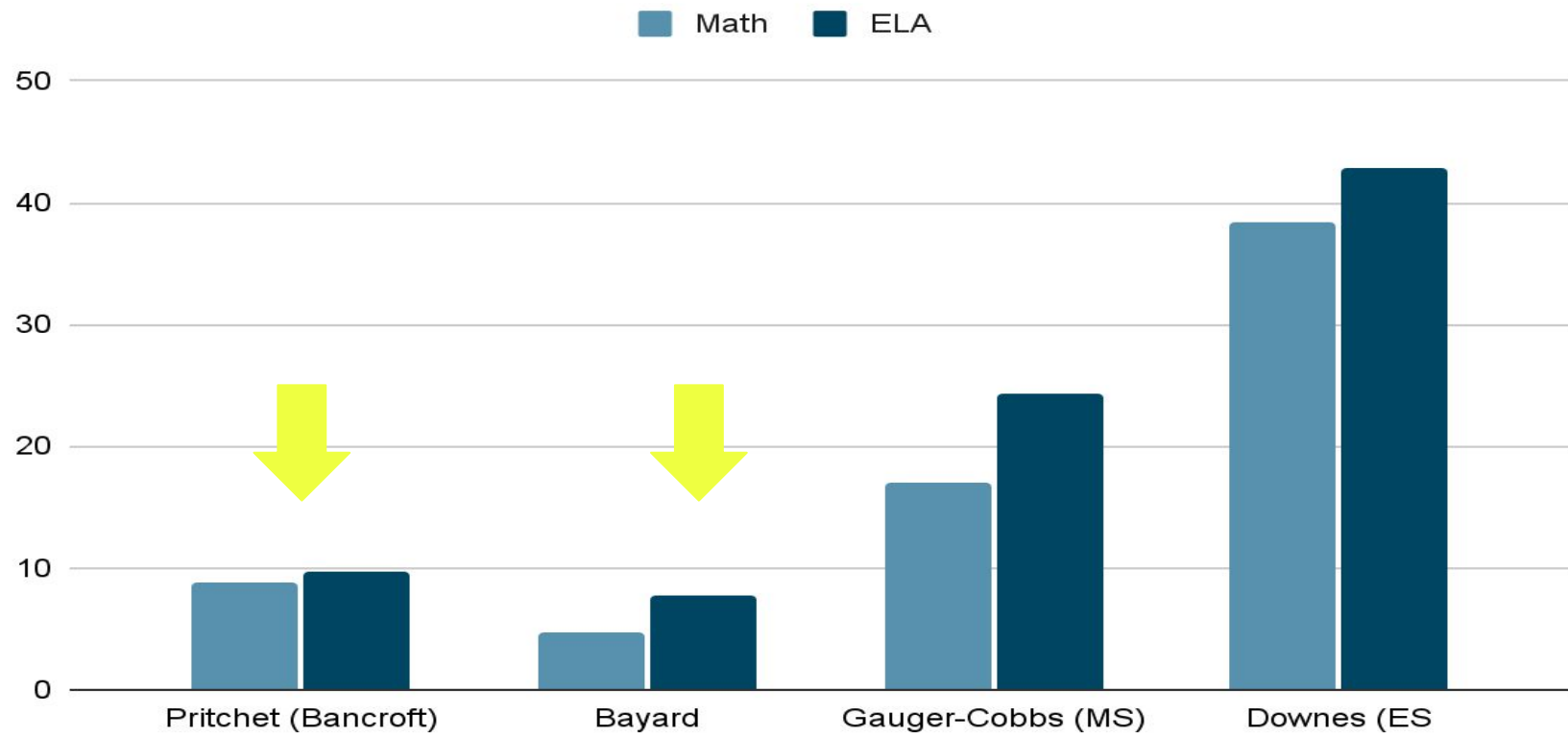
RED CLAY CONSOLIDATED

COLONIAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Source: Institute for Public Administration, 2024

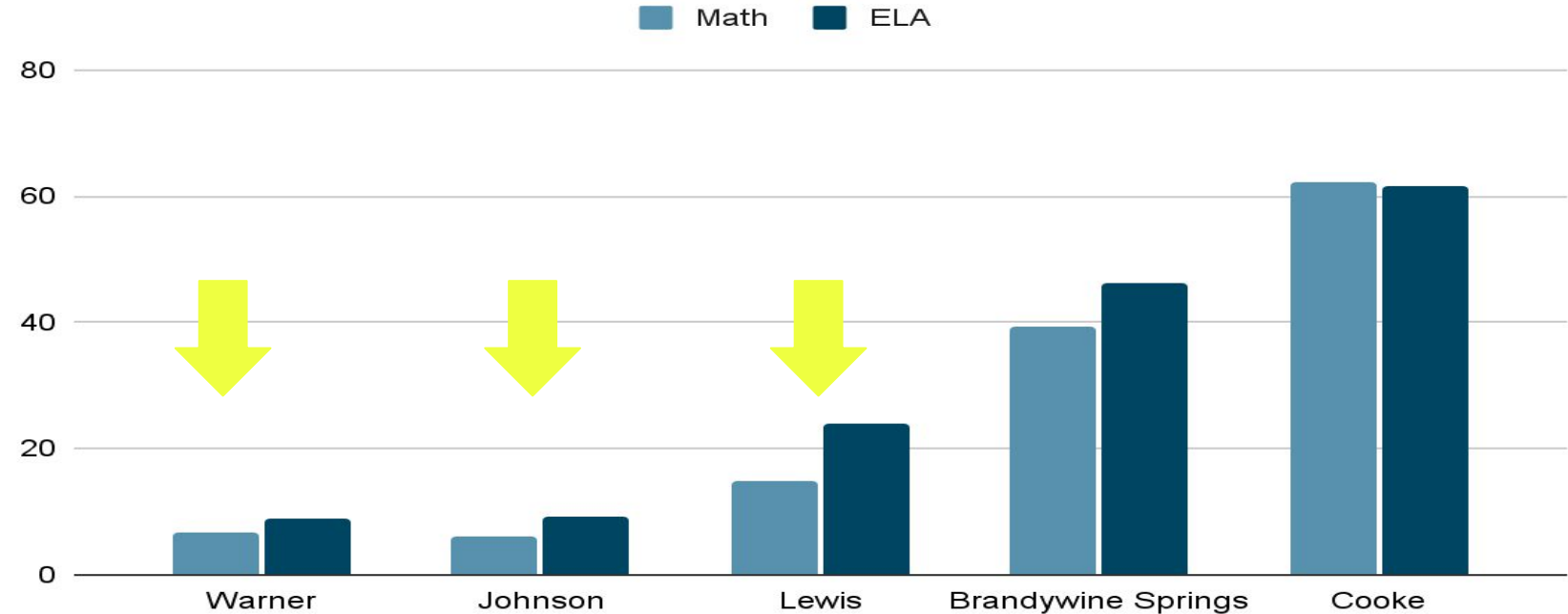
**How are the City students doing
compared to their district peers?**

Data: Christina School District



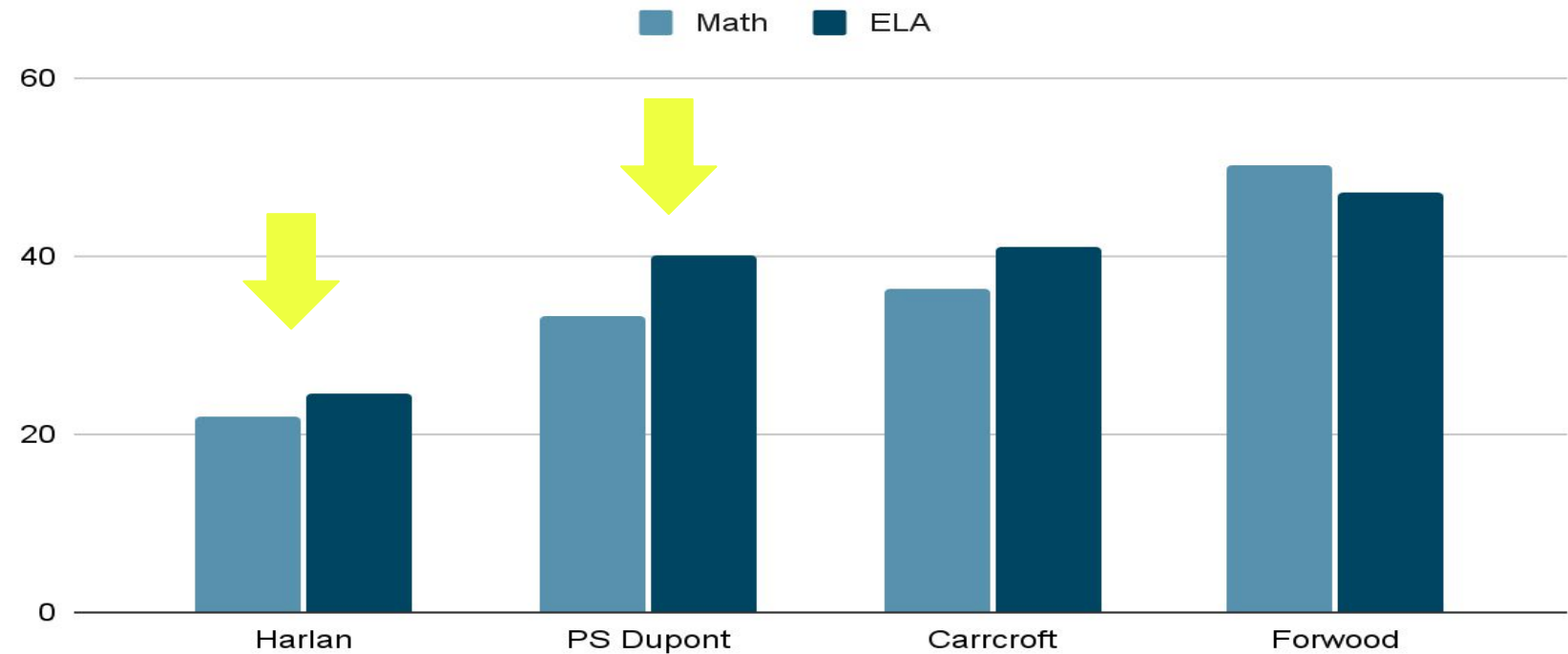
Data: Red Clay School District

Note: data not available for Shortlidge



Data: Brandywine School District

Note: PS Dupont - Houses Gifted and Talented Program



A Vision for Strong Public Schools



Every child deserves access to **a great school** and **a high-quality education**, no matter where they live or their background.

Changing school district boundaries won't solve everything, but it's an **important first step** to bring school communities together.

This is part of a **bigger plan** to improve schools and support stronger, more connected communities.

Redding Consortium: Mission

The Redding Consortium was created in 2019 to recommend policies and practices to the Governor and Delaware General Assembly that will improve educational equity for students.

Our goal is to improve academic and learning outcomes for all students in Pre-K through 12th grade in the city of Wilmington and northern New Castle County.

The Consortium is mandated by the state to develop a redistricting plan (Senate Bill 148; House Bills 222 & 229).

We are working to expand opportunities so that every student has access to a world-class education.





Redistricting Planning & Process

Redding Consortium - Approved Interim Plan

The interim plan was approved by the Consortium on May 9, 2024 and affirmed by the General Assembly

- The interim plan framework outlines that **no more than two school districts** should serve city of Wilmington students, focusing on removing the Christina School District from serving the city.

Key areas of the plan include:

- **18-Month Timeline (May 2024 - December 2025)** - the Redding Consortium has 18 months to develop a final redistricting plan.
- **Subcommittees** - three groups working to address the 13 stipulations for the final Redding plan.
- **Landscape Analysis** - the American Institutes for Research (**AIR**) is conducting a study about the factors outside of school that impact students' educational outcomes.
- **"Big Ideas" for Policy Reform** - the final plan will also explore big-picture policy reform ideas related to school funding, state investment, and charter schools and school choice reform.

Where Are We Now?



Redistricting Update

- **Hosted 3 “Strong Schools” Town Halls in May 2025** to hear from the community about their values and key priorities for improving public education in the city of Wilmington and northern New Castle County.
- **Convened 2 subcommittee retreats in March and June 2025** for deeper planning across the three redistricting subcommittees and to hear data updates about the landscape analysis from the American Institutes for Research (AIR).
- **Hosted 2 full body meetings in May and July** to affirm the narrowed list of redistricting options prioritized for further consideration.

6/14 Retreat Recap - Redistricting Options

Based on the data modeling review, community feedback, and group discussions at the retreat, **three redistricting options were supported by those in attendance at the June retreat:**

- ✓ **Northern New Castle County Consolidated District:** Consolidates the districts serving northern New Castle County comprising the city of Wilmington, the city of Newark, and all suburbs north and west of the city of Wilmington (not including the Appoquinimink School District unless otherwise proposed). This option consolidates all four districts serving Wilmington: Red Clay, Christina, Brandywine, Colonial into one district.
- ✓ **Metropolitan Wilmington District:** Consolidates the districts that would serve students within the geographical boundaries of the city of Wilmington and the Brandywine and Red Clay School Districts. This option would consolidate Brandywine, Red Clay, and the city of Wilmington into one district.
- ✓ **Brandywine and Red Clay Consolidated School District:** The Brandywine and Red Clay Consolidated School Districts divide responsibility for the education of all students within the geographical boundaries of the city of Wilmington (i.e., River Plan).

What Happened to the Wilmington City School District Option?



What else is being considered?

For over 70 years, the city of Wilmington has been at the center of efforts to create a more equitable educational system. A recurring theme throughout this history has been the reliance on structural changes.

Redding recognizes that simply changing district boundaries is not enough and is seeking additional state funding to expand wraparound services that address the social drivers of health and education – the factors outside of schools that impact students' health and educational opportunity.

Social Drivers

American Institute for Research (AIR) identified four social drivers that have the biggest impact on students' health and educational opportunities

- Public Safety
- Transportation
- Housing
- Mental Health

It's important to note - these social drivers are not fixed and can be addressed through policies and programs.

Public Safety

Students are avoiding school options, parks, public transportation, and community centers due to concerns about their safety. Parents and students described regular encounters with gun violence, fighting, and public drug use, leaving many families to choose isolation at home versus engagement with school and community.

Transportation

Students, parents, and after-school providers described complex barriers to transportation that limit students' options. Some barriers were structural, such as misaligned scheduling and no busing for school choice. Others were rooted in safety concerns as students and parents described navigating community violence and dangerous roadways.

Housing

A growing number of lower-income families are unable to grow roots in their schools and community due to housing insecurity. Rising housing costs are forcing parents to choose between working extra jobs and being less present or moving to cheaper housing and interrupting their child's academics and relationship with peers and teachers.

Mental Health

Students, parents, school personnel, and community providers all highlighted mental health as a fast-growing challenge for many students and parents—especially those dealing with housing instability and community violence. Mental health service availability is mixed, and uptake is limited due to social stigmas, cost, and lack of awareness of options.

What's Next?

Redding Consortium's Proposed Process Timeline



September 2025

- Parent and Family Engagement Series (Sept. - Oct.)
- Educator Advisory Panel Town Halls (Sept. - Oct.)
- Subcommittee/Co-Chair Work (Ongoing)
- AIR - Report 3 (September)
- Co-Interpretation Event (September)

October 2025

- Full Body Retreat
- Draft Redistricting Plan
- AIR - Final Report

November 2025

- Full Meeting
- Public Hearings
- Finalize Redistricting Plan with AIR's findings

December 2025

- Redding full body meeting vote on final plan

January 2026

- Submit final plan to the State Board of Education in January (90 days to review the plan)
- Controller General's Office Reviews Plan

June 2026

- Submit Final Redistricting Plan to General Assembly
- General Assembly Votes on Redistricting Plan

Our Ask

Keep an Open Mind!

- Change is scary but it is necessary
- Remain open to all perspectives and engage in healthy dialogue

Please Engage!

- Continue to come to Redding Meetings and engage in the process.
- The process is not over and your involvement makes a difference

Share Correct Information!

- Please counter mis-information with correct information. If you are unsure, ask :-)
- Please share the one-pager and point questions to a member of Redding or Dr. O

Questions and Comments

