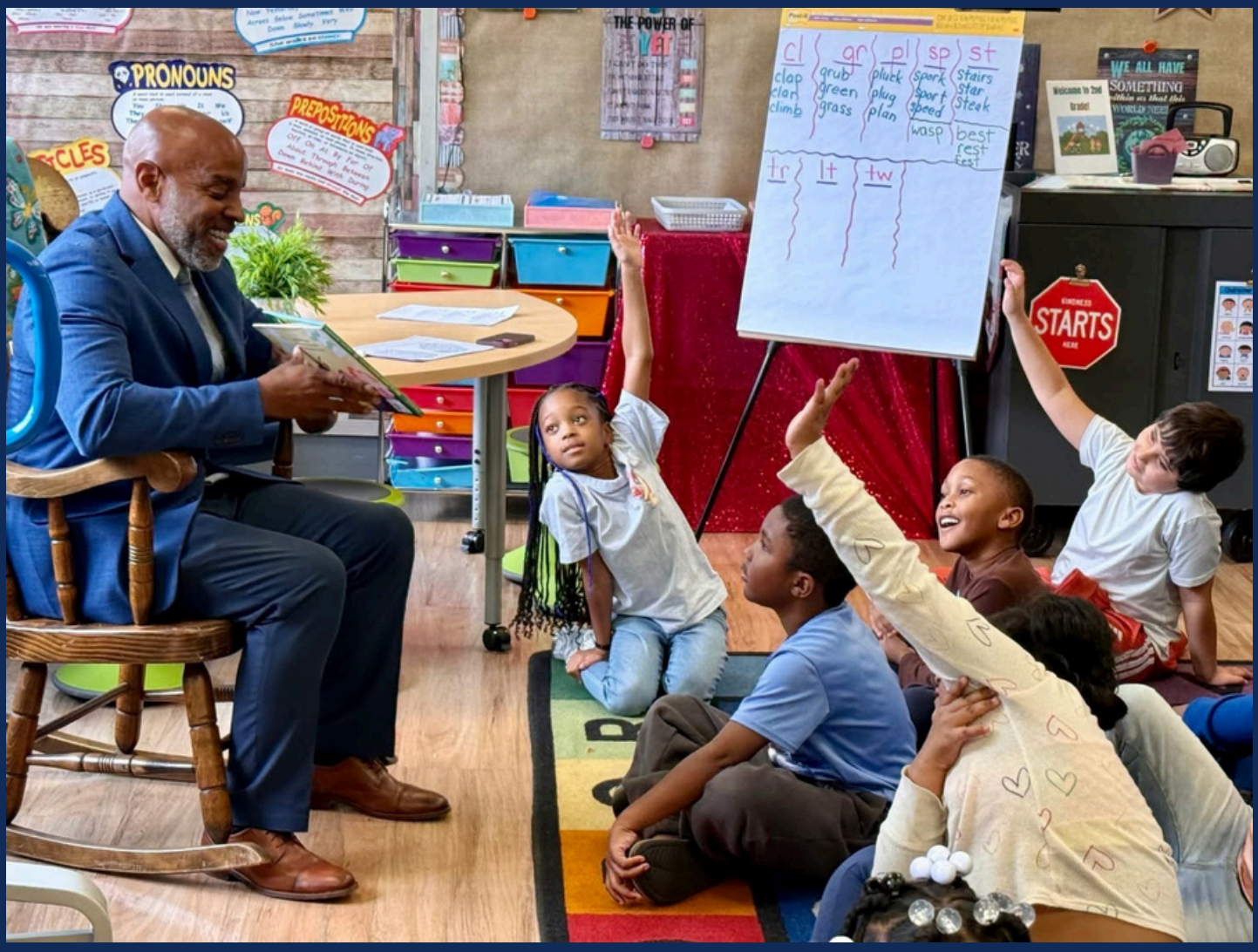
ISSUE 001 / FALL 2026

THE EDUCATION EDIT

OFFICE OF EDUCATIONAL ADVOCACY



90 DAYS IN / Wilmington Education

The village is taking shape.

INSIDE ReadingDay / Community Tour/ YouthVoice / Meeting Minutes

Letter from the Director



Dear Wilmington,

In my first 90 days as Director of Educational Advocacy, I've seen what that care looks like across our city. I've seen community advocates bring neighbors together to speak up for what students need, volunteers sort books so more children can build libraries at home, and community members pull up a chair to read with students. I've also heard young people speak plainly about what they want for Wilmington. My guiding question remains:

> **What could we make possible for Wilmington's students if we worked together more often?**

Part of my role is to bring people doing this work together and ask a second question: How do we make sure the people closest to our students help shape the decisions that affect them?

Both questions run through this first issue of The Education Edit. We're sharing preliminary findings from our OEA Survey so you can see what we're hearing from Wilmington so far. You'll also find stories from Reading Day, a look at what the Wilmington Youth Advisory Council is building, and updates on school funding, school support, and redistricting. My hope is that when you read about an education decision, you can see what it could mean for your child or your neighborhood and know how to weigh in.

To everyone who welcomed me into a school, invited me to a community table, made an introduction, or took the time to share your perspective in the survey: thank you. You helped shape these first 90 days. The work continues, and what you've shared will guide what we do next.

Every child deserves a village. I'm glad we get to build it together.

In community,

Dr. Brittany C. Powell
Director of Educational Advocacy · Wilmington City Council

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COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

The city is our classroom.

Understanding education in Wilmington means learning beyond school walls. At neighborhood events, libraries and community spaces OEA is learning from our city.



A FIELD NOTE FROM WILMINGTON

Organizations, parents and families across Wilmington are eager to collaborate. Too often, this work happens in silos, but throughout OEAS's Community Tour, I've heard a shared desire to change that. People want to know wo else is doing the work, share what they have, and find ways to support our students together.

The next few pahes hilight the people, places and conversations that shaped our first 90 days. Showing up is he beginnig. Or responsibility is to stay connected, listen closely and turn that willingness to collaborate into shared action.

Listening first

From a room of principals to conversations with young people, these visits made space to hear what matters at different points in a student's life.



PRINCIPALS BREAKFAST/ RED CLAY



URBAN PROMISE ACADEMY/ OEA VISIT

01 Red Clay Principals Breakfast

Connecting & Celebrating with school leaders while learning about the students they serve

02 Urban Promise Academy Visit

Talking with eighth graders and high school students about using their voices to advocate.

03 Home Library Project Visit

Sorting books so more children can build libraries at home.

04 HBCU Week College Fair

Meeting students and families as they explored paths to college.

05 Freire Charter School

Joining families and educators for Back-to-School Community Day.

Beyond the classroom

Arts spaces, libraries, and neighborhood gatherings are part of how Wilmington learns.



NoMA LIBRARY EAST / GRAND OPENING



DELAWARE INSTITUTE FOR ARTS EDUCATION/ FOUNDERS DAY

06 Delaware Institute for Arts Education
Marking Founders Day and the role of the arts in how students learn.

07 Suit Up, Show Up: EastSide Charter
Showing up at EastSide Charter in support of students.

08 NoMA Library East Grand Opening
Celebrating a new neighborhood space for reading and learning.

09 Red Clay Block Party
Meeting families during the back-to-school season.

Show up for youth





KUUMBA ACADEMY

10 Kuumba Clap Up
Cheering students into a new school year.

11 Play Streets Finale
Connecting with neighbors at a Wilmington summer gathering.

12 Next Level Youth Summit
Taking part in a gathering centered on young people.

13 CEB Youth Development Center Fest
Celebrating a space dedicated to youth development.

THE CONVERSATION CONTINUES

What is working for young people in your neighborhood? What should OEA hear next?

When the village reads



ELIJAH SIMMONS / CHIEF OF STAFF, WILMINGTON CITY COUNCIL

For National Literacy Month in September, OEA invited community readers and local children’s book authors into EastSide Charter classrooms. Miss Delaware Anaya Harrison also returned to her former school as a guest reader, giving students a chance to meet someone whose story started in a place they know.

In 2023–24, Wilmington students met state English language arts standards at lower rates than peers outside the city. OEA wants to be part of the solution.

A story worth coming back to.

Reading Day brings people from across Wilmington into classrooms to share books with students. OEA is making it a monthly tradition so more school communities can take part.



WILMINGTON LITERACY SNAPSHOT

Redding Schools Performance 2025-2026 change in ELA/Math

District	School	ELA 2025	ELA 2026	ELA Change	Math 2025	Math 2026	Math Change
Brandywine	P.S. DuPont Middle School	40%	45%	5%	33%	36%	3%
Christina	The Bayard School	8%	9%	1%	5%	5%	0%
Christina	Maurice Pritchett, Sr. Academy (formerly Bancroft)	7%	9%	2%	3%	3%	0%
Christina	Pulaski Early Education Center	Does not serve grades 3-8					
Christina	Stubbs Early Education Center	Does not serve grades 3-8					
Red Clay Consolidated	Shortlidge Academy	Does not serve grades 3-8					
Red Clay Consolidated	Lewis Dual Language Elementary School	24%	16%	-8%	15%	8%	-7%
Red Clay Consolidated	Joseph E. Johnson Elementary School	9%	18%	9%	6%	5%	-1%
Red Clay Consolidated	Warner Elementary School	9%	8%	-1%	7%	5%	-2%
Charter Schools	East Side Charter School	28%	24%	-4%	23%	18%	-5%
Charter Schools	Great Oaks Charter School	Does not serve grades 3-8					
Charter Schools	Kuumba Academy	26%	20%	-6%	12%	6%	-6%
Charter Schools	Thomas Edison Charter School	16%	11%	-5%	7%	8%	1%

source: Delaware Department of Education

A read-aloud is one way the community can help children build a relationship with books. Students also need strong reading instruction and access to books all year.

READING DAY CONTINUES MONTHLY

NOVEMBER 20

Kuumba Academy

DECEMBER 9

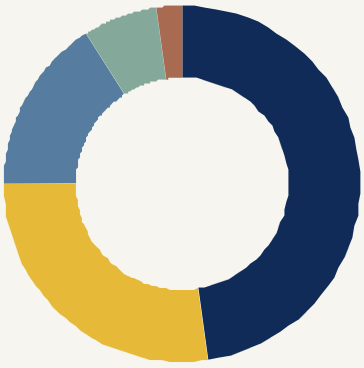
Johnson Elementary

Want to read with us? Connect with OEA about a future Reading Day.

What we're hearing

Families told us what matters most and where they run into barriers. Local organizations told us how they want to work together.

WHO RESPONDED



Community organizations / nonprofits	48%
Parents and caregivers	27%
Educators and school staff	16%
Community members and residents	7%
Students	2%

TOP 3 FAMILY PRIORITIES

Most selected issues among families who answered.

01 **Academic achievement**

02 **Literacy and reading**

03 **Mental health and wellness**

These early responses describe who took the survey and what they shared. They do not represent all of Wilmington.

What comes next

WHAT FAMILIES FOUND HARD TO NAVIGATE

These were the challenges parents and caregivers selected most often. Respondents could choose more than one issue.

SCHOOL CLIMATE & BELONGING

SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

What we want to learn next: When families need help, where do they turn first, and what happens next?

100%

Every organization representative who answered said they were interested in future opportunities with OEA. All also expressed interest in being featured in the Resource Directory.

KEEP THE CONVERSATION GOING

These early responses are helping OEA identify where to ask deeper questions, strengthen connections and make information easier to find. Our OEA Youth & Family Resource Directory is in development to help families explore available opportunities.

The strong interest in collaboration expressed through the survey from community organizations have informed in the curation of our Community Table event on Dec 3 at NoMa library. Grassroots and Community organizations will come together to discuss whats working, what gaps remain and how we can better serve Wilmington youth and families

SOURCE: OEA WILMINGTON EDUCATION FEEDBACK SURVEY

Youth Voice: A seat at the table

What would you change about Wilmington if you had the ear of the people making decisions?



The Wilmington Youth Advisory Council (WYAC) is officially back in session! Our Next meeting is November 12th. The goal of WYAC is to create a space that gives young people a place to bring the issues they see in their schools and neighborhoods to city leaders. Members will elect leaders, work in committees modeled on City Council, and learn how public decisions are made, including how the city budget process works.

OEA is developing a civic engagement and advocacy curriculum to help students understand how city government works and practice speaking up on issues that matter to them.



WILMINGTON YOUTH ADVISORY COUNCIL

From an issue to a proposal

What would make life better for young people in Wilmington? WYAC members will choose an issue and turn it into a recommendation city leaders can respond to.

01 **Start with a real issue**

Working alone or in small groups, members will choose an issue, research who it affects, and identify who can help address it.

02 **Make a specific ask**

Members will write a short policy brief and create a display that explains the issue, their recommendation, and what they want city leaders to do.

03 **Present it at the policy gallery on May 4th**

At the gallery, members will present their recommendations, answer questions, and discuss next steps with attendees.

WYAC SPRING 2027

APRIL	**Students speak at a city budget hearing.**
MAY 4	**You’re invited to the Youth Policy Gallery.**
MAY 7	**Students visit the Baltimore Youth Council.**

The Meeting Minutes

I WENT TO THE MEETING FOR US, HERE'S WHAT I LEARNED

01 HOW DELAWARE SUPPORTS SCHOOLS?

WHAT'S ON THE TABLE

Delaware's draft School Performance and Support Framework would provide earlier and more intensive help as needs increase. Support could include coaching, resources and improvement planning. State takeover is a possible last resort in the draft.



WATCH VIDEO HERE

WHAT WILMINGTON CAN ASK

What support will reach schools first? How will the state recognize progress, and how will students, families and educators help shape improvement plans before decisions are made?

USE YOUR VOICE BY NOVEMBER 20

Submit feedback through the state's framework page. The state lists town halls on November 9 (hybrid) and November 17 (virtual), both from 6 to 7:30 p.m.

USE YOUR VOICE. GIVE FEEDBACK

Below you will find the link to the FULL draft of Secretary of Education Martin's full School Performance and Support Framework & Feedback Form

OPEN THE DRAFT, FEEDBACK FORM & TOWN HALL DETAILS

Two decisions to watch

02 REDDING CONSORTIUM: THE PROPOSAL PROCESS

WHAT'S ON THE TABLE



The consortium is developing a proposal to consolidate four northern New Castle County school districts: Brandywine, Christina, Colonial and Red Clay. The plan is still being developed and there is still time to be a part.

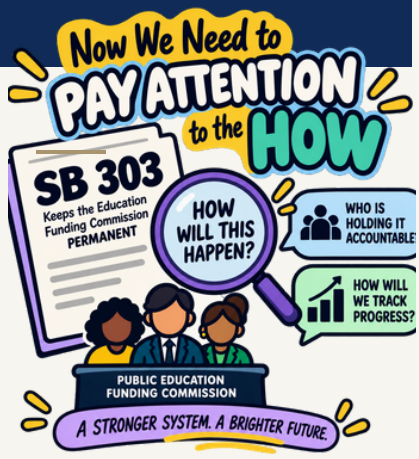
USE YOUR VOICE

Check the consortium's meeting materials and agenda for public comment. Ask how the plan would affect school assignments, bus rides, student services or access to a comprehensive high school in Wilmington.

FOLLOW REDISTRICTING MEETINGS & MATERIALS

03 HOW DELAWARE FUNDS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

WHAT'S NEXT



WATCH VIDEO HERE

The hybrid model keeps parts of the existing formula and adds funding based on student needs. SB 302 authorized preparation for fiscal year 2028. SB 303 made the Public Education Funding Commission (PEFC) permanent so it can keep reviewing the formula.

USE YOUR VOICE

Speak during public comment at a PEFC meeting or contact your state legislators as they consider the budget. Ask how extra funding will reach students and how families will be able to see what schools received.

FIND PEFC MEETINGS & PUBLIC COMMENT INFORMATION

READ THE LEGISLATIVE RECORD FOR SB 302 & SB 303

City Council members can also gather constituent experiences and bring specific requests to state decision makers.

You’re invited

01 / OEA × COUNCILMAN HACKETT

Parent & Teacher Appreciation

NOVEMBER 5, 2026 • 5–8 P.M.

CEB Youth Development Center · 315 E. 12th St., Wilmington

Free admission • Register on Eventbrite





02 / COMMUNITY LISTENING SESSION

The Community Table

DECEMBER 3, 2026

Grassroots leaders and community organizations: Share what’s working for Wilmington families and where we can work together.

LOOKING AHEAD / SPRING 2027

OEA Community Day

A resource fair for Wilmington families. Council members: Help shape the fair and connect OEA with organizations serving your district.

Lets Stay in CONTACT

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Continue to fill out our survey