

Wilmington, Delaware
June 20, 2024

#0450

Sponsor:

**Council
Member
Cabrera**

Co-Sponsor:

**Council
Member
Mills**

WHEREAS, House Concurrent Resolution 146 (HCR 146), Supporting the Recommendation of the Redding Consortium for Educational Equity to Provide Immediate Support to Wilmington Public School Students and Planning for the Withdrawal of the Christina School District from the City, affirms the Redding Commission for Educational Equity’s (RCEE) recommendations to “move immediately to support Christina School District’s City of Wilmington students and to plan for the eventual withdrawal of the Christina School District from the City of Wilmington”; and

WHEREAS, the Wilmington City Council Strategic Plan expresses a firm commitment to a “Wilmington for All Ages” that advocates for and supports youth in the educational process; and

WHEREAS, historical educational policies, such as the Neighborhood Schools Act of 2000 and the four school district model, as well as major disruptions to the learning environment, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, have further widened the achievement gap between students who reside in the City of Wilmington and their counterparts throughout the State and nation; and

WHEREAS, academic outcomes in the Christina School District have been particularly concerning to stakeholders in the Wilmington community. According to the District’s most recent Delaware Report Card, which provides an overview of key indicators for Delaware’s educational institutions, 32.58%, or less than one-third, of third through eighth graders were proficient in English language arts (ELA) and about 25%, only one in every four students in

the third through eighth grades, had math scores that were satisfactory for their grade level;
and

WHEREAS, less than 75% of the class of 2023 graduated high school in the Christina School District within four years with a traditional high school diploma. In the 2022 to 2023 school year, attendance was at 80.63%, and only 70.83% of graduating seniors were classified as college or career-ready; and

WHEREAS, the RCEE attributes these outcomes to ongoing “systemic and systematic” issues. Despite the efforts of educators, school staff, and other District stakeholders, the RCEE has determined that the current configuration of school districts that serve Wilmington’s students is not conducive to eliminating educational inequities. The RCEE has developed a Redistricting Interim Plan that identifies a framework, key concerns, and recommended actions to improve the quality of the educational experience for Wilmington’s school-aged children; and

WHEREAS, the Christina School District is the only noncontiguous school district in Delaware. Its serving area spans the City of Wilmington, the City of Newark, and surrounding suburban areas. The RCEE’s plan involves an assessment of factors within the school setting and external variables that influence educational outcomes for Wilmington’s students. The data derived from the assessment will inform the RCEE’s efforts to develop a strategy for withdrawing the Christina School District from the City’s existing four school district model with minimal disruption to the academic process for students; and

WHEREAS, HCR 146 “encourages the Department of Education to work to provide immediate supports to the Christina School District’s Wilmington schools through the Wilmington Learning Collaborative and The Office of Equity and Innovation” while also

initiating “purposeful steps” to realign the school district model to one that is more befitting to the needs of Wilmington’s students over the next several years; and

WHEREAS, the Redding Consortium members have voted in agreement to recommend an alternative educational model for the City of Wilmington that is independent of the Christina School District.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WILMINGTON that this Legislative body expresses favor for House Concurrent Resolution 146 (HCR 146), Supporting the Recommendation of the Redding Consortium for Educational Equity to Provide Immediate Support to Wilmington Public School Students and Planning for the Withdrawal of the Christina School District from the City, and encourages the honorable members of the Delaware General Assembly and the Department of Education to give the Redding Consortium’s recommendation for redistricting its fullest consideration.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that ensuring access to high-quality education for all Wilmington students is of paramount priority for this Legislative body.

Passed by City Council,

ATTEST: _____
City Clerk

SYNOPSIS: This Resolution affirms the Wilmington City Council's favor for House Concurrent Resolution 146 (HCR 146), Supporting the Recommendation of the Redding Consortium for Educational Equity to Provide Immediate Support to Wilmington Public School Students and Planning for the Withdrawal of the Christina School District from the City’s existing four school district model. HCR 146 aligns with Council's 2022-2025 Strategic Plan commitment to a “Wilmington for All Ages” that advocates for and supports youth in the educational process.