Wilmington Learning Collaborative

Developing a collaborative approach to educational success in the City of Wilmington
Current as of 11/7/21

Current Challenges

To improve student outcomes in City of Wilmington schools, we need to address the current challenges and develop a student-focused solution.

- **Fragmented governance**

  Governance is fragmented across four districts (five including NCCVT) and several charter schools.

- **Low achievement rates, high absenteeism**

  Student achievement rates are low and chronic absenteeism is high. The pandemic has exacerbated inequities and gaps, and a new approach to supporting schools is needed.

- **Movement between schools and LEAs**

  Moving mid-year could mean changing districts, leading to learning disruptions for students.

- **Recruitment & retention**

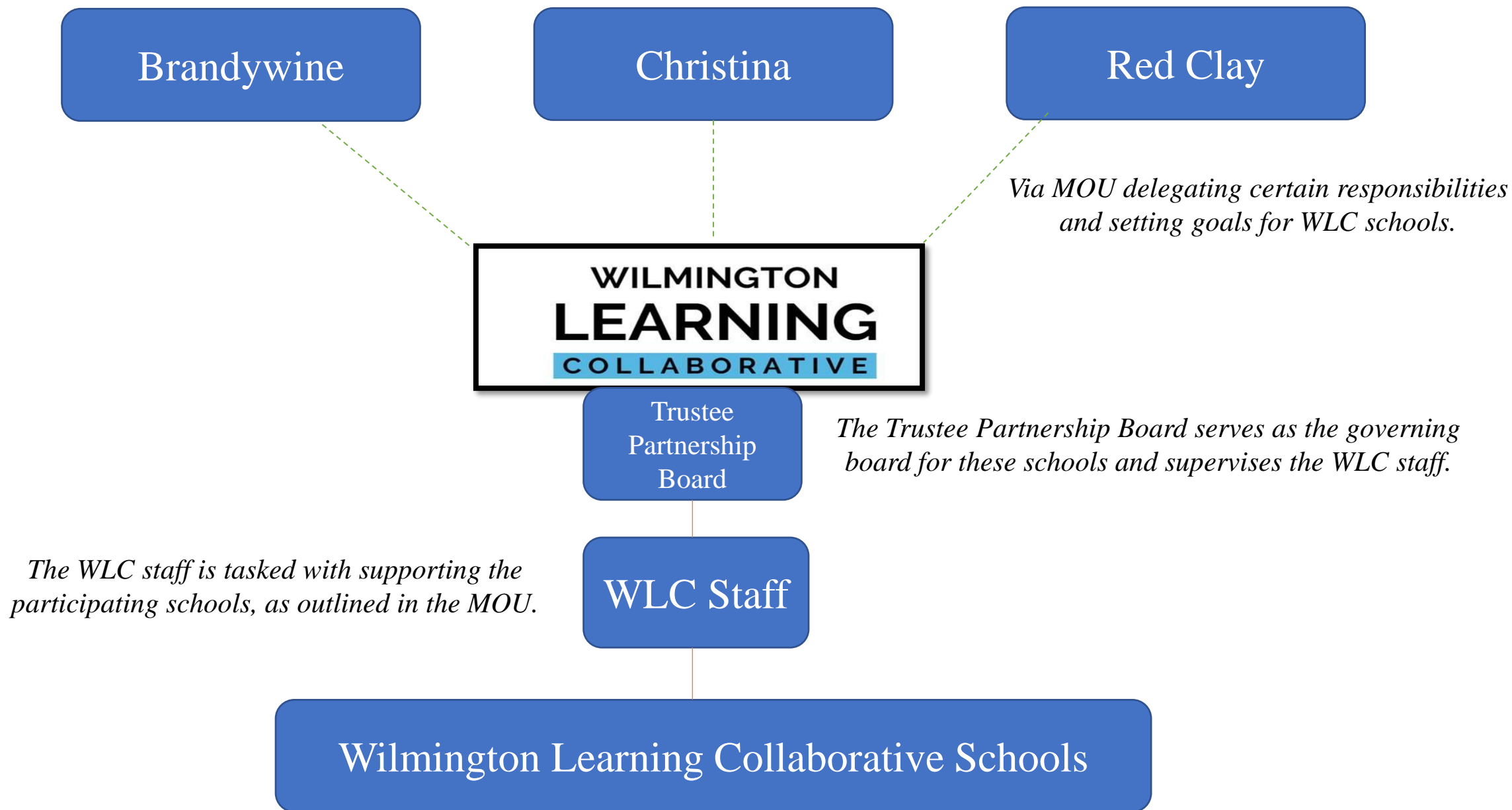 Recruitment and retention of educators and leaders is a challenge.

- **Facilities**

  The current state of the school buildings makes redistricting a challenge.

Teacher Retention Data – Three-year percentage

School	Same School Retention Rate
Bayard	30.4%
Bancroft	35.5%
Warner	38.5%
Highlands	42.9%
Shortlidge	46.7%
Harlan	55.6%
Lewis Dual Language	56.3%
State of Delaware Average	66.4%

Wilmington Learning Collaborative Structure

Brandywine

Christina

Red Clay

Via MOU delegating certain responsibilities and setting goals for WLC schools.

WILMINGTON
LEARNING
COLLABORATIVE

Trustee Partnership Board

The Trustee Partnership Board serves as the governing board for these schools and supervises the WLC staff.

The WLC staff is tasked with supporting the participating schools, as outlined in the MOU.

WLC Staff

Wilmington Learning Collaborative Schools

Why Would a District Join?

- Enables **a special focus** on a small subset of schools to meet each child's needs.

- **Increases cross-district collaboration** and minimizes the impact of student mobility.

- Ensures long overdue **Wilmington community involvement** in Wilmington schools.

- Dedicated focus on staff retention and recruitment, with a **dedicated focus on talent management**.

- Enhances wraparound services and supports so that **schools are community hubs**.

- This model **has shown results** elsewhere.

What Could a Collaborative Look Like?

Who Participates

- This initiative is open to elementary and middle schools in Wilmington.

- Participation is voluntary; this is a coalition of the willing to better support these schools.

Targeted Support

- Small staff to operate the Collaborative and solely focus on supporting these schools.

- Community-based governing board only focused on these schools.

Empowerment

- Empower educators/leaders with shared decision-making.

- Empower communities with Community Councils at each school to help make these schools true community hubs.

Flexibility

- Funding flexibility to meet student/community needs.

- Operational flexibility to design models (STEM/arts) or schedules (longer day/year).

Collaboration

- Cross-district collaboration to minimize impact of transfers.

- Joint professional learning and a shared, high-quality, culturally relevant curriculum.

Remain in District

- Schools remain in their regular school district.

- Rely on the district for certain services (enrollment, payroll, transportation, etc.)

Targeted Support

✓ ## Student Supports

- Extended learning opportunities

- One consistent, culturally relevant curriculum

- Focus on collaboration to minimize the disruption of mid-year student transfers

- Enhanced wraparound services and equity in programs

✓ ## Educator Supports

- Consistent, quality coaching and support for educators and leaders

- High-quality, targeted professional learning and collaboration across LEAs

- Opportunity to serve on the Educator Leader Team to ensure shared decision-making

✓ ## Talent Management

- Strong focus on retention and recruitment

- Strong focus on school leadership

✓ ## Flexibility

- Schools will have flexibility to use their funding to meet the unique needs of their students

- Schools can modify school schedules or focus to support student learning and engagement

✓ ## Collective Impact/Accountability

- Community-based Trustee Board comprised of trusted leaders, superintendents, board members, and experts solely focused on these schools

- Community Councils at each school to advise on community needs (families, staff, current/former students, community members)

Additional State Investments

Pre-K Investments
- Goal to increase full-day pre-k seats in the City

Program Investments
- Extended day and year services
- On-site health services

Operation Costs
- High-quality curricula
- Staffing costs

Teach Wilmington Fund
- Strong focus on retaining our educators
- Innovative recruitment efforts
- High-quality professional learning for educators and school leaders

Other Initiatives Could Include...

- ✓ Have businesses adopt each school

- ✓ Improved equipment and facilities

- ✓ Connect every family to the internet and provide devices

- ✓ Create/enhance wellness centers at every WLC school; whole child/whole school initiatives

- ✓ Innovative, growth-centered accountability pilot

- ✓ University partnerships and scholarships

- ✓ High quality professional learning that leads to a Masters Degree

- ✓ Farm to table partnerships and community gardens to ensure healthy options for students

- ✓ A para or a yearlong resident in every classroom; two adults in every room

- ✓ Evening adult classes

School Operations

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

- Trusted community leaders
- Superintendents of participating districts
- City School Board members
- Education experts

Acts as the Collaborative's governing board, hires/supervises WLC staff.

STAFF

Sample roles could focus on
- Executive Director
- Teaching and Learning
- SEL/Family Engagement
- Operations Director
- Talent Management

Run the day-to-day operations of the Collaborative; supervises school leaders; daily efforts and energy on these schools.

SCHOOL STAFF & COMMUNITY COUNCIL

- ELTs work with the administration on school-based decisions
- Community Councils advise the administration and ELTs

Example Collaborative School

Autonomy

- School X, working with their ELT and Community Council, decides to become a STEM Academy.

- Dedicated focus on math, science, technology, robotics, and more.

Flexibility

- Invest flexible resources in state-of-the-art technology equipment for students and staff.

- Hire extra staff to support STEM activities for students during and after school.

New Schedule

- School day could run until 4:30 with robust robotics, coding, and app designing opportunities.

- STEM classes and job training for families and the community.

- Strong, embedded SEL focus and supports for students on-site.

Talent Management

- The Collaborative staff recruits strong candidates for open staff positions.

- The ELT and administrators interview them and hire those who are the best fit for the school.

Collaboration

- 2nd grade teachers from this school collaborate with 2nd grade teachers at another WLC school around literacy.

- A child moved from one school to the other, so their current and former teacher discuss needed supports.
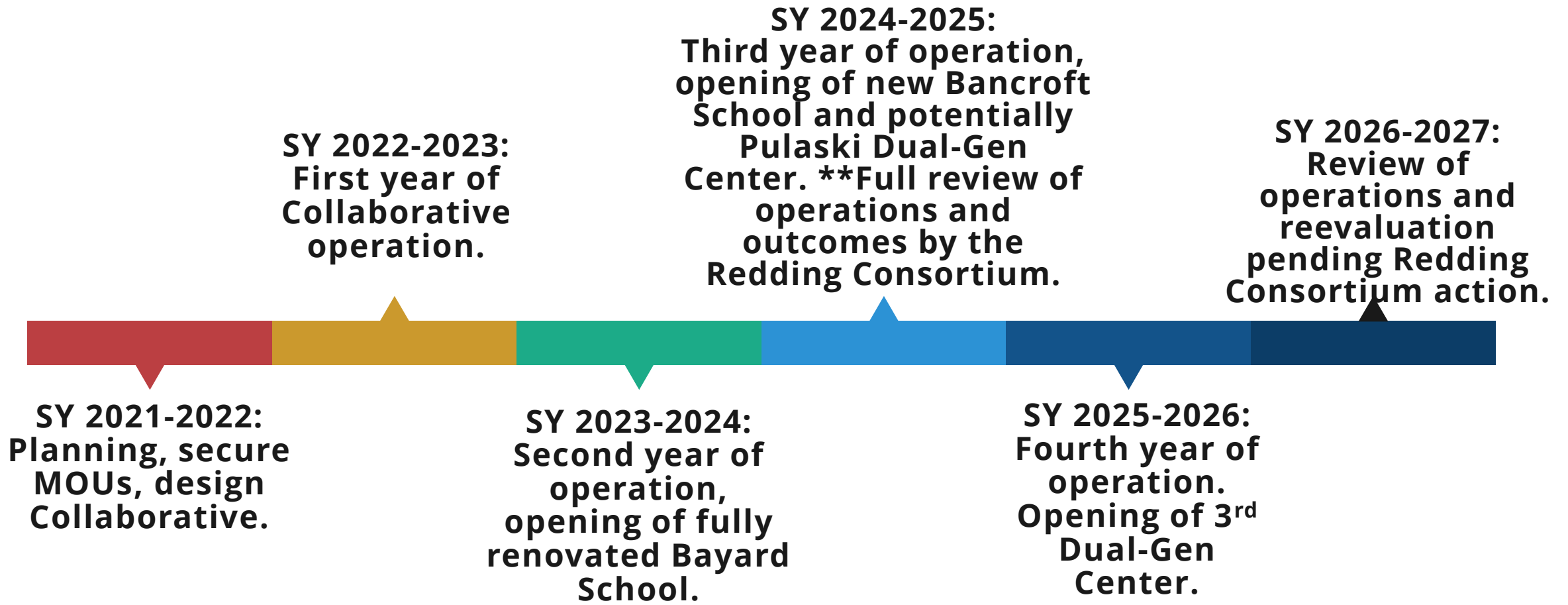
How would this get done?

MOUs

- Districts negotiate MOUs delegating certain operations to the Collaborative. These agreements would have goals that the district/board would hold the Collaborative to.

- Contracts and bargaining agreements are amended if needed.

- This is NOT going to change employee rights regarding termination/collective bargaining. This is NOT having people reapply for jobs. This IS empowering educators and those closest to children.

Budget

- Added budget investments to further support Collaborative schools.

What is the Long-Term Plan?

SY 2021-2022:
Planning, secure MOUs, design Collaborative.

SY 2022-2023:
First year of Collaborative operation.

SY 2023-2024:
Second year of operation, opening of fully renovated Bayard School.

SY 2024-2025:
Third year of operation, opening of new Bancroft School and potentially Pulaski Dual-Gen Center. **Full review of operations and outcomes by the Redding Consortium.

SY 2025-2026:
Fourth year of operation. Opening of 3rd Dual-Gen Center.

SY 2026-2027:
Review of operations and reevaluation pending Redding Consortium action.

Path Forward

- **November:** Present to school boards and share the framework.

- **December:** Continued board and community engagement.

- **January:** Ask for Board vote to proceed with MOU crafting and negotiation.

- **January-February:** MOUs negotiated.

- **March:** MOUs finalized.

- **April-June:** Continued goal-setting, continued Collaborative design/planning, continued community engagement.

- **July:** Beginning of year one.