

**Race to the Top**  
**Application for Initial Funding**  
CFDA Number: 84.395A

**Narrative**  
The State of Delaware  
January 19<sup>th</sup>, 2010

## Table of Contents - Narrative

<b>Glossary</b>	.....	Glossary -1
<b>Section A</b>	<b>State Success Factors</b>	
(A)(1)	Articulating the State’s reform agenda and LEA participation.....	A-3
(A)(1)(i)	The State’s comprehensive and coherent reform agenda.....	A-3
(A)(1)(ii)	The MOU represents a strong commitment from LEAs.....	A-13
(A)(1)(iii)	LEA participation and statewide goals .....	A-15
(A)(1)	Evidence List.....	A-20
(A)(2)	Strong statewide capacity to implement and sustain plans.....	A-23
(A)(2)(i)	Strong statewide capacity to implement.....	A-23
(A)(2)(ii)	Statements of support.....	A-35
(A)(2)	Evidence List.....	A-37
(A)(3)	Demonstrating progress in raising achievement and closing gaps.....	A-39
(A)(3)(i)	State progress in the four reform areas over the past several years.....	A-39
(A)(3)(ii)	Improving student outcomes, overall and by subgroup.....	A-46
(A)(3)	Evidence List .....	A-54
<b>Section B</b>	<b>Standards and Assessments</b>	
(B)(1)	Participation in a common standards consortium and plan to adopt standards...B-2	
(B)(1)(i)	Participation in consortium of a significant number of states.....	B-2
(B)(1)(ii)	Plan demonstrating commitment to adopting common standards.....	B-3
(B)(1)	Evidence List.....	B-6
(B)(2)	Developing and implementing high-quality assessments.....	B-9
(B)(2)(i)	Working towards high-quality assessments.....	B-10
(B)(2)(ii)	Participating in consortia committed to developing common assessments.....	B-11
(B)(2)	Evidence List .....	B-13
(B)(3)	Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and assessments.....	B-15
<b>Section C</b>	<b>Data Systems to Support Instruction</b>	
(C)(1)	Data Systems to Support Instruction.....	C-2
(C)(1)	Evidence List.....	C-8

(C)(2)	Accessing and Using State Data.....	C-10
(C)(3)	Using Data to Improve Instruction.....	C-17
(C)(3)(i)	Ensuring implementation of instructional improvement systems.....	C-18
(C)(3)(ii)	Providing effective professional development to support instruction.....	C-21
(C)(3)(iii)	Making data accessible and available to researchers.....	C-22

**Section D Great Teachers and Leaders**

(D)(1)	Providing high quality leadership pathways.....	D-2
(D)(1)(i)	Legal provisions allowing alternative routes to certification.....	D-2
(D)(1)(ii)	Alternative routes to certification.....	D-2
(D)(1)(iii)	Identifying and preparing to fill shortages.....	D-3
(D)(1)	Evidence List.....	D-5
(D)(2)	Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance.....	D-7
(D)(2)(i)	Establishing clear approaches to measuring student growth.....	D-11
(D)(2)(ii-iii)	Evaluation systems and conducting annual evaluations.....	D-12
(D)(2)(iii)	Ensuring rigorous annual evaluations.....	D-17
(D)(2)(iv)	Using evaluations to inform decisions.....	D-18
(D)(3)	Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals.....	D-29
(D)(3)(i)	Ensuring the equitable distribution of teachers and principals.....	D-31
(D)(3)(ii)	Increasing the number of effective teachers and principals.....	D-32
(D)(3)(i-ii)	Providing incentives to retain effective teachers and principals.....	D-33
(D)(3)(i-ii)	Improving the teaching and learning environment.....	D-34
(D)(3)	Evidence List.....	D-41
(D)(4)	Improving preparation programs.....	D-43
(D)(4)(i)	Linking student and teacher data to preparation programs.....	D-44
(D)(4)(ii)	Expanding preparation and credentialing options.....	D-45
(D)(5)	Providing effective support to teachers and principals.....	D-49
(D)(5)(i)	Providing effective, data-informed professional development.....	D-50
(D)(5)(ii)	Measuring, evaluating, and continuously improving supports.....	D-56

**Section E Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools**

(E)(1) Intervening in the lowest achieving schools.....E-2  
(E)(2) Supporting LEAs in turning around the lowest-achieving schools.....E-7  
(E)(2)(i) Identifying the persistently lowest-achieving schools.....E-9  
(E)(2)(ii) Regulatory support for LEAs in turning around schools.....E-11  
(E)(2)(ii) Establishing a turnaround office to support lowest-achieving schools.....E-12  
(E)(2) Evidence List.....E-22

**Section F General**

(F)(1) Making education funding a priority.....F-2  
(F)(1)(i) Percentage of total state revenues available to education funding.....F-2  
(F)(1)(ii) The State’s funding policies lead to equitable funding.....F-3  
(F)(1) Evidence List..... F-4  
(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools.....F-8  
(F)(2)(i) The State does not limit the number of high-performing charter schools.....F-8  
(F)(2)(ii) Laws regarding charter school approval, monitoring and accountability.....F-9  
(F)(2)(iii) Equitable funding for charter schools.....F-11  
(F)(2)(iv) The State provides charters with facilities funding and other supports.....F-11  
(F)(2)(v) The State enables LEAs to operate innovative, autonomous public schools....F-12  
(F)(2) Evidence List..... F-14  
(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions..... F-17  
(F)(3) Evidence List..... F-18

**Invitational Priorities**

Priority 2 STEM .....P-2  
Priority 3 Innovations for improving early learning outcomes.....P-7  
Priority 4 Expansion and adaptation of the statewide LDS.....P-12  
Priority 5 P-20 coordination, vertical and horizontal alignment.....P-14  
Priority 6 School-level conditions for reform, innovation, and learning.....P-18

## Table of Contents - Appendix

### Appendix A

Appendix (A)(1)-1	LEA MOU and Scope-of-Work.....	Appendix A-1
Appendix (A)(2)-1	Selected biographies, Race to the Top team.....	Appendix A-14
Appendix (A)(2)-2	Selected public-private partnerships.....	Appendix A-19
Appendix (A)(2)-3	Screen shots from the project management system.....	Appendix A-20
Appendix (A)(2)-4	Excerpt from staff workplan.....	Appendix A-22
Appendix (A)(2)-5	Budget summary and narrative.....	Appendix A-23
Appendix (A)(2)-6	Project-level budget summary and narrative.....	Appendix A-26
Appendix (A)(2)-7	Longitudinal Data System grant budget.....	Appendix A-44
Appendix (A)(2)-8	Letters of Support.....	Appendix A-50
Appendix (A)(2)-9	Delaware’s education agenda.....	Appendix A-79
Appendix (A)(2)-10	Senate resolution supporting Delaware’s application.....	Appendix A-87
Appendix (A)(3)-1	NAEP average scale scores and percent proficient.....	Appendix A-92
Appendix (A)(3)-2	Rank order of NAEP improvements.....	Appendix A-94
Appendix (A)(3)-3	ESEA data – students meeting state standards.....	Appendix A-96
Appendix (A)(3)-4	The black-white achievement gap by scale score.....	Appendix A-100
Appendix (A)(3)-5	NAEP achievement gap.....	Appendix A-105
Appendix (A)(3)-6	Changes to DSTP cut scores.....	Appendix A-111
Appendix (A)(3)-7	NAEP Exclusion Rate.....	Appendix A-112
Appendix (A)(3)-8	NAEP exclusion and accommodation guidance.....	Appendix A-116

### Appendix B

Appendix (B)(1)-1	Evidence of membership in common standards consortium...Appendix B-1
Appendix (B)(1)-2	Standards adoption timeline and progress to date.....Appendix B-5
Appendix (B)(1)-3	Evidence for international benchmarking of the standards... Appendix B-8
Appendix (B)(1)-4	Evidence of alignment with the common standards..... Appendix B-10
Appendix (B)(2)-1	Model unit gallery review process..... Appendix B-14
Appendix (B)(2)-2	MOUs with common assessment consortia..... Appendix B-16
Appendix (B)(2)-3	Item Bank Collaborative description..... Appendix B-28

**Appendix C**

Appendix (C)(1)-1 Data warehouse public reports screen shot..... Appendix C-1  
Appendix (C)(2)-1 Federal Longitudinal Data System grant summary..... Appendix C-2  
Appendix (C)(2)-2 Dropout early warning indicators..... Appendix C-12  
Appendix (C)(2)-3 Select biographies from the technology workgroup..... Appendix C-13  
Appendix (C)(3)-1 Data sharing request form..... Appendix C-14

**Appendix D**

Appendix (D)(1)-1 Evidence for (D)(1)(i)..... Appendix D-1  
Appendix (D)(1)-2 New teacher induction and mentoring program..... Appendix D-9  
Appendix (D)(1)-3 Evidence for (D)(1)(ii)..... Appendix D-10  
Appendix (D)(1)-4 Description of The New Teacher Project ..... Appendix D-15  
Appendix (D)(1)-5 Description of New York City Leadership Academy..... Appendix D-17  
Appendix (D)(1)-6 Teacher and Administrator Supply Survey Analysis..... Appendix D-19  
Appendix (D)(2)-1 Appraisal Criteria for all DPAS II components..... Appendix D-23  
Appendix (D)(2)-2 New regulations for DPAS II..... Appendix D-30  
Appendix (D)(2)-3 Teacher Leader responsibilities..... Appendix D-50  
Appendix (D)(2)-4 DPAS II Guide for Teachers..... Appendix D-52  
Appendix (D)(3)-1 State Teacher Equity Plan background information..... Appendix D-57  
Appendix (D)(4)-1 State Regulations for approval of educator prep programs..Appendix D-58  
Appendix (D)(5)-1 Vision 2015 Progress Report..... Appendix D-68  
Appendix (D)(5)-2 State professional development offerings..... Appendix D-71  
Appendix (D)(5)-3 Information on SAMs..... Appendix D-73  
Appendix (D)(5)-4 Professional development audit summary..... Appendix D-77

**Appendix E**

Appendix (E)(1)-1 Regulations regarding turnaround..... Appendix E-1  
Appendix (E)(2)-1 Description of supports for schools at-risk of failure..... Appendix E-8  
Appendix (E)(2)-2 Mass Insight MOU..... Appendix E-12

**Appendix F**

Appendix (F)(2)-1 Charter school applications, approvals, and closures..... Appendix F-1  
Appendix (F)(2)-2 Charter school and traditional public school funding..... Appendix F-2  
Appendix (F)(2)-3 House resolution commending charter schools..... Appendix F-3

## **Glossary of Terms**

- **AP:** Advanced Placement. Series of advanced coursework offered in high school that can qualify students for college credit.
- **CSR:** Comprehensive Success Review. A qualitative analysis of the root causes of school problems. Applied to all schools that miss AYP in Delaware
- **Data coaches:** Experts in both pedagogy and data analysis who facilitate professional learning community meetings, and provide observation and feedback, to help teachers and leaders build skills in using data to inform instruction
- **DCAS:** Delaware Comprehensive Assessment System. Delaware's new statewide test of student achievement, which will be computer-adaptive and include multiple formative assessments.
- **DDOE:** Delaware Department of Education
- **Development coaches:** Experts in assessing performance, providing feedback, and identifying opportunities for development who provide coaching to assessors to improve the quality of evaluation and development planning
- **District and Charter Success Plan:** The District and Charter Success Plan is a detailed plan to put all schools within the LEA on track to meet AYP. Plans must be written annually and approved by the Secretary of Education. An approved plan is a necessary precondition for School Improvement Grant money.
- **DPAS II:** Delaware Performance Appraisal System II. Statewide evaluation system for teachers, specialists, and administrators.
- **DSTP:** Delaware State Testing Program. Delaware's current statewide test of student achievement.
- **GLE:** Grade Level Expectations. A set of intermediate steps to guide teachers in implementing standards.
- **High-minority school:** High-minority school is defined by the State in a manner consistent with its Teacher Equity Plan, as the quartile of schools with the highest percentage of minority students in the State.
- **High-need school:** High-need school means a high-poverty or high-minority school

- **High-need students:** High-need students means students at risk of educational failure or otherwise in need of special assistance and support, such as students who are living in poverty, who attend high-minority schools (as defined in the Race to the Top guidelines), who are far below grade level, who have left school before receiving a regular high school diploma, who are at risk of not graduating with a diploma on time, who are homeless, who are in foster care, who have been incarcerated, who have disabilities, or who are English language learners
- **High-poverty school:** High-poverty school means, consistent with section 1111(h)(1)(C)(viii) of the ESEA, a school in the highest quartile of schools in the State with respect to poverty level, using a measure of poverty determined by the State
- **IBC:** Item Bank Collaborative. An open-source platform for storing and sharing testing items.
- **IIS:** Instructional improvement systems. Technology-based tools and other strategies that provide teachers, principals, and administrators with meaningful support and actionable data to systemically manage continuous instructional improvement, including such activities as: instructional planning; gathering information (e.g., through formative assessments (as defined in the Race to the Top guidance), interim assessments (as defined in the Race to the Top guidance), summative assessments, and looking at student work and other student data); analyzing information with the support of rapid-time (as defined in the Race to the Top guidance) reporting; using this information to inform decisions on appropriate next instructional steps; and evaluating the effectiveness of the actions taken. Such systems promote collaborative problem-solving and action planning; they may also integrate instructional data with student-level data such as attendance, discipline, grades, credit accumulation, and student survey results to provide early warning indicators of a student's risk of educational failure
- **Intensive state leadership training:** A 12-18 month training program to improve the instructional leadership of principals
- **Low-minority school:** The quartile of schools that have the lowest percentage of minority students in the State
- **Low-performing school:** Any school that is in improvement, corrective action, or restructuring, or that has shown a persistent decline in student achievement over time.



- **MOU process:** Refers to the negotiation period described in the Partnership Zone regulations
- **Novice:** Teacher or administrator that is in the first year of a particular role. For administrators, a new principal with previous experience as an assistant principal would still be considered a novice.
- **Partnership Zone:** A Delaware regulation defining the turnaround process for select schools that are persistently lowest achieving.
- **PAT:** Parents as Teachers. A parent-lead curriculum for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers. Developed nationally by the group Parents As Teachers, this system is used in Delaware.
- **PLA:** Persistently lowest-achieving. Defined in Delaware regulation identically to the definition in Race to the Top
- **PMO:** Project Management Office. The organizing structure for the most critical Race to the Top functions. Includes the TLEU, PMT, and Turnaround Office
- **PMT:** Performance Management Team. Responsible for tracking progress towards goals and intervening when progress is off-track.
- **PSAT:** Practice Scholastic Aptitude Test. A preview of the SAT college entry examination.
- **SAMs:** School Administrative Managers. A program providing time studies, coaching, and distributed leadership strategies to help school leaders spend more time on instructional leadership.
- **SAT:** Scholastic Aptitude Test. College entry examination.
- **Student growth:** Increases in student achievement over a period of time.
- **Student Success Plan:** A Delaware initiative to provide personal goals, performance metrics, tracking, and counseling to all students. Student Success Plans will help all students to reach graduation career and college ready.
- **"Tenure":** While tenure does not exist in Delaware, the State provides increased due-process protection, and limits reasons for termination for teachers who have taught for more than three years, and in the same LEA for two years, which for ease are referred to as "tenure"
- **TLEU:** Teacher and Leader Effectiveness Unit. Group responsible for the strategic management of RTTT teacher and leader effectiveness initiatives.
- **Turnaround Office:** Responsible for supporting LEAs in the pursuit and execution of school turnaround.

**(A) State Success Factors (125 total points)**

**(A)(1) Articulating State’s education reform agenda and LEAs’ participation in it (65 points)**

*The extent to which—*

*(i) The State has set forth a comprehensive and coherent reform agenda that clearly articulates its goals for implementing reforms in the four education areas described in the ARRA and improving student outcomes statewide, establishes a clear and credible path to achieving these goals, and is consistent with the specific reform plans that the State has proposed throughout its application; (5 points)*

*(ii) The participating LEAs (as defined in this notice) are strongly committed to the State’s plans and to effective implementation of reform in the four education areas, as evidenced by Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) (as set forth in Appendix D)<sup>1</sup> or other binding agreements between the State and its participating LEAs (as defined in this notice) that include— (45 points)*

*(a) Terms and conditions that reflect strong commitment by the participating LEAs (as defined in this notice) to the State’s plans;*

*(b) Scope-of-work descriptions that require participating LEAs (as defined in this notice) to implement all or significant portions of the State’s Race to the Top plans; and*

*(c) Signatures from as many as possible of the LEA superintendent (or equivalent), the president of the local school board (or equivalent, if applicable), and the local teachers’ union leader (if applicable) (one signature of which must be from an authorized LEA representative) demonstrating the extent of leadership support within participating LEAs (as defined in this notice); and*

*(iii) The LEAs that are participating in the State’s Race to the Top plans (including considerations of the numbers and percentages of participating LEAs, schools, K-12 students, and students in poverty) will translate into broad statewide impact, allowing the State to reach its ambitious yet achievable goals, overall and by student subgroup, for—(15 points)*

*(a) Increasing student achievement in (at a minimum) reading/language arts and mathematics, as reported by the NAEP and the assessments required under the ESEA;*

*(b) Decreasing achievement gaps between subgroups in reading/language arts and mathematics, as reported by the NAEP and the assessments required under the ESEA;*

*(c) Increasing high school graduation rates (as defined in this notice); and*

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendix D for more on participating LEA MOUs and for a model MOU.

*(d) Increasing college enrollment (as defined in this notice) and increasing the number of students who complete at least a year's worth of college credit that is applicable to a degree within two years of enrollment in an institution of higher education.*

*In the text box below, the State shall describe its current status in meeting the criterion, as well as projected goals as described in (A)(1)(iii). The narrative or attachments shall also include, at a minimum, the evidence listed below, and how each piece of evidence demonstrates the State's success in meeting the criterion. The narrative and attachments may also include any additional information the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers. For attachments included in the Appendix, note in the narrative the location where the attachments can be found.*

*Evidence for (A)(1)(ii):*

- *An example of the State's standard Participating LEA MOU, and description of variations used, if any.*
- *The completed summary table indicating which specific portions of the State's plan each LEA is committed to implementing, and relevant summary statistics (see Summary Table for (A)(1)(ii)(b), below).*
- *The completed summary table indicating which LEA leadership signatures have been obtained (see Summary Table for (A)(1)(ii)(c), below).*

*Evidence for (A)(1)(iii):*

- *The completed summary table indicating the numbers and percentages of participating LEAs, schools, K-12 students, and students in poverty (see Summary Table for (A)(1)(iii), below).*
- *Tables and graphs that show the State's goals, overall and by subgroup, requested in the criterion, together with the supporting narrative. In addition, describe what the goals would look like were the State not to receive an award under this program.*

*Evidence for (A)(1)(ii) and (A)(1)(iii):*

- *The completed detailed table, by LEA, that includes the information requested in the criterion (see Detailed Table for (A)(1), below).*

*Recommended maximum response length: Ten pages (excluding tables)*

### **(A)(1)(i) The State’s Comprehensive and Coherent Reform Agenda**

Delaware became known as “the first state” because, while other states deliberated, its representatives decisively ratified the Constitution of a new nation. More than 200 years later, Delaware is again ready to lead: being first to provide public education that prepares all students for success in the global economy. With more than a decade of reforms and the critical technology, tools, and systems in place to measure and drive improvement, Delaware is the State best positioned to use Race to the Top support to show how U.S. public education can once again produce world-class results. The State will not do this work alone—every superintendent, every union leader, and every school board president in the State has signed on to this ambitious reform. This remarkable collaboration is a testament to Delaware’s long history of reform and will create the momentum necessary to produce significant gains in student outcomes.

Delaware will show results quickly. With Race to the Top help, more than half of Delaware’s students will be proficient or advanced on NAEP, and the achievement gap will decrease by 50% no later than 2014-15. In addition, all students will meet state standards, graduation rates will rise and more students will enter and be successful in college.

This introduction summarizes Delaware’s strong foundation and the unique circumstances that position the State for success, its specific goals, and the five-part approach it has shaped in collaboration with all of the critical constituents in its education community.

#### **Again, the “First State”**

Delaware is already a leader in education reform, with over a decade of investing in bold solutions to improve student outcomes. For example, Delaware has had a statewide teacher evaluation system since the 1980’s, and underwent a major improvement to that evaluation in 2005. It has collected longitudinal data on students since 1994. And, its longstanding charter laws and statewide school choice are models for the nation.

These reforms have produced measurable results: From 1998 to 2007, Delaware led the nation in reducing achievement gaps on NAEP’s 4<sup>th</sup> grade mathematics and 8<sup>th</sup> grade reading exams, and was among the top five states in reducing gaps on NAEP’s 4<sup>th</sup> grade reading and 8<sup>th</sup> grade mathematics exams.

Today, Delaware’s continued efforts to increase student achievement, eliminate achievement gaps, and increase student success in college and the workplace will be supported by a strong foundation that few states can match:

- Delaware’s **state-of-the-art data system** captures longitudinal information about both students and teachers, and links them together. Today, the State can quickly analyze the performance of any teacher’s students over time, can track how graduates perform in college, and can link teachers to teacher preparation programs, providing rich opportunities to use data to drive performance at the system, school, and classroom levels. This extensive longitudinal data provides the foundation for Delaware’s broader reform efforts by offering real time, formative information about student, teacher, school and State performance. Timely and extensive data allows the State to track progress, determine what is successful and swiftly adjust course at all levels of the system.
- Delaware’s **rigorous statewide educator evaluation system** is based on the most respected standards for teaching and leading (Danielson’s *A Framework for Teaching* and the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium’s standards for leaders). The system provides a multi-measure assessment of performance that incorporates student growth as one of five components. Rather than set a specific percentage that student growth must be weighted in the evaluation, these regulations go much further. They say that an educator can only be rated effective if they demonstrate satisfactory levels of student growth. Thus, the difference between effective and ineffective educators becomes clear - an effective educator is one that achieves satisfactory levels of student growth while an ineffective educator is one that does not. In Delaware, student growth is not one factor among many; instead satisfactory student growth is the minimum requirement for any educator to be rated effective. The law reflects a policy choice: student growth is now considered **essential** to teacher and leader effectiveness. This improved evaluation system will serve as the basis for building a stronger, more effective cadre of educators by driving professional development, rewards and consequences.
- Delaware’s newly-defined **regulatory framework for school turnaround** gives the State the authority to intervene directly in failing schools and requires schools to demonstrate results by achieving AYP within two years. It also requires both strict adherence to the school intervention models defined in the Race to the Top guidance, and negotiation of collective bargaining agreement carve outs to secure the staffing

and operational flexibility necessary for successful implementation. In cases where negotiations fail, the State has the authority to break a stalemate. This collaborative, yet robust approach will be complemented with central supports from the State and will allow the DDOE to affect change at the local level.

Beyond these strengths, Delaware brings another advantage to its reform – its size. With just 126,800 students, 19 districts, and 18 charters, Delaware is small enough to make true statewide reform achievable. In Delaware, reform will be managed face-to-face, not via a remote bureaucracy, allowing the State to act quickly in response to challenges and opportunities. By proving that reform is possible with the same complex conditions that other states face (e.g. diverse stakeholders, limited funding, complex governance), and doing it quickly, Delaware will become a laboratory for reform for the nation.

With these fundamentals in place, Delaware is now set to pursue transformational change. Starting this school year, Delaware will set world-class standards for every student, inform instruction in every classroom with world-class data, use detailed evaluation to create world-class teachers and leaders, and transition the State’s persistently lowest-achieving schools into world-class schools. By the 2011-12 school year, Delaware’s reform program will be fully operational, leaving the state education system to concentrate on driving rapid improvement to achieve the greatest possible gains in student achievement.

### **Ambitious and measurable goals**

Through this reform, Delaware will achieve the following goals:

- 60% proficient or advanced on NAEP 4<sup>th</sup> grade math by 2014-15
- 55% proficient or advanced on all other NAEP exams by 2014-15
- Reduce black-white and Hispanic-white achievement gaps on NAEP by half by 2014-15
- 100% meets-standard on the State’s math and reading exams by 2013-14
- 87% graduation rate by 2013-14, and a 92% graduation rate by 2016-17
- 70% college enrollment by 2013-14
- 85% college retention rate by 2013-14 (with students earning at least a year of credit within two years of enrollment)

### **Reform on five fronts**

The current stage of reform and Delaware’s Race to the Top application are not only built on nearly 15 years of efforts to improve public education, but also on the wisdom and input of a

wide range of experts and stakeholders. This summer, Delaware engaged over 100 educators, education experts and parents, as well as leaders of teachers' unions, nonprofits, corporations, and civic groups to create a strategic plan for the DDOE. The plan sparked the new evaluation and school turnaround laws passed this January. Today, the State has refined the summer's plan into an integrated reform program that will take advantage of a range of federal grant opportunities, including the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund Phase II, School Improvement grants under 1003(g) of ESEA, Statewide Longitudinal Data System grant, the Teacher Incentive Fund, and Race to the Top. The reform has five primary initiatives, which closely align with the components of the Race to the Top competition as well as these other grants:

**1. Set high standards for college- and career- readiness, and measure progress with high quality assessments and excellent data systems**

Delaware's strategy begins with setting sights high for children: The State expects every student to graduate college- and career- ready. To translate this expectation into classroom requirements, in June of 2010 the State plans to adopt the Common Core Standards<sup>2</sup> developed by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO)/National Governors' Association (NGA). By the start of the 2010-11 school year, the State will be able to measure student progress towards meeting these internationally-benchmarked standards through the implementation of the Delaware Comprehensive Assessment System (DCAS.) For every student, DCAS will provide up to three computer-adaptive formative assessments and one summative assessment per year, including end-of-course exams in high school, making Delaware one of the few states able to measure student growth in a valid and reliable way. DCAS will be fully implemented in the 2010-11 school year including benchmark and summative assessments for grades 2-10 in English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies<sup>3</sup> and end-of-course exams for high school courses (e.g. Algebra II)

Data from DCAS will flow into Delaware's existing longitudinal data system, which already allows the State to know how every LEA, every school, every teacher, and every student is performing and improving. This statewide system includes each of the 12 elements of the America COMPETES Act, as well as all 10 "Essential Elements" defined by

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<sup>2</sup> Based on early drafts of the CCSSO standards, Delaware expects the final standards to meet its high expectations for rigor, and plans in good faith to adopt these standards.

<sup>3</sup> Math and English Language Arts will be tested in all grades while science and social studies will only be tested in selected grades

the Data Quality Campaign. Data is easily accessible online and includes a history of student results on state assessments as well as other indicators of performance (e.g., attendance), and links students to teachers. Moreover, it connects with other state data systems, including those that measure student performance in institutions of higher education, allowing the State to understand whether Delaware students are graduating college-ready and achieving success in college.

Data, therefore, will be a critical enabler of reform. With the addition of formative assessment data from DCAS, and the development of improved data dashboards to inform decision-making, the state data system will provide critical information to help educators target extra supports to students who need them most, ensuring that college-readiness and success in rigorous high school coursework are realistic goals for all students.

## **2. Recruit, retain, develop, and support great teachers and leaders who can help all students meet high standards**

High standards and rich data are only valuable if they can be translated into excellent classroom instruction and data-driven decision making by effective educators. Therefore, the success of Delaware's reform strategy rests with its teachers and leaders. For this reason, much of the State's reform focuses on recruiting, retaining, developing, and supporting great teachers and leaders, particularly in schools where they are needed the most.

Just as the success of students begins with high standards for student learning, the success of teachers and leaders also begins with high expectations. In Delaware, these expectations are outlined in the state evaluation system for teachers, leaders, and specialists, known as the Delaware Performance Appraisal System II (DPAS II.) DPAS II provides clear, rigorous standards based on Charlotte Danielson's *A Framework for Teaching*, and the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium's (ISLLC) standards for leaders.

Recent revisions to DPAS II will require that teachers and leaders demonstrate satisfactory levels of student growth in order to receive an "effective" rating, and more than a year of student growth to receive a "highly effective" rating. After consulting with stakeholders, including the teachers' union, the Delaware Secretary of Education will define a rigorous and comparable measure of student growth to be used in educator evaluations starting in the 2011-12 school year.



These evaluations will provide the basis for four initiatives to reward and promote teacher and leader effectiveness:

- **Differentiating professional development, promotion, advancement, retention, and removal based on performance:** Participating LEAs will use evaluation results as a primary factor in delivering professional development, and in making critical decisions regarding promotion, advancement, retention and removal. In addition, the State will create/identify model career ladders that link performance to professional development, promotion, advancement, and compensation. Optionally, LEAs may adopt a state-identified career ladder or choose one of their own.
- **Providing special opportunities for highly-effective educators:** Delaware will create new opportunities for highly-effective educators to advance and contribute to high-need schools. Specifically, the State will create a teacher leader role that engages highly-effective teachers as instructional leaders in schools (and rewards them for their service), and the State will offer bonuses to attract and retain highly-effective teachers and leaders in high-need schools.
- **Improving and expanding effective preparation and certification programs:** The State will use evaluation data from graduates of preparation and certification programs to inform program improvement and to encourage the expansion of programs that produce effective teachers and leaders.
- **Linking tenure protections to performance:** The State will seek new legislation requiring that teachers demonstrate student growth to qualify for tenure protections.

Together, these efforts will result in the continuous improvement in teaching and leading necessary to produce rapid growth in student achievement

3. **Build core capabilities to promote great teaching and leadership:** The State will invest in new statewide professional development initiatives to build the critical skills among teachers and leaders that will be necessary for successful reform. This professional development will cover four areas: (1) mastering new standards, (2) using data to inform instruction, (3) assessing educator performance and development needs (for assessors), and (4) providing instructional leadership (for principals). The results:

- Curricula in classrooms will match new career- and college-readiness standards, following centralized training

- Teachers will have the technical and pedagogical skills to use data from the State’s new formative and summative assessments to inform instruction, following two years of support by a data coach
- Assessors (e.g., principals, assistant principals) will have the skills to recognize performance, assess development needs, and provide well-calibrated evaluations, following two years of work with embedded development coaches
- All Delaware schools will be guided by great instructional leaders, following intensive training for principals

#### 4. Accelerate improvements in the State’s high-need schools

Delaware will accelerate improvements in its high-need schools in two ways:

- **Invest broadly in high-need schools, particularly by recruiting, training and retaining highly-effective teachers and leaders.** The State will encourage highly-effective teachers and leaders to work in the schools and subjects where they are needed most by providing attraction and retention bonuses in high-need schools and creating a fellowship program for highly effective teachers and leaders that transfer to these schools. In addition, it will expand the pipeline of preparation programs with national recognized and proven organizations that recruit high-potential candidates to work in high-need schools.
- **Turn around persistently lowest-achieving schools using a collaborative intervention approach supported by a strong regulatory framework.** Delaware law<sup>4</sup> defines an approach to turning around the persistently lowest-achieving schools that combines authority with flexibility, and that promotes rapid reform within a collective bargaining environment. The law gives the State full authority to ensure there is sufficient operational and staffing flexibility for the selected school intervention model to be implemented successfully. Specifically, the law establishes a new regulatory classification for “persistently lowest-achieving schools.” The State can select schools within this classification for inclusion in its “Partnership Zone,” where they will be required to enter into an MOU with the DDOE. Under this MOU, LEA and DDOE leaders will select one of four options for the school – close, restart,

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<sup>4</sup> Please see Appendix (E)(1) - 1 for the regulations.

turnaround, or transformation. For each option, specific elements are mandated by regulation (the elements are the same as those described in the Race to the Top guidance). The details of implementation and any additional elements are negotiated as part of the MOU.

Following this process, LEAs must then negotiate any elements of the selected model that implicate collective bargaining agreements with the local bargaining representative. The Delaware Secretary of Education has final authority in the event of a stalemate – giving her the authority to support bold local proposals.

Schools in the Partnership Zone will also be subject to sharp accountability. If, after two years of operations, the school does not make AYP, the MOU process will be repeated, allowing the State to directly intervene again to shape a new implementation plan, secure additional flexibilities in staffing and operation, and, if necessary, narrow the set of options to exclude the failed intervention model. When combined with strong central supports from the State that provide access to expertise, training, and resources, this flexible yet rigorous approach has the potential to be a national model for school turnaround.

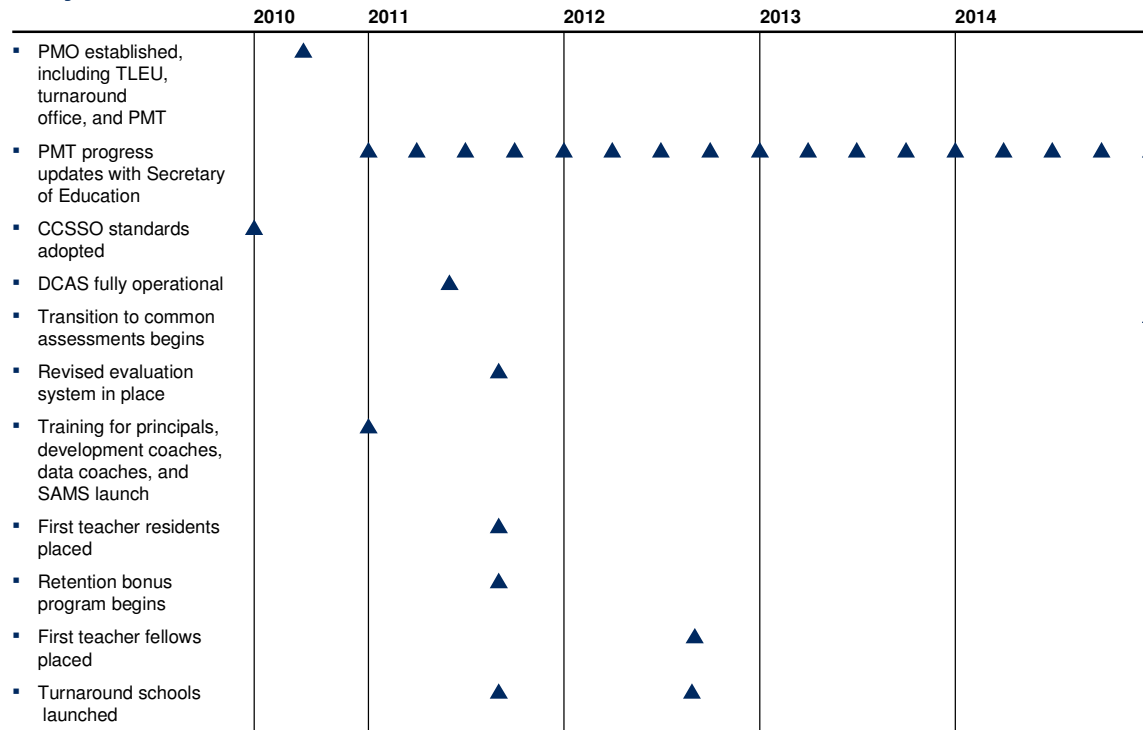
## **5. Build capacity to deliver against goals**

Ultimately, the success of Delaware’s reform will depend on its capacity to deliver against its ambitious goals. The State is committed to actively managing outcomes with this reform plan. That is, the State will not just focus on compliance, it will focus on impact. Moreover, it will actively support LEAs as they implement this reform, building their capacity to deliver results.

To accomplish this, the State will establish a Project Management Office (PMO) in the DDOE to lead the reform’s implementation. The PMO’s Performance Management Team (PMT) will monitor performance against goals, identify when performance is off-track, and intervene early to ensure that goals are met on budget and on time. The PMO’s Teacher and Leader Effectiveness Unit (TLEU) will be a key implementation resource, managing reform programs in professional development, evaluation, career paths, recruitment, and retention. Finally, the PMO’s Turnaround group will provide expertise to support schools in the Partnership Zone.

These five components represent an integrated approach that takes full advantage of Delaware’s strong foundation for reform. The following chart provides a general timeline for the upcoming reform:

**Project timeline – selected milestones**



**Committed leadership and widespread support to accomplish goals collaboratively**

Delaware will rely on sustained leadership from Governor Jack Markell and his appointed State Secretary of Education, Lillian Lowery. Elected just a year ago, Governor Markell has the potential to be in office for another seven years. Already, he is a rising leader in education reform, holding the co-chair in the National Governor’s Association’s Common Core Standards Initiative, and the chairmanship of the Democratic Governors’ Association.

In addition, the reform has the widespread support of Delaware’s broader education leadership, teachers’ unions, nonprofits, business community and civic leaders, all having a long history of working together in ways unheard of in other states. This collaboration is best evidenced in the unanimous support for the State’s Race to the Top application, with every LEA, union, and school board leader in the State signing on to participate in this reform. This support reflects the deep involvement of many stakeholders, especially the State teachers’ union

leadership, who have collaborated in the development of the State's new laws and the wider strategy explained here.

The State's collaborative spirit was also in evidence in 2006, when a steering committee comprised of 28 leaders of public education, higher education, teachers' unions, non-profit organizations, philanthropies, and businesses and civic groups held more than 50 public meetings and worked with teachers, school leaders, LEAs, parents and the public to develop the Vision 2015 plan, which calls for public-private partnership to help Delaware create a world-class school system. Specifically, the Vision 2015 plan called for six initiatives that are consistent with Race to the Top: (1) setting sights high; (2) investing in early childhood education; (3) developing and supporting high-quality teachers; (4) empowering principals to lead; (5) encouraging innovation and requiring accountability; and (6) establishing a simple and equitable funding system. This inclusive process led to widespread buy-in for improvements in public education.

### **Unmatched potential for rapid reform**

Delaware's progress towards providing a world-class education for all students is significant, and its momentum for reform continues. No other state has both the critical technology, tools, and systems in place to measure and drive improvement, and the ability to implement reform rapidly enough to be a laboratory for the nation. Only Delaware can be the "First State" in this national reform.

**(A)(1)(ii) Strong commitment by participating LEAs reflected in Delaware’s Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)**

***(A)(1)(ii)(a) Terms and conditions that reflect strong commitment by the participating LEAs to the State’s plans***

The MOU signed by the State and participating LEAs reflects a strong commitment from the LEAs to the State’s plan. The MOU stipulates that LEAs will:

- Be supportive of and participate in 100% of the relevant activities detailed in the scope of work developed by the State (see Appendix (A)(1) – 1)
- Participate in all relevant convenings, communities of practice, or other practice-sharing events that are sponsored by the State or by the USED
- Participate, as requested, in any evaluations of the grant conducted by the State or USED
- Be responsive to State or USED requests for information including on the status of the project, project implementation, outcomes, and any problems anticipated or encountered

Participating LEAs therefore commit to implement the entirety of Delaware’s extensive Race to the Top reform agenda, share best practices to engender success throughout the State, allow for regular review of progress against goals, and generally cooperate in full with the DDOE and the USED.

***(A)(1)(ii)(b) Scope-of-work descriptions that require participating LEAs to implement all or significant portions of the State’s Race to the Top plans***

This commitment is significant given the extensive reform described throughout this application. All LEAs have signed on to implement the **full** scope-of-work released by the State. Because they are detailed in state law, two critical elements of Delaware’s reform are described in the scope-of-work only at a high level:

- Procedures and requirements for turning around “persistently lowest-achieving schools” as described in (E)(1) and Appendix (E)(1) - 1
- Procedures and requirements for the DPAS II statewide teacher evaluation that require teachers to have at least one year of student growth to receive a highly effective rating. See section (D)(2) and Appendix (D)(2) - 2

<b>Summary Table for (A)(1)(ii)(b)</b>		
<b>Elements of State Reform Plans</b>	<b>Number of LEAs Participating (#)</b>	<b>Percentage of Total Participating LEAs (%)</b>
<b>Standards and Assessments</b>		
(B)(3) Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments	38	100%
<b>Data Systems to Support Instruction</b>		
(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction:		
(i) Use of local instructional improvement systems	38	100%
(ii) Professional development on use of data	38	100%
(iii) Availability and accessibility of data to researchers	38	100%
<b>Great Teachers and Leaders</b>		
(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance:		
(i) Measure student growth	38	100%
(ii) Design and implement evaluation systems	38	100%
(iii) Conduct annual evaluations	38	100%
(iv)(a) Use evaluations to inform professional development retention	38	100%
(iv)(c) Use evaluations to inform tenure and/or full certification	38	100%
(iv)(d) Use evaluations to inform removal principals:	38	100%
(i) High-poverty and/or high-minority schools	38	100%
(ii) Hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas	38	100%
(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals:		
(i) Quality professional development	38	100%
(ii) Measure effectiveness of professional development	38	100%
<b>Turning Around the Lowest-Achieving Schools</b>		
(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools	38	100%

***(A)(1)(ii)(c) Signatures from local leaders***

Delaware’s plan will be implemented with 100% support from the State’s local leaders. Every superintendent, every school board president, every teachers’ union leader, and every charter school leader in the State signed the MOU and agreed to participate in the full scope-of-work, making Delaware’s reform truly statewide. With this unity, Delaware will implement a comprehensive and collaborative statewide education transformation that can serve as a model for other states.

<b>Summary Table for (A)(1)(ii)(c)</b>			
<b>Signatures acquired from participating LEAs:</b>			
signatures			
	<b>Number of Signatures Obtained (#)</b>	<b>Number of Signatures Applicable (#)</b>	<b>Percentage (%) (Obtained / Applicable)</b>
LEA Superintendent (or equivalent)	38	38	100%
President of Local School Board (or equivalent, if applicable)	38	38	100%
Local Teachers’ Union Leader (if applicable)	38	38	100%

**(A)(1)(iii) Participation and goals**

Summary Table for (A)(1)(iii)

	Participating LEAs (#)	Statewide (#)	Percentage of Total Statewide (%) (Participating LEAs / Statewide)
LEAs	38	38	100%
Schools	206	206	100%
K-12 Students	123805	123805	100%
Students in poverty	51960	51960	100%

Delaware’s 100% LEA participation rate presents an opportunity for the State to unite around ambitious goals that reflect the moral imperative to provide all students with the best possible education. Recognizing that this moment will be difficult to replicate again, Delaware is setting goals that are indeed ambitious, representing significant gains across grades and student groups.

These goals were informed by the following analysis:

- Internal benchmarking based on trends and absolute performance among the State’s best districts over the last decade
- External benchmarking based on trends and absolute performance among the nation’s best performing states over the last decade
- Expectations for increased performance nationwide, particularly among already high-performing states, based on more rigorous standards and widespread reform
- Expectations for improvements in teacher effectiveness based on Delaware’s reform, specifically that the State will double the percentage of highly effective teachers (who demonstrate more than a year of student growth), and halve the percentage of ineffective teachers (who do not demonstrate student growth.)
- Expectations for rapid identification and resolution of implementation problems through the State’s robust data system and the work of the Performance Management Team (PMT)

Delaware recognizes that its goals will be very difficult to achieve. However, it also believes these goals strike a balance— they are bold enough to be inspiring, but not so ambitious to be demoralizing. Therefore, over the next four years, the State will challenge its LEAs to work together to achieve the following goals:

- **60% proficiency on NAEP Grade 4 Math, and 55% proficiency on Grade 4 Reading, Grade 8 Math, and Grade 8 Reading by 2015.** Through this reform,



Delaware intends to lead the nation in student performance. While these goals are ambitious given the State's current performance levels from 31-36%, the performance of other states demonstrates that rapid growth is possible – Massachusetts increased the percent of student's proficient or above on NAEP grade 4 math by 16 points between 2003 and 2009.<sup>5</sup> With the support of strong data, evaluation, and regulatory systems Delaware should experience rapid change.

- **Racial (black-white and Hispanic-white) and income (low income-high income) achievement gaps that close by half on NAEP by 2015.** Following a decade of gains, Delaware has one of the smallest achievement gaps in the nation as measured by NAEP. The State was cited this year by the Education Trust<sup>6</sup> as one of the states that has the smallest absolute achievement gap and made the most progress in the nation towards eliminating the achievement gap. Past success, combined with an active focus on high-minority and high-poverty schools through this reform provide a strong foundation to aggressively combat the achievement gap moving forward.
- **100% of students meeting state standards on the Delaware state math and reading exams by 2014.** Depending on grade and subject, 55%-87% of students are meeting state standards<sup>7</sup> today, reflecting substantial gains over the past decade that cut across subjects, grades, and subgroups. The percentage of students meeting standards in grades tested since 1998 has risen by over 20 points on average. While 100% is an ambitious goal, it is one held not just by Delaware, but by all states, through NCLB. Given Delaware's current performance and history of achievement gains for all subgroups, this goal is within reach. Accomplishing it will simultaneously raise student achievement and eliminate the achievement gap on state tests.
- **An NCLB graduation rate of 90% for the class entering high school in 2014.** Currently, 82% of Delaware students graduate from high school, as measured by NCLB accountability standards, and approximately half of Delaware's dropouts leave

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<sup>5</sup> According to <http://www.nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/states/>

<sup>6</sup> Education Trust, "Gauging the Gaps: A Deeper Look at Student Achievement"

<sup>7</sup> Students meeting standards are those scoring in the top three achievement levels (Meets the Standards, Exceeds the Standards or Distinguished)

school after 9<sup>th</sup> grade. This tendency for early dropouts means that any reform efforts will have a lagged effect on graduation rates. The Class of 2017 will enter school once the reform has been embedded within the system, making the potential for gains among this group significant.

- **A college enrollment rate of 70% by 2014.** Currently, 59% of Delaware graduates attend college – a number that has been trending upwards each year for every subgroup. A special focus on college-readiness, including aligned K-12 and college entry requirements, mandatory SAT exams, and special supports for underrepresented groups should produce gains in college-going rates will allow Delaware to match the approximately 68% enrollment<sup>8</sup> achieved by the best States in the nation.
- **85% college retention by 2014, as measured by the percent of college students who complete at least one year of college credits within two years.** As college- and career- readiness rises, students will be better equipped for the academic rigor of college, making it more likely that they will be successful in college. An 85% retention rate would place Delaware among the top performers in the country, and would represent a 6 point gain from the State’s current 79% retention rate.<sup>9</sup>

For each goal, the State will use its new Performance Management Team to track performance against expected trajectories, and will intervene if schools, LEAs, or state programs are off-track to reach targets. This active performance management will help the State adjust quickly to ensure that it meets these ambitious goals.

Today is a unique moment for education in Delaware, with considerable momentum and political will already dedicated to reform. Race to the Top provides the opportunity to build upon this momentum and fund education reform. Together, these conditions give Delaware the potential to reach very ambitious goals. If Delaware is not a recipient of Race to the Top funding, this unique moment will pass, and the State will be unlikely to fully capitalize on the momentum and political will that currently exists. Although the State will continue to pursue

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<sup>8</sup> Via Postsecondary Connection’s College Pipeline Data Profiles; the median score earned by the top five states in 2004 according to “College - going rates of high school graduates – directly after high school”, National Center for Higher Education Management Systems, 2004

<sup>9</sup> In the top 5 states, a median of 82% of freshman returned for a second year at four year colleges in 2006 according to Postsecondary Connection’s College Pipeline Data Profiles based on data from the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, Measuring Up 2006

improvements in performance, the path will be more gradual. Therefore, the State believes that it will be able to achieve 75% of the improvement towards the goals stated above over the next ten, rather than five, years. Reforms will be implemented, but they will be more incremental and the timing will be slower than is necessary to take full advantage of the momentum of today.

Detailed Table for (A)(1)				Signatures on MOUs	MOU Terms	Preliminary Scope of Work – Participation in each applicable Plan Criterion																	
LEA Demographics			LEA Supl. (or equivalent)			President of Local Teachers Union (if applicable)	President of local school board (if applicable)	Uses Standard Terms & Conditions?	(B)(3)	(C)(3)(i)	(C)(3)(ii)	(C)(3)(iii)	(D)(2)(i)	(D)(2)(ii)	(D)(2)(iii)	(D)(2)(iv)(a)	(D)(2)(iv)(b)	(D)(2)(iv)(c)	(D)(2)(iv)(d)	(D)(3)(i)	(D)(3)(ii)	(D)(5)(i)	(D)(5)(ii)
# of Schools	# of K-12 Students	# of K-12 Students in Poverty																					
<b>Participating LEAs</b>																							
Caesar Rodney School District	13	7120	2484	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Capital School District	12	6054	3393	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Lake Forest School District	7	3877	1914	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Laurel School District	5	2084	1098	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Cape Henlopen School District	8	4519	1972	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Milford School District	6	4109	1949	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Seaford School District	6	3278	2025	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Smyrna School District	8	4657	1456	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Appoquinimink School District	13	8498	1012	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Brandywine School District	17	10187	3756	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Red Clay Consolidated School District	27	15709	7154	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Christina School District	26	16348	8852	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Colonial School District	14	10465	4222	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Woodbridge School District	3	2019	1140	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Indian River School District	14	8348	4277	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Delmar School District	2	1141	418	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
New Castle County Votech School District	4	4348	1332	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Polytech School District	1	1164	258	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Sussex Technical School District	1	1251	360	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Delaware College Preparatory Academy	1	112	13	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Prestige Academy	1	103	61	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Charter School of Wilmington	1	960	27	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Positive Outcomes Charter School	1	120	47	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
East Side Charter School	1	355	331	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Campus Community Charter School	1	597	184	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Moyer (Maurice J.) Academy	1	325	290	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Thomas A. Edison Charter School	1	825	749	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Sussex Academy of Arts and Sciences	1	323	26	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Delaware Military Academy	1	526	43	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Family Foundations Academy	1	389	201	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Kuumba Academy Charter School	1	253	181	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Pencader Business and Finance Charter High School	1	575	43	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Academy of Dover Charter School	1	238	196	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Odyssey Charter School	1	293	67	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Providence Creek Academy Charter School	1	671	235	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
MOT Charter School	1	675	49	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Newark Charter School	1	1286	145	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Dept. of Services for Children and Youth	1	3	0	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

## **(A)(1) Evidence**

### ***Evidence for (A)(1)(ii)***

- *An example of the State’s standard Participating LEA MOU, and description of variations used, if any – See Appendix (A)(1) – 1*
- *The completed summary table indicating which specific portions of the State’s plan each LEA is committed to implementing, and relevant summary statistics – See narrative for (A)(1)(ii)*
- *The completed summary table indicating which LEA leadership signatures have been obtained – See narrative for (A)(1)(ii)*

### ***Evidence for (A)(1)(iii)***

- *The completed summary table indicating the numbers and percentages of participating LEAs, schools, K-12 students, and students in poverty – See narrative for (A)(1)(iii)*
- *Tables and graphs that show the State’s goals, overall and by subgroup, requested in the criterion, together with the supporting narrative. In addition, describe what the goals would look like were the State not to receive an award under this program – See narrative for (A)(1)(iii)*

### ***Evidence for (A)(1)(ii) and (A)(1)(iii)***

- *The completed detailed table, by LEA, that includes the information requested in the criterion – See narrative for (A)(1)(iii)*

**(A)(2) Building strong statewide capacity to implement, scale up and sustain proposed plans (30 points)**

*The extent to which the State has a high-quality overall plan to—*

*(i) Ensure that it has the capacity required to implement its proposed plans by— (20 points)*

*(a) Providing strong leadership and dedicated teams to implement the statewide education reform plans the State has proposed;*

*(b) Supporting participating LEAs (as defined in this notice) in successfully implementing the education reform plans the State has proposed, through such activities as identifying promising practices, evaluating these practices' effectiveness, ceasing ineffective practices, widely disseminating and replicating the effective practices statewide, holding participating LEAs (as defined in this notice) accountable for progress and performance, and intervening where necessary;*

*(c) Providing effective and efficient operations and processes for implementing its Race to the Top grant in such areas as grant administration and oversight, budget reporting and monitoring, performance measure tracking and reporting, and fund disbursement;*

*(d) Using the funds for this grant, as described in the State's budget and accompanying budget narrative, to accomplish the State's plans and meet its targets, including where feasible, by coordinating, reallocating, or repurposing education funds from other Federal, State, and local sources so that they align with the State's Race to the Top goals; and*

*(e) Using the fiscal, political, and human capital resources of the State to continue, after the period of funding has ended, those reforms funded under the grant for which there is evidence of success; and*

*(ii) Use support from a broad group of stakeholders to better implement its plans, as evidenced by the strength of the statements or actions of support from— (10 points)*

*(a) The State's teachers and principals, which include the State's teachers' unions or statewide teacher associations; and*

*(b) Other critical stakeholders, such as the State's legislative leadership; charter school authorizers and State charter school membership associations (if applicable); other State and local leaders (e.g., business, community, civil rights, and education association leaders); Tribal schools; parent, student, and community organizations (e.g., parent-teacher associations, nonprofit organizations, local education foundations, and community-based organizations); and institutions of higher education.*

*In the text box below, the State shall describe its current status in meeting the criterion. The narrative or attachments shall also include, at a minimum, the evidence listed below, and how each piece of evidence demonstrates the State's success in meeting the criterion. The narrative and attachments may also include any additional information the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers. The State's response to (A)(2)(i)(d) will be addressed in the budget section (Section VIII of the application). Attachments, such as letters of support or commitment, should be summarized in the text box below and organized with a summary table in the Appendix. For attachments included in the Appendix, note in the narrative the location where the attachments can be found.*

*Evidence for (A)(2)(i)(d):*

- *The State's budget, as completed in Section VIII of the application. The narrative that accompanies and explains the budget and how it connects to the State's plan, as completed in Section VIII of the application.*

*Evidence for (A)(2)(ii):*

- *A summary in the narrative of the statements or actions and inclusion of key statements or actions in the Appendix.*

*Recommended maximum response length: Five pages (excluding budget and budget narrative)*

**(A)(2)(i) Strong statewide capacity to implement**

Delaware’s education reform is being driven by strong public and private leaders with the vision, capacity, and commitment to deliver a world-class education to all Delaware children. These leaders are supported by a progressive State Department of Education, which has spent years developing the high-quality data systems, project management tools, and program administration and oversight abilities to meet a diverse range of goals.

At the same time, the State recognizes the need to build stronger capacity in three areas:

- Actively managing performance to ensure goals are met (e.g., tracking interim indicators, intervening when performance is off-track to meet goals, promoting effective practices and ceasing ineffective practices);
- Strategically managing efforts to improve teacher and leader effectiveness; and
- Providing support to school turnaround.

Therefore, as part of its reform plan, the State will build this capacity within the DDOE by creating a project management office (PMO) with three functional groups to fill these needs.

Finally, the State is fully committed to ensuring that education remains a priority in the State budget, and to sustaining the ongoing initiatives that are part of this reform by leveraging public and private resources.

***(A)(2)(i)(a) Strong leadership and dedicated teams to implement statewide education reform***  
*Strong public and private leadership*

Delaware’s strong education leadership spans both the public and private sectors. This leadership team is headed by:

- Jack Markell – Governor of Delaware: Governor Markell combines a commitment to world-class education with the expertise in effective and efficient delivery of services necessary to ensure Delaware delivers on its goals. In leading this effort, Governor Markell will draw upon his long career as a leader in the private sector, as well as his 10 years as Delaware’s State Treasurer.
- Lillian Lowery – Delaware Secretary of Education: With 32 years experience as a teacher and administrator, and as the superintendent of Delaware’s largest, lowest-income school district, Delaware Secretary of Education Lowery brings deep expertise in education and management skill to her role as the operational leader of this reform.



Governor Markell and Delaware Secretary of Education Lowery are supported by a strong team of managers and advisors who will help lead this reform. For a list of key staff, roles, and qualifications, please see Appendix (A)(2) – 1.

Their work is supported by the State’s active State Board of Education, its network of 19 highly-engaged superintendents, and its 18 charter school leaders. In addition, the state teachers’ union, the Delaware State Educators’ Association, is an active participant in the State’s reform efforts, and has been instrumental in building widespread support for this work.

The State also regularly draws upon public-private partnerships to enhance its reform efforts, and expects to continue to do so throughout this effort. These partnerships include work with the Business Roundtable, the Chamber of Commerce, the Delaware Charter Schools Network, the Longwood Foundation, and the Rodel Foundation of Delaware, which was founded to help Delaware create one of the finest public education systems in the nation. For more information on these organizations, please see Appendix (A)(2) – 2.

*Dedicated teams to drive outcomes, not compliance*

The State’s education leaders will rely on several dedicated teams to implement the Race to the Top reform plans, monitor progress, provide support to LEAs, and ensure that the State is on-track to meet its goals. Some of these teams are existing, others will be created to build new capacity at the State level. The teams described below represent the management group that will drive the reform, rather than simply monitoring compliance. They will engage other resources as necessary for successful implementation:

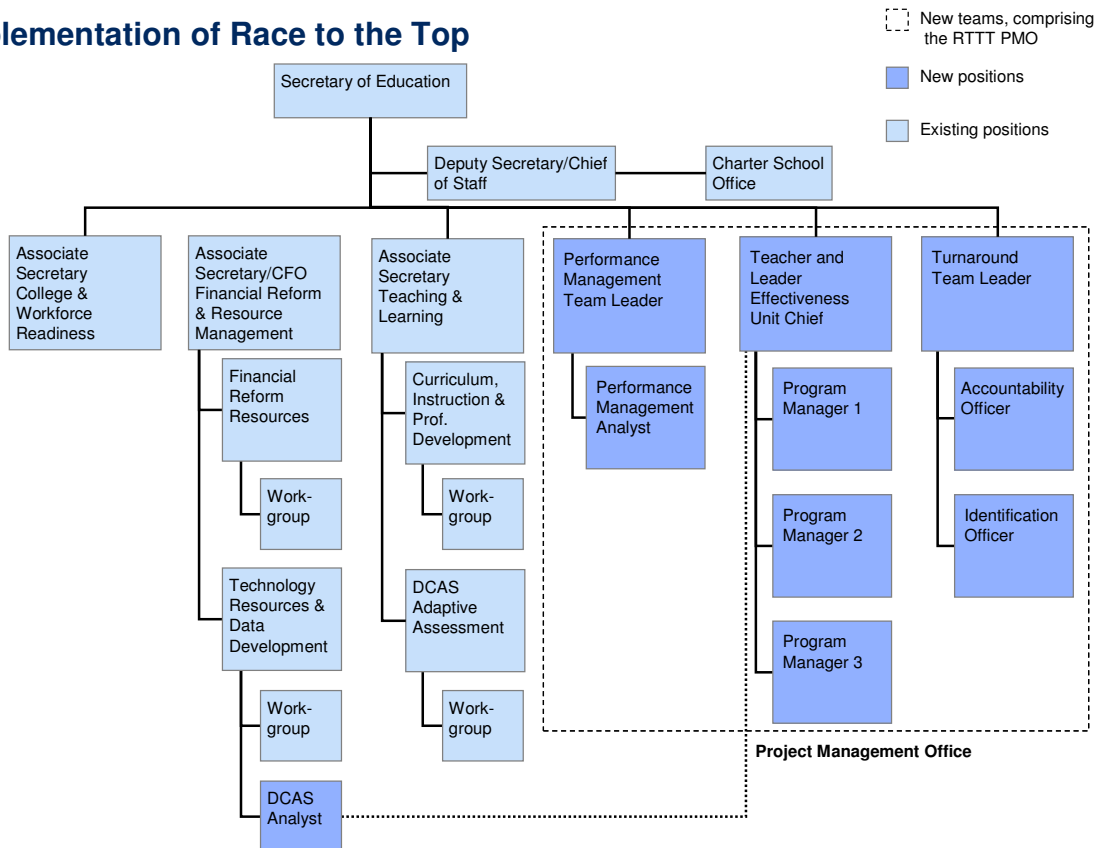
- *Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Development:* This existing team, consisting of 25 people, will continue to oversee the State’s efforts to implement new standards and assessments (see section (B))
- *Technology Resources and Data Development:* This existing team, consisting of 18 people, will continue to oversee the DDOE’s longitudinal data system and all online tools. In addition, it will add a new DCAS analyst, who will support the work of data coaches and educators in using DCAS data to improve instruction (see section (C))
- *Teacher and Leader Effectiveness Unit:* This new team, consisting of a leader and three program managers, will oversee the reforms related to using data to inform instruction, and recruiting, retaining, supporting, and developing great teachers and leaders (see below and sections (C)(3) and (D)(1-5))

- *Turnaround Team*: This new team, consisting of a leader and two program managers, will support interventions in the State’s lowest-achieving schools (see section (E))
- *Charter Schools Office*: This existing team, consisting of 2 members, will continue to support the State’s charter schools (see section (F))

These teams will work together in a coordinated effort to implement Race to the Top reforms.

Their organization is laid out in the following chart:

### Implementation of Race to the Top

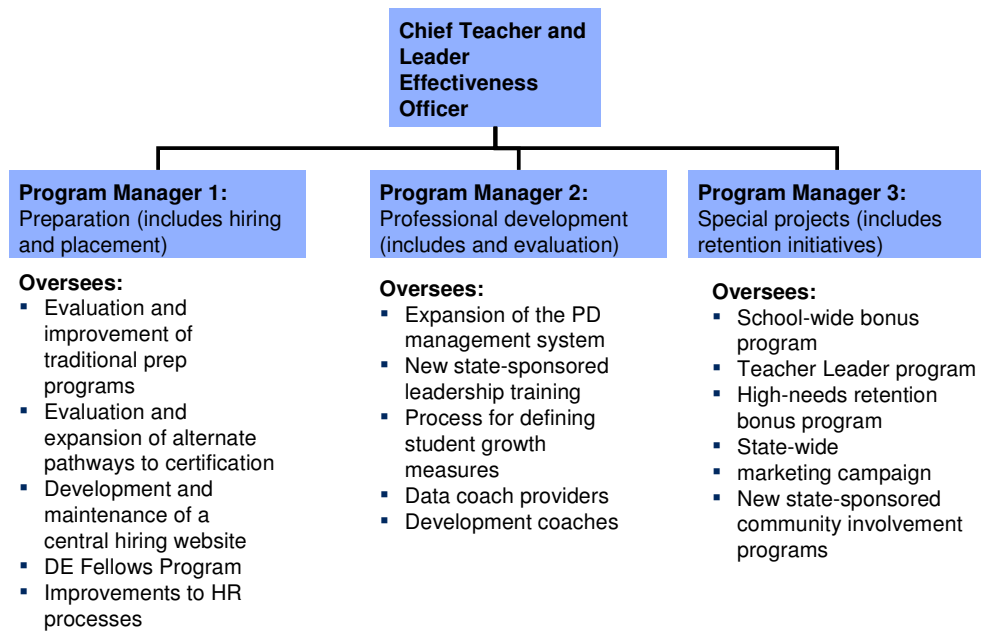


Since the Teacher and Leader Effectiveness Unit (TLEU) will have a broad mandate to improve the effectiveness of teachers and leaders statewide and make Delaware the employer of choice for excellent educators, it is described in detail below and referenced in relevant sections.

The TLEU will manage the range of new programs and processes designed to improve teacher and leader effectiveness as part of this reform. Specifically, the TLEU will utilize Delaware’s sophisticated data and evaluation systems to improve effectiveness at all stages in the teacher and leader pipelines by using data to identify and replicate best practices across teacher and leader preparation, development, and retention.

The TLEU organization structure features one “Chief” and three “Program Managers” (as shown in the illustration below). The Preparation Program Manager will oversee efforts to improve the pipeline of effective teachers and leaders, and efforts to place more highly-effective teachers and leaders in high-need schools. The Professional Development Program Manager will oversee efforts to improve the quality of professional development, and to ensure that the evaluation system is implemented with fidelity and links to development plans. The Special Projects Program Manager will oversee the development of new career paths for teachers and leaders, including the teacher leader program, and will lead other special initiatives.

### Teacher and Leader Effectiveness Unit (TLEU)



This team will be characterized by extensive experience in school reform and outstanding previous achievement in driving change.

***(A)(2)(i)(b) Supporting LEAs, monitoring performance, and improving performance***

The TLEU and the other dedicated teams will be responsible for all implementation activities, including tracking State and LEA progress towards goals, identifying promising practices, evaluating these practices' effectiveness, ceasing ineffective practices, and widely disseminating and replicating effective practices statewide. For example, these teams will analyze outcomes within different LEAs and schools in order to understand the root cause of performance differentials. In schools and LEAs where results are particularly strong these teams will investigate why these groups are outperforming their peers. Similarly, where LEAs and schools are underperforming, these teams will analyze the data to understand the source of their difficulties. The combined information will allow the State to differentiate and identify best practices that will be disseminated throughout the State. In addition, these teams will hold participating LEAs accountable for progress and performance, and intervene where progress is off track. These teams will actively manage their reform efforts and provide supports to LEAs to ensure that student achievement goals are achieved. In short, these teams will be ***responsible*** for outcomes.

*Performance Management Team*

The activities described above represent a shift from the traditional compliance-orientation of state government to an outcomes-oriented approach. To build the implementation teams' capacity to drive the reform, the State will also create a Performance Management Team (PMT) (consisting of one leader and one analyst) that will track performance indicators against the State's systemwide student achievement goals, support problem solving when performance is off-track, engage leadership in driving outcomes, and provide support to implementation teams and LEAs. The PMT will not have direct line management responsibilities over programs. Rather, its purpose will be to enhance the capacity of line managers and LEAs to accomplish their goals.

The PMT will institute several processes and routines to drive performance towards goals. First, the PMT will ensure that clear trajectories towards goals are in place at the state, LEA, and school levels that can be used to measure progress at any point in time. Each trajectory will define the expected progress against a particular goal over time (e.g. annual graduation rate

targets that lead to a final graduation rate goal).

Trajectories will (1) identify a specific goal, (2) select target metrics and leading indicators of success, (3) set a series of interim goals to achieve over time, and (4) link to specific improvement plans. Much of this work has already begun through the development of the reform strategy. However, as implementation begins, the PMT will help implementers refine plans and trajectories.

The PMT will also work with participating LEAs as they develop their local reform plans to ensure these are credible and linked with goals and trajectories. As part of this, the PMT will help break down state goals into local goals. For example, it will ensure that state NAEP score goals are translated into local NAEP goals.

The PMT will also track progress towards the State's most important goals, such as improvements in student test scores. At least quarterly, the PMT will track results at the state, LEA, and school levels to understand overall performance and variance in performance (including where excellent results are occurring and where performance is lagging.) This work is critical as it will give the State the ability to predict how likely it is to meet goals at any point in time. Implementation teams will complement the PMT's work by tracking leading indicators and final deliverables for their projects at the state and school level, and by sharing this information with the PMT.

When its analysis indicates that performance against state goals is off-track, the PMT will work directly with state implementation teams and with LEAs to determine the cause of lagging performance and to identify opportunities to get back on track.

The PMT will also establish new routines, including hosting quarterly performance meetings and producing quarterly internal performance reports, to ensure that the Delaware Secretary of Education and their leadership team understand (1) the State's current performance against goals, (2) the likelihood that the State will reach its goals, (3) causes of lagging performance, and (4) necessary interventions to put the State on track to reach goals. With this discipline, the PMT will identify problems early, assess root causes, and promote interventions to address problems in time to accomplish goals.

Through these efforts, the State expects the PMT to help reorient the DDOE around meeting goals rather than completing tasks, instilling a culture of performance rather than compliance.

The PMT, TLEU, and Turnaround team will be housed together in a single Project Management Office, reporting directly to the Delaware Secretary of Education. Upon announcement of the Race to the Top award, these teams will begin ramping up quickly, with the help of at least 3-6 months of intensive consulting support. During this period, experts in performance management, education strategy, and school turnaround will work with these teams to manage and support LEAs as they each develop local scopes of work.

*Identifying and disseminating best practice*

As noted above, each implementation team will support LEAs by identifying and disseminating best practice, evaluating the effectiveness of practices, and by ceasing ineffective practices. In addition, the PMT will use its cross-functional perspective to promote best practices that span across individual program areas. Furthermore, the PMT will challenge implementation teams to ensure they rigorously promote best practice and cease ineffective practices as part of its overall effort to understand variances in performance and drive improvements in performance. The PMT will then draw on this knowledge to spread best practice across the State.

*Tools to support implementation and performance management*

Delaware's online Education Success Planning and Evaluation System is a sophisticated tool for developing implementation plans and tracking performance at the state, LEA, and school levels. It significantly enhances the State's capacity to manage major strategic education initiatives and gives program managers at all levels easy access to the information necessary to know if they are on-track or off-track to achieve goals. The system includes LEA Success Plans that use a balanced scorecard methodology to align LEA activities with system goals. Success Plans drive the LEAs' work based on a dynamic review of specific needs and identified strategies to address those needs.

The Education Success Planning and Evaluation System also includes a robust web based project management tool. The online project maps assist LEAs and the State in managing the work required to implement initiatives in an effective and efficient manner. Project management includes: (1) a defined beginning and anticipated end date; (2) specific deliverables and tasks required to realize those deliverables; (3) specific assignment for tasks to individuals; (4) specific timelines. These project and employee-specific project maps guide work and ensure that activities are aligned around the established goals. A screen shot of the system's project tracking

page is available in Appendix (A)(2) – 3. To complement the online project maps, the State uses employee workplans to guide each individual’s work and evaluation. These workplans align activities with individual goals and with work group goals to ensure that all work is directly aligned with broader State reform efforts. An example of an employee workplan is included in Appendix (A)(2) – 4.

The PMT plans to use this system to provide much of the data it needs to ensure that the State is on-track to reach its goals. Any additional data is readily available through the State’s longitudinal data system.

*Holding LEAs accountable and intervening where necessary*

The work of the PMT, including routines to track performance data, identify opportunities for improvement, and update the Delaware Secretary of Education on progress, will lead to increased accountability for LEAs and the State’s implementation teams. The PMT’s relentless focus on outcomes will reinforce the need for leaders to push for results. PMT staff will regularly meet with frontline managers to evaluate the effectiveness of their approach. In addition, the PMT will give the Delaware Secretary of Education the information she needs to both support the hard work of reform, and to know when to take action because of poor performance. Unsuccessful practices will be identified early and steps to intervene will be taken immediately. Successful practices will be recognized, celebrated and expanded. The result will be a rigorous, goal-oriented approach to on-going activities throughout the State.

The work of the PMT, combined with the dedicated implementation offices, represent a more nimble, outcomes-oriented structure to ensure that the State has ample capacity to implement its strategic plan with a relentless drive towards results.

***(A)(2)(i)(c) Grant administration and oversight, budget reporting and monitoring, and fund disbursement***

Delaware consistently administers grants in accordance with federal and State requirements. The State awards sub grants in accordance with the grant requirements and makes the funding available to the sub recipients in proportion to the amount received by the federal government. These allocations are prepared by the DDOE and receive approval from the Office of Management and Budget and the Controller General’s office in the Legislature before being disbursed. When a grant is approved, the notifications of grant award are written, accounting documents are prepared and budget lines are opened so each of the LEAs may begin obligating

and expending their funding. Sub grants are usually awarded for a period of 12 months with a 90-day liquidation period.

Delaware has a clear process for making expenditures and drawing funds that coordinates the relevant state and federal actors. As funds are expended by the DDOE and the sub recipients, the checks are cut by the Delaware Office of the State Treasurer and then the DDOE draws funds in accordance with the agreement between the State of Delaware Office of Management and Budget and the U.S. Treasury Department. The agreement states that Delaware will draw based upon the composite method using the average float day of a check. The DDOE's average float day is 10 days. Draws are done on an average every two weeks totaling approximately \$3 - \$4 million a draw.

Once disbursed, Delaware is well positioned to provide oversight and guidance to LEAs on grant expenditures. The web-based performance management system includes a budgeting function that requires LEAs to outline how local, state and federal funding relates to specific strategies. For state and federal funding, the State reviews and approves the use to ensure it meets grant and strategic requirements. Moreover, all local, State and federal funds are monitored through a unified state accounting system called the Delaware Financial Management System (DFMS). DFMS's centralized grants management web application allows the State to seamlessly provide technical assistance on programming, performance measures and compliance issues. Through DFMS, the DDOE can monitor each individual LEA's expenditures, encumbrances, and balances. The system has very tight controls on liquidation end dates and stops the LEAs from issuing checks or purchase orders past the end date of the grant period. The DFMS is also able to roll up individual LEA revenues or expenditures into the parent grant level to see overall grant totals.

This coordinated system allows the State and other central departments, such as the Delaware Office of Management and Budget, to continually monitor the LEAs' expenditures. Expenditures are monitored by DDOE program managers and subject to review under the State of Delaware A-133 audit as required by OMB A-87. The audit is conducted by an independent auditing firm contracted through the Office of the State Auditor and coordinated with the DDOE.

***(A)(2)(i)(d) Coordinating, reallocating, and repurposing funds***

To ensure that Delaware truly is the "first state" in its education reform efforts, the State is committed to coordinating and repurposing funding to align with reform. The budget narrative



(in Appendices (A)(2) – 5 and 6) details how the funds from the Race to the Top grant will be used to support Delaware’s coordinated education reform. Importantly though, investment in education reform is not limited to Race to the Top funding. Delaware already invests considerably in the four reform areas and will continue to coordinate and reallocate resources so that they align with the Race to the Top goals. These investments include:

- *Standards and Assessments:* To improve standards, Delaware is currently committing state fiscal and human resources to align content standards with the national Common Core Standards. In order to support this effort the State funds the development of online standards based units of instruction and provides LEA allocations for professional development to create standards based curricula. To measure learning against these standards, Delaware is dedicating nearly \$13 million in local, state and federal funding to develop the Delaware Comprehensive Assessment System (DCAS) – a series of new computer adaptive, flexible formative assessments that will be used to inform instruction and measure ongoing student learning. This investment, which shifts funding from an older summative testing system to one that is flexible and aligned with reform, includes \$5.0 million of LEA funds, \$4.1 million of State funds, and \$3.6 million of federal No Child Left Behind funds. Finally, federal funding from College Access Challenge Grant supports college access initiatives for low income students in Delaware.
- *Data Systems to Support Instruction:* As a result of years of committed funding, Delaware has a world class data system that is able to support instruction. In order to further utilize the existing data to encourage differentiated instruction and accountability Delaware has applied for approximately \$6 million for a Statewide Longitudinal Data System (LDS) grant. This federal money will be used to create the Delaware Automated System for Education Reporting (DASER) and the Educational Dashboard Portal, among other projects. See section (C)(2) for a full description of the way these funds will support education reform in Delaware.
- *Great Teachers and Leaders:* The State of Delaware directly invested nearly \$33.5 million in educator development and accountability over the last 20 years. State funding supports development through (1) skills and knowledge salary supplements for skills that improve classroom instruction, (2) professional mentoring for new teachers to receive leadership and guidance from exemplary teachers, and (3) professional and curriculum

development activities in specific content areas. For school leaders, the State has committed \$250,000 of federal funding in FY10 for the training, mentoring and coaching of superintendents, principals and other leaders to maximize student achievement. To ensure educator accountability, State funding is set aside at the DDOE to improve the technology related to Delaware's performance evaluation system, teacher recruitment and retention programs. The State also plans to apply for a Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) grant to support financial incentives that will be initiated by Race to the Top team to recruit, retain, and reward highly effective teachers in low-income schools.

- *Turning Around Lowest-Achieving Schools:* Delaware sets aside \$1.0 million in grants to the lowest-achieving school LEAs to foster building level academic improvement. Moving forward, efforts to turnaround the lowest-achieving schools will be supported with the \$8.9 million of federal 1003(g) School Improvement Grants.
- *STEM:* In FY10 Delaware secured \$100,000 in federal appropriations to upgrade computing operations in nearly 200 public schools throughout Delaware. In addition, Delaware secured \$125,000 in federal appropriations for the Forum to Advance Minorities in Engineering (FAME), Inc. to prepare minority students for college and encourage them to pursue careers in science, engineering, and math.
- *General Reform:* As a means to promote early academic success, the State provides funding for full day kindergarten, provided matching local funds can be secured. As of today, 13 of 15 school districts that serve kindergarten<sup>10</sup> and 8 charter schools operate full-day kindergarten. The State continues to support high-need students throughout school; in FY10 almost \$1 million of federal appropriations were allocated to create supplemental education, enrichment, and mentoring programs for at-risk or high-need students. In addition, the State has dedicated \$150,000 of federal appropriations in FY10 to the Delaware Parent Leadership Institute in order to expand leadership training for parents of Delaware public school students on how to effectively advocate for their children's education and to partner effectively with their children's schools.

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<sup>10</sup> Vocational school districts and Delmar school district (with only two schools) do not serve kindergarten

These combined investments represent a substantial coordination of funding across sources around the Race to the Top efforts. The State is committed to furthering this effort to align and coordinate spending around reform.

***(A)(2)(i)(e) Using the fiscal, political, and human capital resources of the State to continue after the period of funding has ended***

In order to continue providing fiscal support to the reforms initiated through the Race to the Top application, the State will pursue a tiered strategy, including:

1. Continuing the overarching Statewide commitment to reform as outlined above
2. Implementing a consolidated purchasing program among LEAs for select categories of goods and services – this may include a central bidding process for instructional materials
3. Coordinating with the General Assembly to realign existing funding in the Public Education budget for reform efforts
4. Providing greater flexibility to LEAs in the administration of their state funding in order to promote autonomy, innovation and reform. This effort began in the last Delaware General Assembly, specifically with House Bill 119.

Combined, these activities will support reform and promote autonomy, efficiency and innovation in education spending throughout the State. Continued funding coordination and repurposing will involve fiscal responsibility and political will as the DDOE works with the General Assembly to ensure that State and federal education funding is distributed fairly and effectively.

Human capital resources dedicated to reform will also continue after the period of the grant. The Project Management Office and the 9 positions therein will remain in place following the period of the grant. The PMO represents a fundamental reorganization and reorientation of the DDOE to create a culture focused on performance and results. Initially these positions will be funded by Race to the Top, jump-started in the “New DDOE,” but over time the DDOE will reallocate fiscal and human resources from unnecessary current positions to these new offices on a permanent basis. The existing resources of the DDOE will be repurposed to support reform without growing the overall size of the Delaware DOE in the long term.

**(A)(2)(ii) Statements of support**

Representatives of the State of Delaware have made repeated and consistent statements of support for both Delaware’s plan for education reform and President Obama and United States Secretary of Education Arne Duncan’s broader education reform agenda. Delaware draws broad support for education from a wide group of stakeholders including education professionals, community organizations, the business community and political officials. The Race to the Top reform effort described here is the result of a collaborative process among these stakeholders. Throughout the summer of 2009, DDOE engaged more than 100 stakeholders to create the foundation for the State’s strategic plan and the Race to the Top application. Groups met daily for six weeks to craft a clear vision for the future of education in Delaware. This was followed by a diverse contingency, including the Delaware State Education Association (DSEA), the DDOE, and nonprofit and business leaders, traveling together to meet with international education reform experts. These efforts have resulted in an aggressive reform plan that maintains broad support throughout the State.

Through this pattern of collaboration, the State has established a culture of mutual trust. Today, all local teachers’ unions, school boards and superintendents have agreed to participate in the State’s plan for Race to the Top. The teachers’ unions in particular have shown active support for Race to the Top; rather than opposing the reform efforts, the teachers’ unions actively encouraged LEAs to participate in Race to the Top reforms. Included in Appendix (A)(2) – 8 are letters of support from the DSEA, the Delaware Association of School Administrators, the Delaware Parent Teacher Association, the Delaware Early Childhood Council and the Delaware Charter School Network.

Educational excellence is critical for economic and social prosperity in the State of Delaware. Delaware’s continued economic growth requires that the State invest in high quality education to prepare today’s students to be the workforce of tomorrow. As a result, members of the business community have been longstanding supporters of education reform. Public-private partnership is significant in Delaware, and is a unique asset supporting the education system fiscally, politically and with human capital needs. Letters of support from the Delaware Business Roundtable and the Delaware Chamber of Commerce are included in Appendix (A)(2) – 8. The State also maintains active support from local nonprofits and community leaders, including the Metropolitan Wilmington Urban League, Delaware Arts Alliance, the Latin

American Community Center, Education Voters of Delaware, Learning Link of Delaware, the Rodel Foundation, the Longwood Foundation and the Governor's Advisory Council for Exception Citizen. In addition to raising public awareness and encouraging public accountability for educational results, these external supporters are crucial in providing a more holistic set of social services to enable student success. Full letters of support from these constituents can be found in Appendix (A)(2) – 8.

Political leaders throughout the State also demonstrate consistent support for education reform and Race to the Top. Leaders of other government social service agencies in Delaware have expressed their support for education reform as a critical part of the social services offered by the State. Letters of support from the Delaware Secretary of Labor, the Delaware Secretary of Health and Social Services, and the Delaware Secretary of Services for Children, Youth and their Families are included in Appendix (A)(2) – 8.

Political will for education reform starts from the top in Delaware. As promised, Governor Markell continues to focus on education reform as a top priority during his term. He has made regular public statements in support of education reform and Race to the Top, and his FY10 budget raised education funding as a percent of total revenues. Full details of his vision for education reform can be found in Appendix (A)(2) – 9. The State General Assembly has also articulated the State's support for the substantial education reform efforts enabled by Race to the Top in Concurrent Resolution No. 24: *Supporting Delaware's Application for a Federal Race to the Top grant*. The full text of this resolution is in Appendix (A)(2) - 10.

Both Delaware Senators are also strong supporters of the Governor's education agenda. Senator Tom Carper and Senator Edward Kaufman both expressed their belief in and commitment to the reform laid out by Governor Markell. Details of their commitment can be found in their letters of support in Appendix (A)(2) – 8. These letters build on a long history of support for education reform. Former Delaware Governor and current Senator Tom Carper (D) has maintained a commitment to education reform throughout his career. As Governor, he spearheaded the adoption of statewide standards and assessments, the charter school movement and statewide school choice legislation which allowed for great student flexibility. Now, as Senator, he is one of nine moderate Democrats to have signed a letter to President Obama detailing his support for innovative national education reform. The full letter is included in Appendix (A)(2) - 11.

Finally, Delaware's Lieutenant Governor Matthew Denn is also a supporter of education reform, as evidenced by his letter of support, in Appendix (A)(2) – 8.

These actions and statements of support combine to create a strong foundation for successful reform in Delaware. The local education community is forward thinking, willing to act and strongly supported by the broader community in their bold efforts to improve student achievement. Education reform is not a fringe effort and local education leaders will not pursue reform in isolation. Improving student achievement is an imperative of the State with strong fiscal, political and human capital support from throughout the State.

### **(A)(2) Evidence**

#### **Evidence for (A)(2)(i)(d)**

- *The State's budget, as completed in Section VIII of the application. The narrative that accompanies and explains the budget and how it connects to the State's plan, as completed in Section VIII of the application – **See Appendices (A)(2) – 5, (A)(2) – 6, and (A)(2) – 7***

#### **Evidence for (A)(2)(ii)**

- *A summary in the narrative of the statements or actions and inclusion of key statements or actions in the Appendix – **See narrative for (A)(2)(ii) and Appendices (A)(2) – 8, (A)(2) – 9, (A)(2) – 10, and (A)(2) – 11***

**(A)(3) Demonstrating significant progress in raising achievement and closing gaps (30 points)**

*The extent to which the State has demonstrated its ability to—*

*(i) Make progress over the past several years in each of the four education reform areas, and used its ARRA and other Federal and State funding to pursue such reforms; (5 points)*

*(ii) Improve student outcomes overall and by student subgroup since at least 2003, and explain the connections between the data and the actions that have contributed to — (25 points)*

*(a) Increasing student achievement in reading/language arts and mathematics, both on the NAEP and on the assessments required under the ESEA;*

*(b) Decreasing achievement gaps between subgroups in reading/language arts and mathematics, both on the NAEP and on the assessments required under the ESEA; and*

*(c) Increasing high school graduation rates.*

*In the text box below, the State shall describe its current status in meeting the criterion. The narrative or attachments shall also include, at a minimum, the evidence listed below, and how each piece of evidence demonstrates the State's success in meeting the criterion. The narrative and attachments may also include any additional information the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers. For attachments included in the Appendix, note in the narrative the location where the attachments can be found.*

*Evidence for (A)(3)(ii):*

- *NAEP and ESEA results since at least 2003. Include in the Appendix all the data requested in the criterion as a resource for peer reviewers for each year in which a test was given or data was collected. Note that this data will be used for reference only and can be in raw format. In the narrative, provide the analysis of this data and any tables or graphs that best support the narrative.*

**(A)(3)(i) The State demonstrated significant achievement over the past several years in each of the four education reform areas**

Delaware has a long history of education reform, particularly over the last 15 years. This reform has demonstrated results. The State has made significant progress in each of the four education reform areas, including:

- *Standards and Assessments*: Delaware implemented statewide standards in 1995 and has improved the rigor of these standards three times since. In 2009, the State began preparations to replace its state assessment in 2010 with a new, leading-edge assessment system including computer-adaptive formative and summative exams.
- *Data Systems to Support Instruction*: Delaware has one of the nation's best longitudinal data systems, which includes students' performance on state tests, links students to teachers, and provides a wealth of trend data at the student, classroom, school, LEA, and system levels. Extensive data is available online, to the public and to educators.
- *Great Teachers and Leaders*: Delaware is one of the only states with a rigorous, statewide evaluation system for teachers and leaders that includes student improvement. Recent laws enhance the evaluation to require student growth for educators to be rated effective or highly effective (see (D)(2)).
- *Turning Around Lowest-Achieving Schools*: Delaware has been using statewide school choice and an extensive network of high-quality charter schools to promote better school performance for over a decade. In 2007, the State launched Success Plans to drive the strategic actions of LEAs and monitor performance (see section (A)(2)(ii)). In 2009, the State revised its school improvement and accountability procedures to promote more rapid reform in schools, especially for those under improvement, and recent law gives the State the authority to intervene directly in the State's lowest-performing schools.

The examples above represent just a portion of Delaware's accomplishments in these four areas of reform. Since 1998, they have resulted in large gains in student achievement and some of the most significant reductions in achievement gaps in the nation, according to NAEP. Below is further detail on Delaware's history of reform, and its impact on Delaware students.

***Standards and Assessments***

Delaware's education reform covers the full continuum of a student's education, beginning with high-quality preschool services that ensure that all children arrive in kindergarten



ready to meet the State’s rigorous K-12 standards. For over 10 years, the State has provided at least one year of preschool education to 100% of high-need children. In 2007, the General Assembly created the Delaware Stars for Early Success, a quality rating and improvement system for early childhood education. The program now serves over 115 programs enrolling more than 7,550 children. The State has also defined curricular guidelines for early childhood programs that align with standards for kindergarten, contributing to improved achievement in elementary school.

Upon entry into the K-12 system, which begins with full-day kindergarten, Delaware students are held to high standards for college- and career- readiness. Statewide standards were implemented in 1995, under the leadership of Governor Tom Carper. In 2005, the General Assembly passed legislation requiring all LEAs to align curricula to state content standards or to use the Delaware Recommended Curriculum (DRC). The State supported the implementation of these standards by providing extensive professional development to align curriculum and instruction with content standards, offering classroom-ready learning resources and creating a website for educators to access up to date information on curriculum and instruction. In 2009, the State joined the “Common Core Standards Initiative,” a collaboration among 48 states to create common academic standards in math and English language arts. The State has committed to adopting the Common Core Standards by June 2010<sup>11</sup>.

To ensure that the students and teachers are meeting its high standards, Delaware has consistently used performance assessments to measure student learning. Performance-based assessments were enhanced and improved in 1997 when the State legislature passed a law mandating a state testing program. That year, the State Board of Education approved the Delaware Student Testing Program (DSTP). DSTP testing began in 1997-98, covering reading, math and writing for students in grades 3, 5, 8 and 10. Science and social students for these grades were added in 1998-99. In 2001-02, the State expanded testing to all grade levels. Delaware is currently upgrading testing through the introduction of DCAS, a new state performance assessment that will track individual student growth over time. This computer-adaptive system will map closely to national standards, will include formative and summative exams, and will link directly with teacher evaluations.

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<sup>11</sup> Based on early drafts of the CCSSO standards, Delaware expects the final standards to meet its high expectations for rigor, and plans in good faith to adopt these standards.

A student that is on track with state assessments and standards is guaranteed access to a college education in Delaware. State high school graduation requirements are directly aligned with college entry standards at all public universities in Delaware. This ensures that every high school graduate has the skills and abilities necessary to succeed in college. Successful students are not only prepared for college, they are given the logistical and financial support to make college a reality. To support successful students, the State guarantees students with at least a 2.5 GPA admittance to a public university associates degree and a full scholarship for the first year of their higher education.

### ***Data Systems to Improve Instruction***

Delaware is nationally recognized for having one of the country's most sophisticated and robust longitudinal data systems, an accomplishment that is the result of nearly 30 years of investment and reform. In 1983, the State created unique identifiers for all students. In 1997, it began collecting longitudinal student test score data. As demands for additional data to inform instruction and decision making grew, so did Delaware's investments in high-quality data. While the State possessed just 5 of the 10 "Essential Elements" defined by the Data Quality Campaign in 2005, it was able to implement all 10 elements by 2007. Today, Delaware is one of the few states whose data system meets these 10 criteria and includes each of the 12 elements of the America COMPETES Act. Its data system links students, teachers, and schools to provide a complete picture of performance across the education system.

Delaware has also invested in making this robust collection of data accessible to educators, parents, decision-makers, researchers, and the public. The State's extensive website provides access to a wide range of data, and special sites for educators allow teachers to access student achievement data to inform their instructional approaches. In addition, the State has regularly made its data available to researchers to contribute to the broader knowledge base about what works in education.

### ***Great Teachers and Leaders***

Delaware has also invested substantially in attracting and developing great teachers and leaders. Since the 1980s, Delaware has used a statewide educator evaluation system to provide clear expectations and a way to target support and development to educators throughout their careers. In 2000, the legislature passed the Professional Development and Educator Accountability Act which increased licensure, certification and professional development

requirements and required that 20% of a teacher’s evaluation be linked directly to student growth.

In 2005 the evaluation was refined to make it more rigorous and actionable – the current system is high-quality and research-based,<sup>12</sup> and includes student improvement as one of five performance areas. The revised evaluation was implemented in all schools in 2008. Recent regulations have considerably strengthened the evaluation to create a highly-effective performance rating, and to require student growth for educators to be rated effective or highly effective (see (D)(2)). Moving forward, no educator in Delaware will be considered effective without showing satisfactory student growth.

Delaware has also made significant investments in professional development to support teachers and leaders. With support from the Wallace Foundation over the last decade, the State has made significant progress in promoting instructional leadership, particularly through the work of the Delaware Academy for School Leadership and through Delaware’s Cohesive Leadership Solution, a program that promotes distributed leadership, trains qualified leaders, and improves succession planning in schools. Complementary efforts include the Delaware Developmental Assessment Center for school leaders, which assesses current and prospective school leaders, and initiatives by institutes of higher education to align their preparation programs with state standards for school leadership. A 2009 RAND Corporation study found that Delaware used a successful model of cohesive leadership.<sup>13</sup>

Since 2007, teachers and leaders in 27 schools have also benefited from participating in Delaware’s Vision Network, a comprehensive professional development and school reform program that promotes data-driven instruction and instructional leadership. According to the American Institutes for Research (AIR), an independent evaluator,

“Delaware’s Vision Network is a pioneer in identifying and leading the work on the key levers for significant education reform, which are now recognized and promoted across the country by the US Department of Education. The fundamental message that Vision 2015 has established is the necessity for alignment and coherence across all levels of the educational system; in fact, there

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<sup>12</sup> The teacher evaluation is based on Charlotte Danielson’s *A Framework for Teaching*. The leader evaluation is based on the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) Standards for School Leaders.

<sup>13</sup> *Improving School Leadership: The Promise of Cohesive Leadership Systems*, RAND Corporation, 2009

is no parallel effort nationally that is as ambitious in its attempts to align state, district, school, and classroom level in a coherent commitment to reform. This is reflected in the collaborative structure of Vision 2015, with a coalition of Delaware's education, business, government and community leaders driving the effort, and cohorts of public and charter schools and districts working together to mobilize change.”

In addition to providing professional development, the State also makes a concerted effort to increase the applicant pool. Since 1994, Delaware has developed an array of alternative certification programs to make entry into the teaching profession easier for high-potential candidates. In 2009, Delaware expanded these options by approving a Teacher Residency program and by creating an alternative certification route for Teach for America (TFA) participants. This year, Delaware began its partnership with TFA in high-need schools.

### ***Turning around low-achieving schools***

Delaware has consistently supported its reform efforts with special attention for low-achieving schools, and efforts to hold schools and educators accountable for performance.

Looking back further, Delaware's Education Accountability Act of 1998 established accountability parameters for students, schools, the DOE and parents. These changes went into full effect in 2001, when school-level ratings (e.g., commendable, needs improvement) were publicly released for the first time in Delaware. Schools where students showed significant academic improvement were rated "superior-accredited" and eligible for monetary rewards. Schools where students failed to demonstrate student improvement were required to develop school improvement plans. Even the accountability system was held accountable – in 2004 the DDOE began a review of state accountability systems. The State launched Success Plans using a balanced scorecard methodology to measure school performance and student achievement in every Delaware LEA in 2007 and were refined in 2008 in order to encourage accountability. Online school profiles provide parents with a clearer view of achievement in schools. The State has repeatedly demonstrated its determination to ensure that all levels of the system are responsible for results.

These measures are not merely for show – students and parents have extensive school choice options enabling them to respond meaningfully to the results of performance assessments. In 1995, Delaware passed school choice legislation permitting parents to send their children to

any Delaware school. The legislature also passed strong charter laws in 1995. Today 18 charters operate in Delaware, including three that opened in 2009; three more are scheduled to open in 2010. Like regular public schools, charters are held accountable for results; charters must prove that they can raise student achievement to earn reauthorization. To date, two unsuccessful charters have been closed.

Through its performance measurement and accountability procedures, the State has been able to identify those schools most in need of assistance and provide supports. In 2009, the State improved the supports it offers schools by providing clearer expectations for school improvement and restructuring plans, requiring more rigorous and comprehensive plans from low-achieving schools, and revising requirements for School Improvement Grant (SIG) applications for 2009-10. Delaware's most significant achievement on this front has been a recent one, with a regulation passed giving the State the authority to intervene directly in its lowest-performing schools to ensure they have credible plans and sufficient flexibility to make rapid gains in student achievement (for more information, see section (E)).

### ***Using ARRA and other funds to support reform***

The State uses state, federal and American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) resources in order to support the State's on-going reform. The substantial coordination of state and federal funding around reform is described in detail in section (A)(2)(i)(d) and the Summary Budget Narrative in Appendix (A)(2) – 5. Most recently, ARRA funds have been used to support on-going reform within the DDOE. ARRA Grant funds were expended in accordance with the goals set forth in the authorizing legislation: (1) spend funds quickly to save and create jobs; (2) improve student achievement through school improvement and reform; (3) ensure transparency, reporting and accountability; and (4) invest one time ARRA funds thoughtfully to minimize the funding cliff.

Specifically, Delaware used ARRA funds to:

- Retain approximately 240 teaching positions
- Replace child nutrition equipment in schools
- Increase services to students served by IDEA and Title I funds
- Provide additional services to homeless students and their families

- Maintain programs that were in peril due to the decline in overall state revenues that occurred as a result of the economic downturn. These programs include:
  - English Language Learners Programs
  - Student Success State Block Grant Programs
  - Reading Resource Teachers
  - Math Specialists
  - Tax Relief reimbursements to LEAs

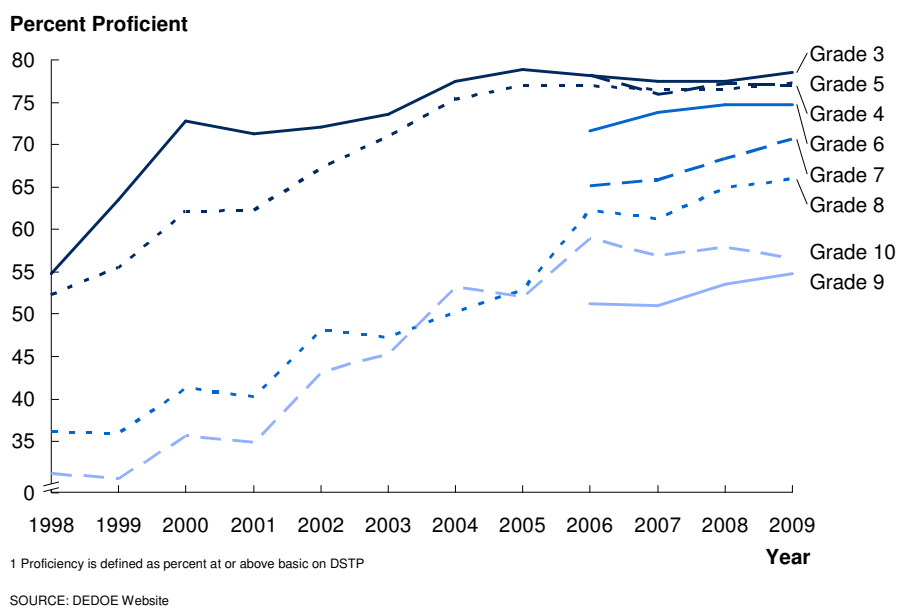
The additional funding provided by ARRA was used efficiently and effectively to maintain and expand critical education programs run by the DDOE.

### (A)(3)(ii) Improving student outcomes, overall and by subgroup

As a result of the considerable investments in education, Delaware has shown consistent improvement in student achievement on both national and state measures. Between 1998 and 2007 Delaware ranked among the best in the nation at improving student achievement on NAEP tests. On the NAEP reading assessment, Delaware was the top state in the nation in improving average grade 8 scale scores and fourth in improving average grade 4 scale scores during this period. On the NAEP math assessment, Delaware was third in the nation in improving average grade 4 scale scores and sixth in improving average grade 8 scale score. For raw NAEP data for grades 4 and 8 see Appendix (A)(3) – 1; for an abbreviated ranking of State improvements see Appendix (A)(3) - 2.<sup>14</sup>

Delaware has shown similar improvement in student achievement on DSTP, the Delaware Student Testing Program. Every grade has shown significant improvement on DSTP Math and Reading tests between 1998 and 2009.<sup>15</sup> The substantial progress on DSTP can be seen clearly on the graphs below:

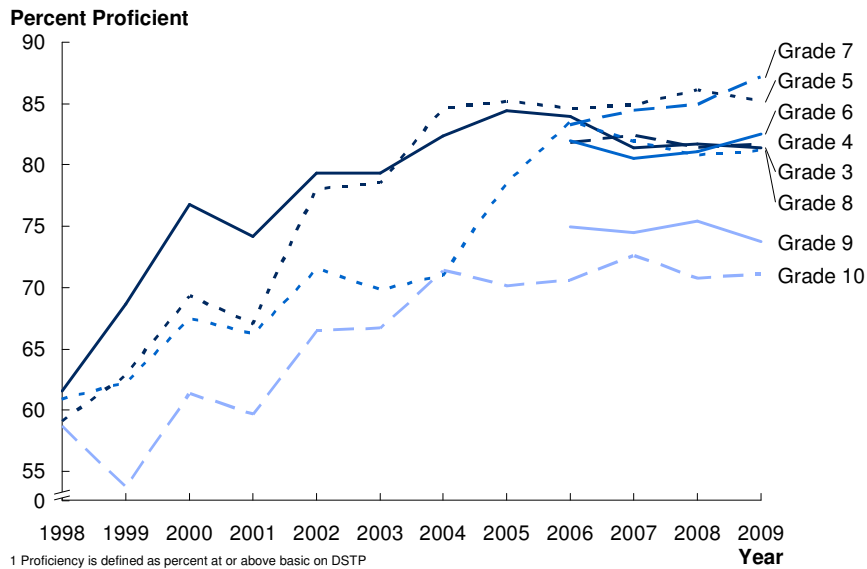
**DSTP Math Proficiency (1998-2009)**



<sup>14</sup> NAEP exclusion and accommodation rates and guidelines can be found in Appendices (A)(3) – 7 and (A)(3) – 8.

<sup>15</sup> These improvements represent real gains – there has been only one change in DSTP cut scores since 2009. For a full description of the change in cut scores see Appendix (A)(3) – 6.

### DSTP Reading Proficiency (1998-2009)



SOURCE: DEDOE Website

See Appendix (A)(3) – 3 for raw DSTP math and reading data for grades 3, 8 and 10.

In addition to these improvements in overall scores, Delaware has also been recognized for its progress in closing achievement gaps. In 2007, Delaware was cited by NAEP as one of the top four states in closing achievement gaps in math and reading and for increasing subgroup scores between 2003 and 2007. There were significant increases in the performance of Hispanics, African Americans, low-income students, and students with disabilities on both reading and math. In 2009, Delaware was nationally recognized by the NCES’s Nation’s Report Card as a clear leader in closing achievement gaps on national tests. Most recently, Education Trust<sup>16</sup> reported that Delaware not only has one of the smallest absolute racial and income achievement gaps, the State is also a leader at narrowing the gap and limiting the variance in performance between LEAs.

Delaware has made significant progress in closing the black-white achievement gap. On NAEP tests between 1992 and 2007, Delaware was one of 13 states whose 2007 reading scores for both African American and white fourth-grade students increased from the first assessment in 1992 and the only state where reading scores for both African American and white eighth-graders increased between 1998 and 2007.<sup>17</sup> Moreover, Delaware was one of only three states

<sup>16</sup> Education Trust, “Gauging the Gaps: A Deeper Look at Student Achievement”

<sup>17</sup> According to the National Center for Education Statistics “Achievement Gaps: How Black and White Students in Public Schools Perform in Mathematics and Reading on the National Assessment of Educational Process.”



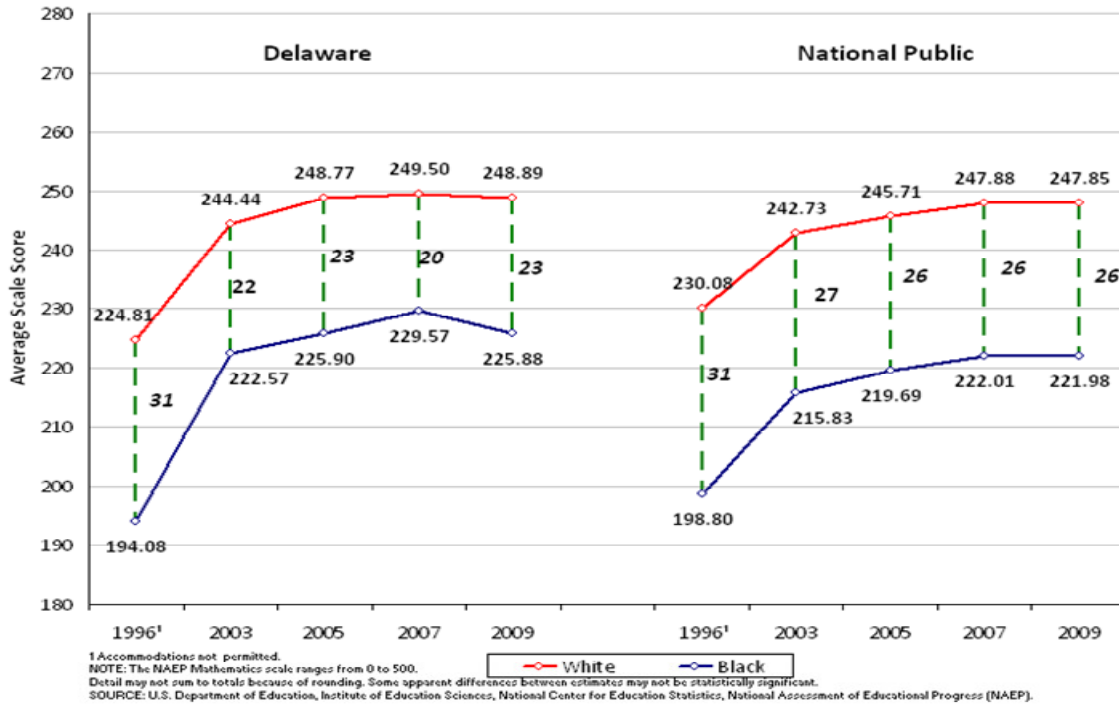
where African American students' gains outpaced those of white students on fourth grade NAEP math and reading exams.<sup>18</sup> As the graphs below and appendices (A)(3) – 4 illustrate, Delaware has a smaller black-white achievement gap, greater absolute scores and more significant gains on both these measures than the national average on every NAEP subject and grade.

Below are graphs detailing Delaware's progress to date closing the black-white achievement gap on NAEP between the 1990s and today.

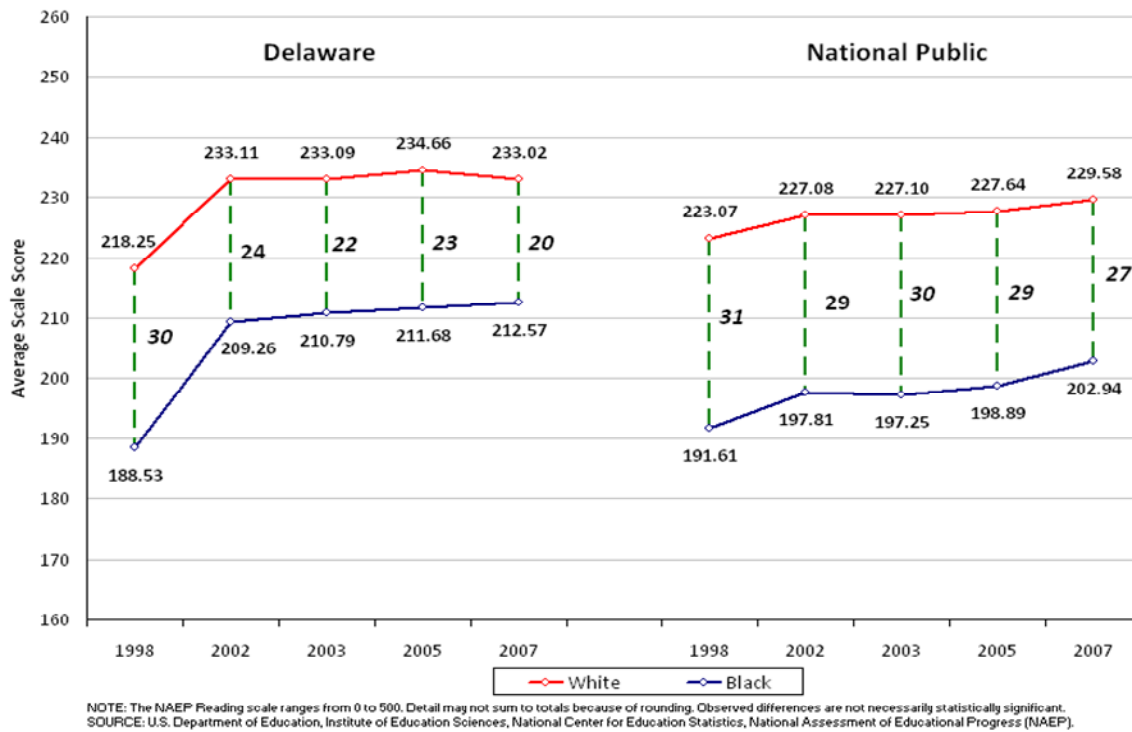
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<sup>18</sup> Ibid

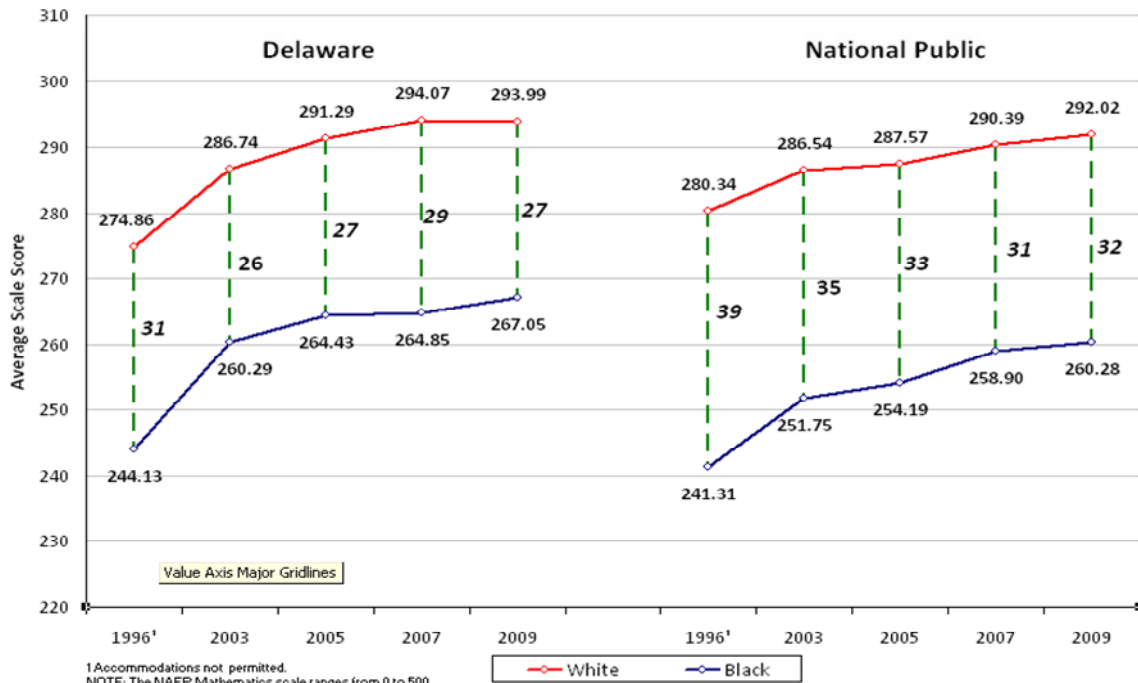
**NAEP Mathematics Grade 4 – White - Black  
Gap - Average Scale Score: 1996-2009**



**NAEP Reading Grade 4 – White - Black  
Gap - Average Scale Score: 1998-2007**

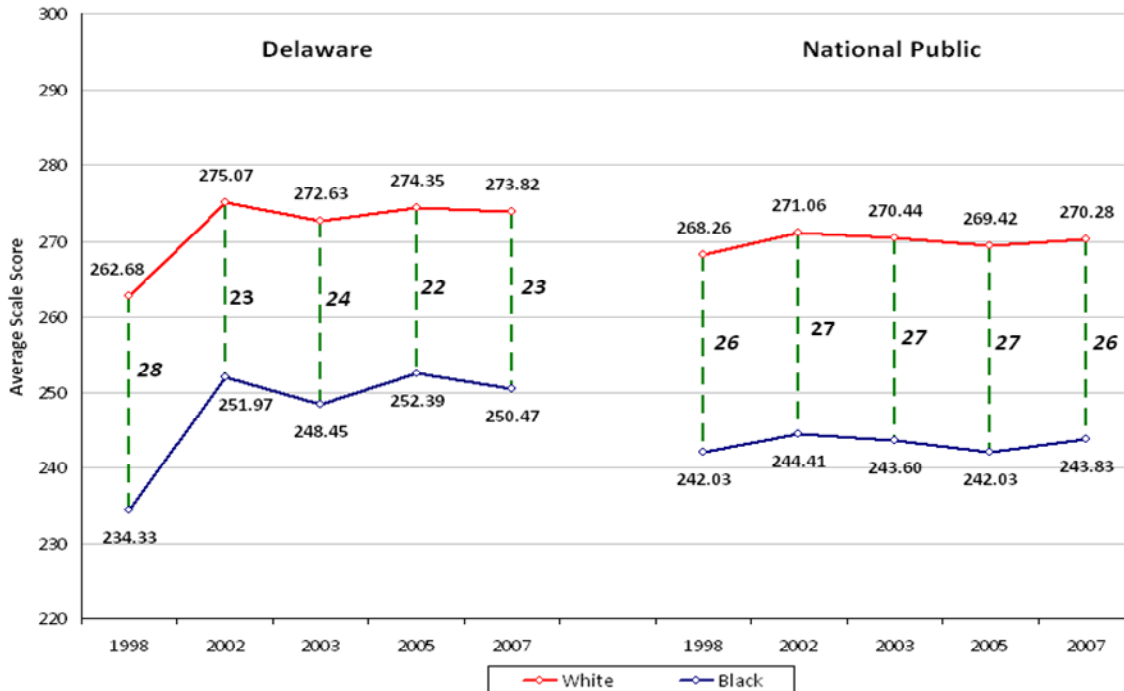


NAEP Mathematics Grade 8 – White - Black  
Gap - Average Scale Score: 1996-2009



<sup>1</sup>Accommodations not permitted.  
NOTE: The NAEP Mathematics scale ranges from 0 to 500. Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding. Some apparent differences between estimates may not be statistically significant.  
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).

NAEP Reading Grade 8 – White - Black  
Gap - Average Scale Score: 1998-2007



NOTE: The NAEP Reading scale ranges from 0 to 500. Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding. Observed differences are not necessarily statistically significant.  
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).

Further graphs detailing Delaware's significant progress in raising scores and closing the achievement gap on NAEP for Hispanic students, students eligible for free and reduced lunch and students with disabilities can be found in Appendix (A)(3) – 5. These accomplishments speak to Delaware's wider ability to aggressively lower the achievement gap while simultaneously raising achievement for all students.

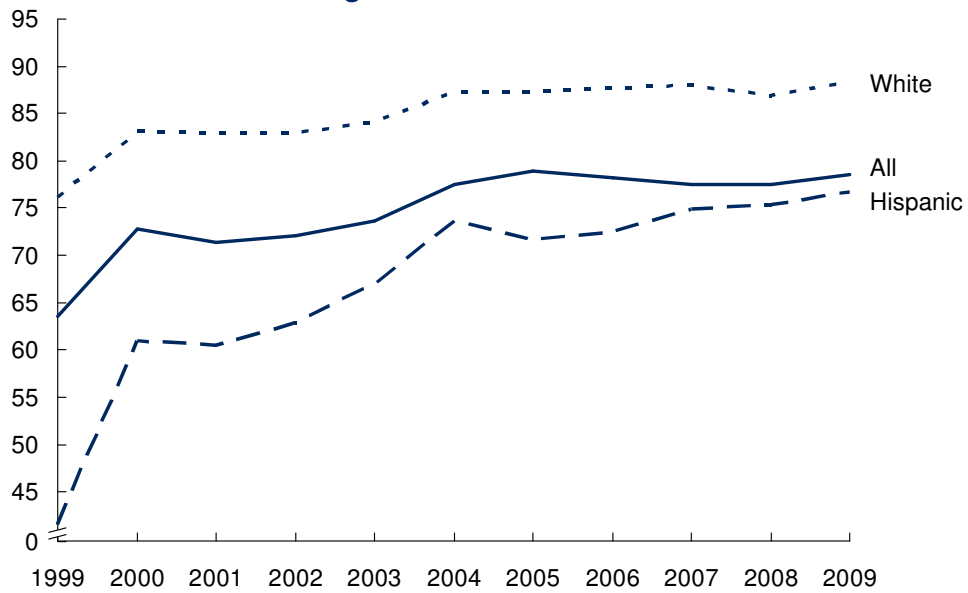
These achievements are the result of a comprehensive system of education supports as well as a specific focus on reading instruction over the last decade. Reductions in reading gaps reflect the State's focus on providing special services to students who were struggling the most. For example, the State introduced rigorous reading-skill objectives for pre-k through Grade 5 that focus on vocabulary and writing and used the federal Reading First program to assist students in the lowest-performing schools. These efforts--combined with the introduction of an early reading instruction model, the expanded use of push-in reading support at the classroom level, and the addition of state-supported reading specialists in all elementary schools to help struggling students and share best practices among teachers--contributed to a significant improvement in results on both State and national exams.

Delaware students also showed significant gains on state and national mathematics exams. These gains stemmed from the adoption of the National Science Foundation mathematics curriculum, the formation of regional teacher training consortia and the use of state funding to provide middle school math specialists to support struggling math students and teachers.

Another achievement gap was closed through the State's intensive focus on Hispanic literacy. Starting with early childhood education, the State addressed the preparation gap for minority students by creating early childhood education programs specifically tailored to the needs of the Hispanic community. Hispanic students have also benefited substantially from a common curriculum based on core reading standards, universal reading instruction and targeted intensive literacy training. The result has been a substantial upward trend in achievement by Hispanic students on state tests that has outpaced growth by students in other groups.

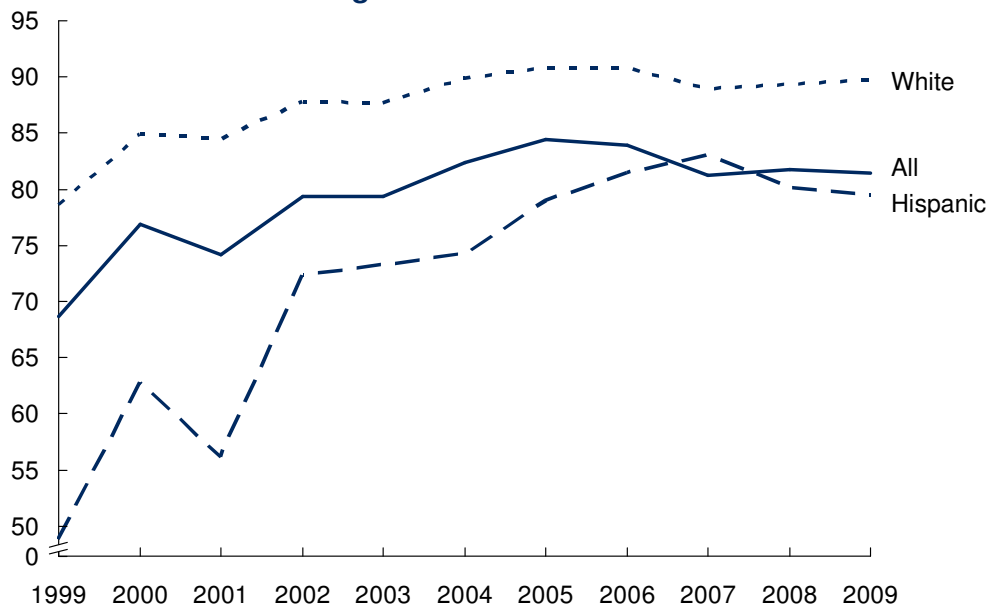
The following charts detail the State's progress at closing the Hispanic-white achievement gap on Delaware state tests between 1999 and 2009.

**DSTP Math Grade 3 – Hispanic White Gap  
Percent Meeting the Standard: 1999-2009**



SOURCE: DEDOE

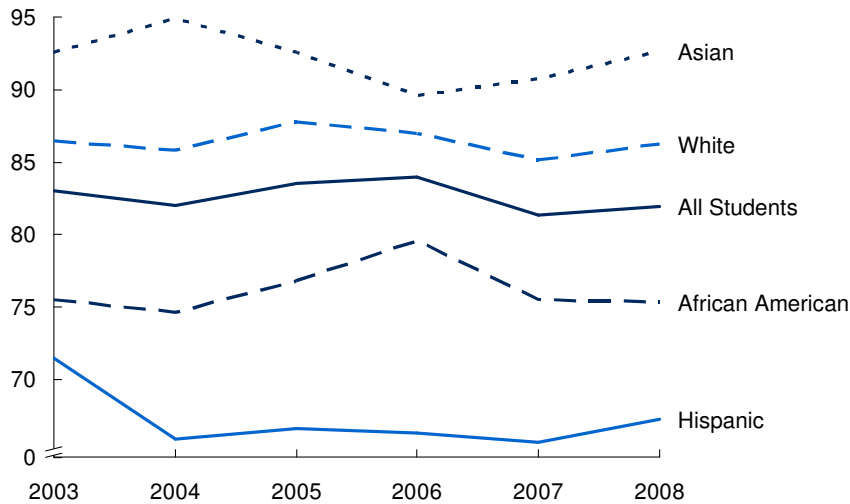
**DSTP Reading Grade 3 – Hispanic White Gap  
Percent Meeting the Standard: 1999-2009**



SOURCE: DEDOE

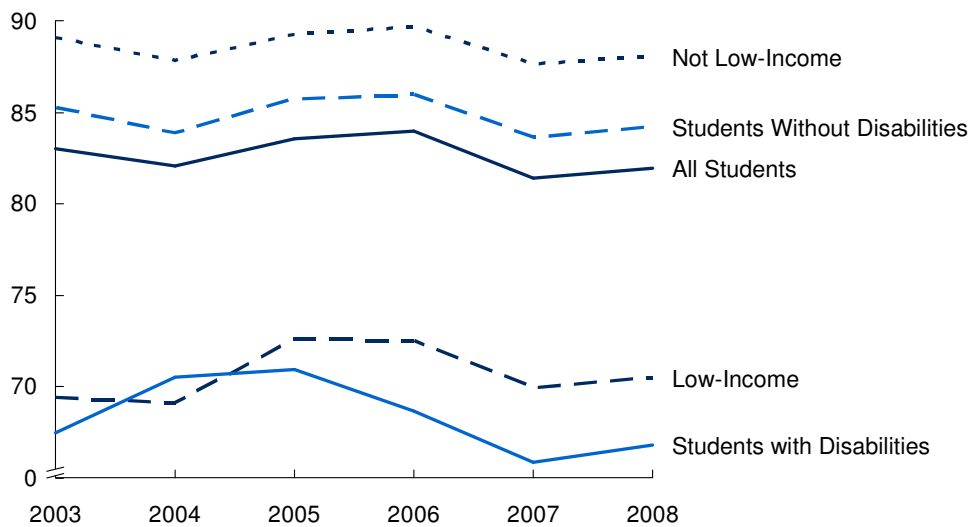
In addition to a focus on student achievement, Delaware is also committed to increasing the number of students graduating and attending college. Delaware already has a high graduation rate of nearly 82% for all students, as measured by federal accountability laws. Graduation rates have been largely stable throughout the past five years, trending slightly downward as accounting policies led to a more accurate account for transfers and dropouts.

**NCLB Graduation Rate – Racial Gap**



SOURCE: DEDOE

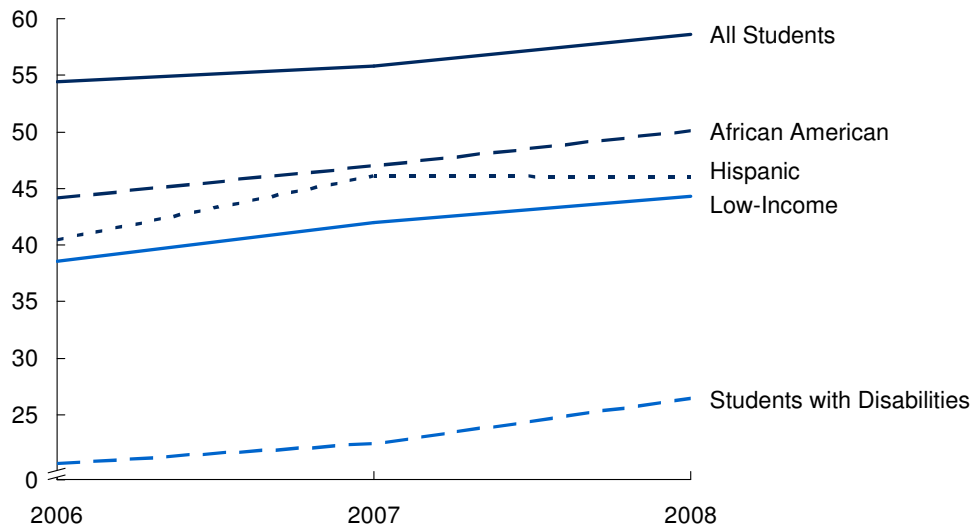
**NCLB Graduation Rate – Demographic Gap**



SOURCE: DEDOE

Among those that graduate from high school in Delaware, nearly 60 percent of students attend college within the following sixteen months. This rate is high and consistently rising, especially among those groups that are traditionally underrepresented – African Americans, Hispanics, low income students and students with disabilities. Delaware has invested heavily in raising college enrollment rates with mentoring services, targeted minority college counseling and generous scholarships.

**NCLB College Enrollment Rate**



SOURCE: DEDOE

The combined substantial investment in core literacy and mathematics education has led to significant improvements in student achievement, reductions in the achievement gap and increases in college enrollment over the last decade. Delaware plans to use Race to the Top support to build upon these successes to further improve student achievement by focusing on continuous improvement, rigorous standards and rising expectations. The efforts outlined in the rest of the application outline the State’s framework for investment, innovation and sustained improvement.

**(A)(3) Evidence**

**Evidence for (A)(3)(ii)**

- *NAEP and ESEA results since at least 2003. Include in the Appendix all the data requested in the criterion as a resource for peer reviewers for each year in which a test*

*was given or data was collected – See Appendices (A)(3) – 1, (A)(3) – 3, (A)(3) – 6, (A)(3) – 7, and (A)(3) – 85*



**(B) Standards and Assessments**

***State Reform Conditions Criteria***

**(B)(1) Developing and adopting common standards**

***The extent to which the State has demonstrated its commitment to adopting a common set of high-quality standards, evidenced by (as set forth in Appendix B)—***

***(i) The State’s participation in a consortium of States that— (20 points)***

*(a) Is working toward jointly developing and adopting a common set of K-12 standards (as defined in this notice) that are supported by evidence that they are internationally benchmarked and build toward college and career readiness by the time of high school graduation; and*

*(b) Includes a significant number of States;*

***(ii) — (20 points)***

***(a) For Phase 1 applications, the State’s high-quality plan demonstrating its commitment to and progress toward adopting a common set of K-12 standards (as defined in this notice) by August 2, 2010, or, at a minimum, by a later date in 2010 specified by the State, and to implementing the standards thereafter in a well-planned way;***

*Recommended maximum response length: Two pages*

## **(B)(1) Overview**

Establishing rigorous, internationally benchmarked college-and career-ready standards is a central component of Delaware’s reform strategy. These standards will set higher expectations for what Delaware students must learn, and the State believes that its students will rise to meet these expectations. Therefore, it is fully committed to quickly implementing enhanced standards, in collaboration with other states.

### **(B)(1)(i)(a-b) The State’s participation in a consortium of states that is working towards developing and adopting common standards and that includes a significant number of states**

The Common Core State Standards Initiative, coordinated by the National Governors’ Association (NGA) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), is an effort by 51 states and territories, including Delaware, to develop a common core of state standards in English language arts and mathematics for grades K-12 (referred to here as the “common core standards”). Appendix (B)(1)-1 has a copy of the signed MOU showing evidence of Delaware joining the common standards consortium.

The standards will be internationally benchmarked and will ensure that students graduate college- and career-ready. According to the CCSSO/NGA, the standards will:

- Be aligned with college and work expectations
- Include rigorous content and application of knowledge through high-order skills
- Build upon strengths and lessons of current state standards
- Be internationally benchmarked to prepare students for global economy and society
- Be evidence and/or research based

An advisory group provides advice and guidance on the initiative. Members of this group include experts from Achieve, Inc., ACT, the College Board, the National Association of State Boards of Education and the State Higher Education Executive Officers. For more information on the standards’ rigor and international benchmarking, see the Appendix (B)(1)-3.

Delaware was one of the first states to join Common Core State Standards Initiative’s consortium, and the State has played a leading role in shaping the development of the standards. Delaware Governor Jack Markell is the NGA’s national co-chair for the consortium. In addition, a University of Delaware professor, Dr. Alfino Flores, sits on the common core standards review

panel, and Julie Harper of the Delaware Department of Education is on the common core standards K-12 writing committee. Beyond these leadership roles, the State has participated in all reviews and hearings for the common core standards, and has used the findings to improve its current content standards. Delaware has also compared all preliminary drafts to its current standards and vetted potential changes with teachers and other stakeholders.<sup>1</sup> As a result, the State expects the transition to the common core standards to occur with a smooth and rapid process.

**(B)(1)(ii) The State’s plan demonstrating its commitment to and progress towards adopting common standards**

By June 2010, Delaware plans to adopt the common core standards, just 3 months after their expected release in March of 2010<sup>2</sup>. By the end of August 2010, the State expects to train all affected teachers to implement the new standards by incorporating them into their instructional approaches. Again, this transition can happen rapidly because so much work has already been done – the State has been comparing preliminary drafts to its standards for months in order to be able to act quickly when final standards are released.

With the authority to adopt new standards resting with the DDOE and State Board of Education, the State will be able to quickly put the transition process in motion once the common core standards are released. The State will then build upon its long experience in implementing and revising statewide standards to ensure a smooth and rapid transition to the common core standards. This experience includes three revisions since statewide standards were adopted in 1995.<sup>3</sup>

The required steps to adopt the common core standards, derived from Delaware’s previous experience, are outlined below:

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendix (B)(1)-4 for comments on early drafts of common standards and Delaware’s comparison to current standards. Delaware considers its current standards well-aligned with the proposed CCSSO/NGA standards.

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix (B)(1)-2 for a memo outlining the adoption timeline and planning process.

<sup>3</sup> There have been three standards reviews since 1995 adoption, commissioned by the Delaware Secretary of Education in 1998, 2004, and 2008

**Based on Delaware’s experience, the following steps are necessary to transition effectively to common national standards**

<b>Prioritization of standards</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Delaware has employed LFS to help with prioritization</li> <li>▪ Prioritization is primarily to increase classroom relevance of standards, and LFS is a leader at this</li> <li>▪ Prioritization makes integration easier</li> </ul>
<b>Adopt common standards</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Delaware has had necessary law in place since 1995</li> <li>▪ Delaware’s common standards are hosted online with Grade Level Expectations and recommended instructional units</li> </ul>
<b>Integrate existing standards with the new standards</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The DDOE has prepared for integration through standards reviews with broad stakeholder engagement</li> <li>▪ Early drafts of the standards have been compared to current standards, and likely changes have been found to be minor</li> </ul>
<b>Refine prioritization based on new standards and translate to GLEs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Delaware will refine its prioritization process once the final standards are released</li> <li>▪ Delaware will unpack the standards into Grade Level Expectations to ensure that they are used appropriately in the classroom, and to align education between grades</li> </ul>
<b>Training all teachers on new standards</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Delaware will train all teachers on new standards in August 2010</li> <li>▪ Delaware will focus the training on classroom relevance and working with professional learning communities</li> </ul>
<b>Refine curriculum based on new standards</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The DDOE will undergo a curriculum review for refinement based on new standards</li> <li>▪ Teachers will have the opportunity to submit and peer review excellent instructional units for inclusion into refined Delaware Recommended Curriculum</li> </ul>
<b>Regulation monitoring curriculum alignment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Delaware law allows the DDOE to monitor curriculums for alignment to Delaware common standards</li> <li>▪ Charters are reviewed in Delaware upon application and renewal</li> </ul>

***Steps to implement the common core standards***

As stated earlier, Delaware is participating as a leader in the CCSSO/NGA common core standards consortium. The State has embarked on the following path to adopt and implement the standards effectively:

*(1) Prioritize existing standards.* Since the Fall of 2008, Delaware has been working to prioritize its existing standards by classifying all standards by importance. Prioritization serves two purposes. First, it is helpful to educators as they develop curricula because it highlights standards to which most classroom time should be dedicated. Second, it is a critical step to ensure that existing standards can be quickly integrated with new standards. With prioritized standards, the State will be able to identify disparities between the existing and new standards that are important and must be addressed, and other disparities that are less important, where existing standards can be discarded in favor of new standards.

*(2) Adopt common standards.* As noted above, the legislation authorizing statewide standards has been in place for over a decade, and provides the DDOE and the State Board of

Education with the authority to adopt new standards. The State will use this legislation to adopt the common core standards when they are released (following a final review of their quality.)

*(3) Integrate existing standards with new standards.* As part of their commitment to the common core standards, states have pledged to adopt the common core as 85% of their overall standards, with 15% determined locally. Delaware will determine its 15% in two ways.

First, it will compare its existing standards to the common core, and will identify high-priority existing standards that are not covered in the common core that it wishes to include in its 15%. (Delaware has already started identifying disparities using drafts of the new common core).

Second, Delaware will incorporate suggestions from a number of other consortia<sup>4</sup> that are identifying opportunities to make state standards even more rigorous and more appropriate to a range of students. In this way, Delaware will ensure that the needs of English language learners, special education students, and others will be met, and that standards are rigorous across all subjects.

*(4) Refine prioritization based on new standards and translate into grade-level expectations.* Once the complete set of Delaware standards is determined, the State will refine its prioritization to incorporate the new standards. It will also translate the standards into grade-level expectations (a set of intermediate steps to guide teachers in implementing standards) that can inform curriculum development and delivery. Grade level expectations serve to create alignment of content standards across grades, and allow students to smoothly build content mastery as they move between grades.

*(5) Provide professional development to introduce teachers and administrators to the new standards and prepare them to align curriculum with these standards.* In August 2010, Delaware will launch a statewide professional development and curriculum redesign process for the roughly 7,000 teachers across the four content areas affected by the new standards (math, science, ELA and social studies).<sup>5</sup> This training will make teachers and administrators familiar with the changes to the standards and will help them prepare to adjust their curricula accordingly.

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<sup>4</sup> These include: the WIDA-ELL consortium, the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), the National Councils of Teachers of Mathematics, English, Science, and Social Studies, and numerous assessment collaboratives sponsored by the CCSSO, including Technical Issues in Large Scale Assessment and Surveys of Enacted Curriculum.

<sup>5</sup> See budget for details of rollout and implementation

(6) *Refine curriculum.* In the transition to new standards, Delaware will develop new instructional units aligned with the common standards by using a proven collaborative submission and peer review process that will engage teachers from across the State (see section (B)(3) for more detail.) This process will continue for three years to add depth and quality to the revised Delaware Recommended Curriculum.

(7) *Use existing regulation to monitor curriculum alignment.* Through Delaware law, adopted in 2007, the State has the authority to monitor alignment of LEA curricula to state standards. The State will use this authority to ensure that local curricula meet the new standards through periodic review.

With the benefit of experience managing three revisions to statewide standards since 1995, Delaware is well prepared to engage in the process described above. Already, the State has begun exhaustive review of curriculum, grade level expectations, and a standards-prioritization process to refine the Delaware Recommended Curriculum Framework<sup>6</sup> in preparation for the transition to new standards. To complete this work, Delaware has collaborated with Learning Focused Solutions, a third party vendor with expertise in developing integrated curriculum and professional development systems based on state standards. The State will consider continuing this collaboration throughout the transition to new standards. In addition, Delaware will share lessons learned with other states transitioning to the common core standards.

## **Evidence**

### **Evidence for (B)(1)(i):**

- *A copy of the Memorandum of Agreement, executed by the State, showing that it is part of a standards consortium. See Appendix (B)(1)-1*
- *A copy of the final standards or, if the standards are not yet final, a copy of the draft standards and anticipated date for completing the standards. See Appendix (B)(1)-4 for draft standards and state response and appendix (B)(1)-2 for current work towards completion. See appendix (B)(1)-2 for anticipated date for completion and adoption*

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<sup>6</sup> Relevant documentation of the curriculum prioritization process available in Appendix (B)(1)-2

- *Documentation that the standards are or will be internationally benchmarked and that, when well-implemented, will help to ensure that students are prepared for college and careers. See appendix (B)(1)-3*
- *The number of States participating in the standards consortium and the list of these States. See appendix (B)(1)-1*

**Evidence for (B)(1)(ii):**

- *A description of the legal process in the State for adopting standards, and the State's plan, current progress, and timeframe for adoption. See narrative for (B)(1)*

**(B)(2) Developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments (10 points)**

*The extent to which the State has demonstrated its commitment to improving the quality of its assessments, evidenced by (as set forth in Appendix B) the State's participation in a consortium of States that—*

*(i) Is working toward jointly developing and implementing common, high-quality assessments (as defined in this notice) aligned with the consortium's common set of K-12 standards (as defined in this notice); and*

*(ii) Includes a significant number of States.*

*Recommended maximum response length: One page*



## **(B)(2) Overview**

Delaware considers high-quality, comprehensive formative and summative assessments to be critical components of its reform strategy. Such assessments can provide teachers and leaders with essential data on student learning throughout the school year. With this data, educators can adjust instruction (particularly with the help of instructional improvement systems, described in section (C)(3)) and can secure additional supports (e.g., Response to Intervention) to ensure that all students meet academic standards.

Delaware's current assessment, the Delaware Student Testing Program (DSTP), in use since 1998, does not meet all of these criteria in that it does not include formative assessments and multiple opportunities to show proficiency on a summative assessment, and does not cover as many courses as possible. While DSTP is rigorous when compared to NAEP and other state assessments<sup>7</sup>, it could be more comprehensive, cover a wider range of subject areas, and include multiple formative assessments to help teachers hit progress goals.

For this reason, in 2009 the Delaware General Assembly mandated the implementation of a new computer-adaptive test (the Delaware Comprehensive Assessment System – DCAS), including formative and summative assessments, by the 2010-11 school year. Delaware is on track to meet this mandate, with a signed contract with an assessment vendor in hand.

At the same time, Delaware is fully committed to adopting a common assessment in collaboration with other states when one becomes available (expected in 2015.) The State is already working with other states and organizations (e.g., Common Core Consortium, the Item Bank Collaborative (an open-source digital infrastructure for test-item storage and sharing), MOSAIC and SMARTER multi-state consortia on formative/benchmark and summative assessment systems<sup>8</sup>) towards this goal. The State intends join a summative assessment consortium and compete with this consortium for a federal common assessments grant in June 2010.

Since Delaware's new assessment will align with the common core standards (pending review and adoption), address college-readiness requirements, and be operational a full five

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<sup>7</sup> See [http://www.edtrust.org/sites/edtrust.org/files/Delaware\\_0.pdf](http://www.edtrust.org/sites/edtrust.org/files/Delaware_0.pdf) for detailed breakdown of DSTP score comparisons

<sup>8</sup> These assessment consortia, which have formed recently, will work together to develop and share high quality testing items aligned to the common core among states. These consortia will produce testing items and assessment systems over the next several years, and will include professional development on the use of these system. Delaware plans to use these testing items to enhance the quality of its own assessment system.

years before a common assessment is expected, the State intends to make its assessment available to the multi-state consortium as a model for the common assessment. When the common assessment is ready, Delaware will transition from DCAS to the new assessment.

### **Activities**

As one of the first states to develop an advanced, rigorous assessment, Delaware is pursuing a multi-pronged strategy to develop high-quality assessments now and guide the development of a common assessment system as part of the national consortium, including:

- Developing the Delaware Comprehensive Assessment System (DCAS)
- Adopting the SAT and encouraging the PSAT as college readiness exams
- Creating a multi-state Item Bank Collaborative
- Participating in the CCSSO's efforts to develop a common assessment
- Joining the MOSAIC and SMARTER common assessment coalitions

Each of these activities is described in further detail below:

#### **(B)(2)(i) Developing the Delaware Comprehensive Assessment System.**

DCAS, Delaware's own computer-adaptive assessment system, will be used to administer up to three formative and summative assessments per year per student in core subjects, and will include formative and end-of-course exams in most other subject areas. In developing DCAS, Delaware will use a combination of local expertise, outside vendors, and participation in consortia that will develop and share testing items (see above) to gain access to high-quality testing items at the best possible value. As a computer-adaptive system, DCAS will improve testing by allowing all test takers, including students with disabilities, to take the same exam and have testing items adjusted to their level of knowledge. In this way, this single assessment will focus questions at the upper limit of a student's knowledge, providing a nuanced assessment of aptitude and content knowledge.

DCAS will also be able to synchronize with the State's data system, yielding immediate results that a teacher will use to improve instruction. For educators, DCAS will provide a more accurate measure of student growth and more timely and detailed information that will be used for planning and improving educational programs at the school, LEA and state levels. The State will provide data coaches to aid in the use of assessment data to improve instruction (see section (C)(3) for more information on using data to inform instruction). In addition, DCAS will

provide multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate proficiency and will provide academic achievement information to students and parents, including a measure of fall-to-spring and year-to-year individual student growth. The robust student data created from this assessment system will form the foundation for a data driven approach to education and evaluation that will affect all of education in Delaware.

Finally, as prescribed by the Delaware General Assembly, DCAS is to be developed in a cost-effective manner and, to the fullest extent possible, developed in collaboration with other states.

### ***Adopting the SAT as a college-readiness exam***

In Fall 2010, Delaware will implement the SAT as a statewide assessment of college-readiness.<sup>9</sup> (The PSAT will also be used as an early indicator of likelihood to succeed in rigorous, college-preparatory (e.g. AP) and STEM coursework). To complement this assessment of college-readiness, the State will provide services to all middle school students, particularly high-need students, to ensure they are prepared for the PSAT and SAT, and for a college-ready course-load in high school. These services, which will give students an in-depth knowledge of the required courses and levels of achievement necessary for college-readiness, will complement the State's existing initiatives, such as the Student Success Plans, to create a seamless college-oriented experience.<sup>10</sup> Additional targeted counseling and services will be provided to students from groups historically underrepresented in college. The SAT is common across states, and is frequently required in the college admissions process, allowing it to serve the dual purpose of assessing whether Delaware's students are college-ready, and removing a barrier to entry to college.

### **(B)(2)(ii) Creating a multi-state Item Bank Collaborative (IBC) and participating in consortia working to develop common assessments**

Delaware is the founding state for the IBC, a common open-source resource for storing and sharing test items that are aligned with the common standards. The IBC is a critical first step in the move to common assessments, by allowing member states to access high-quality assessment items at a low-cost, and has the potential to grow into a common assessment consortium. Even if

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<sup>9</sup> 9<sup>th</sup> graders will take the PSAT and all 11<sup>th</sup> graders will take the SAT, and the State will receive student data

<sup>10</sup> See section (P)(5) for more detail on student success plans and college-oriented culture.

another consortium becomes the driver for a common assessment, the Delaware-led IBC will be a critical resource to that group, providing cost-effective access to high-quality shared test items. See appendix (B)(2)-3 for materials describing the Item Bank Collaborative.

### ***Participating assessment consortia beyond the IBC***

Delaware is fully committed to participating in a common assessment, and to sharing its experience with DCAS to expedite the development of that assessment. Therefore, as a number of assessment consortia have developed, Delaware has joined all those that have the potential to lead to a national common assessment.

There are four consortia that have emerged to date and Delaware has joined; each of these consortia includes a significant number of states:

- *Balanced Assessment Consortium*: Sponsored by the NGA, this consortium is committed to a balanced approach to summative assessments, to studying and replicating best practices from within the States, and to creating an integrated system of standards, assessment, curriculum, instruction, and teacher development
- *MOSAIC*: This consortium is focused on summative assessments that are both aligned with the common core standards and integrated with the SMARTER benchmark assessment initiative.
- *SMARTER*: This consortium is focused on developing testing items and professional development around benchmark assessments, and to moving towards a computer-adaptive testing model.
- *Achieve Statement of Principles*: Sponsored by Achieve, this partnership commits its members to follow common principles in the pursuit of common assessments, regardless of the specific consortium. Members are committed to pursuing the development and implementation of summative assessments that are aligned to the common core standards, that can be used within states as part of statewide assessment systems, and that will enable comparability of results across a maximum number of states

These three coalitions plan to share resources to work towards common formative, benchmark, and summative assessments, and involve a significant number of states. In addition, Delaware expects to compete for federal common assessment grants in June 2010 in collaboration with other states. Please see appendix (B)(2)-2 for signed MOUs and a current listing of all states participating in each consortium.

## **Conclusion**

Delaware has a balanced approach to bringing common assessment to its schools in a timely manner. By proceeding with its plans to implement a new assessment in the 2010-11 school year, while contributing to multi-state efforts to develop a common assessment, the State will ensure that it can benefit from a high-quality assessment system as soon as possible, and that it will be able to transition to a common assessment when it is available. Throughout this process, Delaware is committed to using its experience to inform the development of the next generation of assessments in collaboration with a significant number of other states.

## **Evidence**

### **Evidence for (B)(2):**

- *A copy of the Memorandum of Agreement, executed by the State, showing that it is part of a consortium that intends to develop high-quality assessments: **See Appendix(B)(2)-2***
- *The number of States participating in the assessment consortium and the list of these States. **See Appendix (B)(2)-2***

**(B)(3) Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments (20 points)**

*The extent to which the State, in collaboration with its participating LEAs (as defined in this notice), has a high-quality plan for supporting a statewide transition to and implementation of internationally benchmarked K-12 standards that build toward college and career readiness by the time of high school graduation, and high-quality assessments (as defined in this notice) tied to these standards. State or LEA activities might, for example, include: developing a rollout plan for the standards together with all of their supporting components; in cooperation with the State's institutions of higher education, aligning high school exit criteria and college entrance requirements with the new standards and assessments; developing or acquiring, disseminating, and implementing high-quality instructional materials and assessments (including, for example, formative and interim assessments (both as defined in this notice)); developing or acquiring and delivering high-quality professional development to support the transition to new standards and assessments; and engaging in other strategies that translate the standards and information from assessments into classroom practice for all students, including high-need students (as defined in this notice).*

*The State shall provide its plan for this criterion in the text box below. The plan should include, at a minimum, the goals, activities, timelines, and responsible parties (see Reform Plan Criteria elements in Application Instructions or Section XII, Application Requirements (e), for further detail). Any supporting evidence the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers must be described and, where relevant, included in the Appendix. For attachments included in the Appendix, note in the narrative the location where the attachments can be found.*

*Recommended maximum response length: Eight pages*

## **(B)(3) Overview**

### **Supporting the transition to enhanced standards and high-quality assessments**

<b>Vision</b>	To create a comprehensive educational approach that includes internationally benchmarked, relevant standards, aligned curricula, and a high-quality assessment system, including multiple formative assessments to guide data-driven instruction
<b>Strategies</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Transition to common standards, prioritized for comprehensiveness and classroom relevance</li><li>2. Train all teachers in relevant subject areas on new standards</li><li>3. Develop and deploy DCAS, a best-in-class assessment system aligned with the common standards</li><li>4. Create foundational materials for data-driven instruction based on assessment system</li><li>5. Implement refined curricula based on new standards and assessments</li><li>6. Use SAT as college-readiness exam and PSAT as college-preparedness tool</li><li>7. Improve college- and career-readiness through advanced coursework and rigorous STEM offerings</li><li>8. Provide comprehensive supports for students traditionally underrepresented in college</li><li>9. Transition to common assessment system when developed</li></ol>
<b>Goals</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Standards adopted by June 2010</li><li>▪ 7000 teachers trained on new standards by start of 2010-2011 school year</li><li>▪ All teachers using data from new assessment systems to guide instruction by 2011</li><li>▪ Instruction focused on college-readiness and college completion</li></ul>

Delaware's commitment to common standards and high-quality assessment is not based on theory: it is proven to work. Nearly 15 years of efforts to create a unified, statewide instructional system that provides common standards, recommended curricula and common assessments have helped Delaware narrow the achievement gap (see (A)(3) for detail) and ensured that students across the State benefit from the same rigorous approach to instruction. This experience has motivated Delaware to become a leader in the movement towards common core standards and to radically reshape its assessment system, creating a computer adaptive testing system that enables multiple formative assessments, end-of-course exams, and summative assessments aligned to common standards.

Now, as the common core standards are due to be released in March and the development of common assessments is becoming a reality, Delaware is well prepared for implementation. The State has developed a high-quality plan and committed extensive resources to preparing for the transition. By the end of the 2010-11 school year, Delaware will (1) adopt the common core

standards and a new system of formative and summative assessments, (2) complete statewide training on the use of new standards and assessments, (3) provide new curricular units aligned to new standards, (4) improve college-readiness programs, STEM offerings, and supports to help high-need students in rigorous coursework, and (5) roll out data-driven routines to support the continuous improvement of instruction. Delaware will be able to act rapidly because of its early investments in preparations for the common core standards, and in development of an assessment system that will produce a rich array of formative, benchmark, and summative assessment data based on the new standards.

### **Goals**

Delaware's goal is to adopt new standards by June 2010 and to train the approximately 7000 teachers affected by the new standards by the start of the 2010-11 school year. The State expects the curriculum refinement process to be 50% complete by the end of the 2010-11 school year, and 100% complete by the end of the 2011-12 school year. By the end of the 2010-11 school year, the State expects that 100% of DCAS tests will be in place, which will include at least three formative assessments. To support college-readiness, the State expects that 100% of students will be taking the SAT by the end of the 2010-11 school year.

### **Activities**

To enact this strategy, Delaware has planned a series of activities over the next five years. The transition to common standards and high-quality assessments will happen in three phases – Adoption, Implementation, and Cultural Change:

#### ***Phase I - Adoption of new standards and development of DCAS (January 2010-August 2010)***

*Standards:* In March 2010, the common core standards will be released, and by June 2010, Delaware will adopt these standards. By August 2010, the State will train its teachers and administrators to adjust curriculum accordingly. To accomplish this, the State will follow the seven step process outlined in section (B)(1). Again, this transition can happen rapidly because so much work has already been done – the State has been comparing preliminary drafts to its standards for months in order to be able to act quickly when final standards are released.



Through this process, Delaware will build upon its comprehensive standards prioritization effort<sup>11</sup>, implemented with the assistance of Learning Focused Solutions (a third party vendor described in (B)(1)). With Learning Focused Solutions, the State has ranked its standards according to relevance, grouped similar and overlapping standards to create streamlined grade-level expectations (GLEs), and recommended curricular units aligning with standards. A preliminary review of the new common core standards has demonstrated that Delaware's existing standards are closely aligned with the common core standards. When the new standards are released, the State's standards prioritization team will review the new standards for approval and adoption, and will begin replacing the current Delaware standards with the new common core standards. From February 2010-June 2010, the DDOE will identify and retain the most critical standards in its portfolio, replace low-priority standards, and align overlapping standards with the new, common set.

From July 2010-August 2010, the State will develop classroom-relevant professional development to prepare teachers and administrators to use the new standards and GLEs. By working with an experienced vendor with knowledge of Delaware's system, this rapid timeline is achievable. Delaware has ongoing relationships with vendors who are both familiar with Delaware's system of standards and with standards-based professional development. In August 2010, the State will provide teachers with 1.5 to four days of training in the new standards,<sup>12</sup> depending on grade level and subject area.

*Assessments:* In December 2009, the State signed a contract with an assessments vendor to develop DCAS (described in section (B)(2)), a set of statewide formative and summative assessments that will align with the common core standards. The vendor will make the DCAS tests for English language arts, mathematics, social studies and science available by August 2010, and the test will launch in the 2010-11 school year. DCAS will be piloted during the spring semester of the 2009-10 school year.

During the development of DCAS, the State will host a DCAS standard-setting event involving K-12 educators, higher education content experts and assessment experts to ensure that DCAS performance level cut scores represent college- and career-ready status for Delaware high

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<sup>11</sup> Details, meeting schedules, and participants in Appendix (B)(1)-2

<sup>12</sup> See budget for details and financial implications of the statewide Standards training.

schools. Once the development of DCAS is complete, the State will submit its revised State Accountability Workbook for USDOE peer review and approval.

In August 2010, the DCAS vendor will provide initial training for teachers and administrators on the new assessment. The State will augment this training with a manual and webinars to ensure that all teachers understand the importance of formative and benchmark assessments in improving instruction.

Finally, in June 2010, the State will compete, as part of a consortium of states, for federal common assessments grants.

*P-20 alignment:* To align high school graduation with college entry requirements, the DDOE has revamped high school graduation requirements to align with the entrance exams of the State's two public universities.<sup>13</sup> In addition, within the K-12 system, the State uses its system of grade level expectations to translate content standards into specific grade level milestones that connect from year to year. Together these efforts ensure that, by high school graduation, students can seamlessly reach the content mastery necessary for success in college.

***Phase II – Implementation of new standards and DCAS in schools (September 2010-June 2011)***

Starting with the 2010-11 school year, the State expects all schools to begin the transition to new curricula based on the new common core standards, and to use the full suite of DCAS formative and summative assessments for ELA, mathematics, science, and social studies in grades 3-8, and the majority of end-of-course exams in these subjects in grades 9-12 (with the remainder to be released in the 2011-12 school year.) In addition, schools should use the rich array of data available through DCAS to support data-driven instruction and to build a college- and career-oriented culture among teachers and students. This work will be complemented by the presence of data coaches, who will inspect current practices, suggest new practices, and ensure that data are used appropriately and effectively.

*Implementing new curricula:* Beginning in September 2010, teachers will work together in professional learning communities to develop new instructional units and collaborate on changes to their instructional approaches required by the new standards. The new standards and

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<sup>13</sup> See section (P)(5) for more details

any developed instructional units will be posted on the DDOE website<sup>14</sup>, so that all teachers will have an opportunity to reference relevant material throughout the year.

In addition, the State, in collaboration with LEAs, will begin two curriculum-development initiatives in September of 2010.

The first curriculum-development initiative will focus on creating new units aligned with the new standards. Using a process that has previously produced low-cost, high-quality instructional units in Delaware, the State will run a competitive, peer-reviewed process to solicit exemplary instructional units. Teachers whose entries are selected by peers to be included in the State recommended curriculum will receive financial rewards. This approach will create a collection of effective instructional units that are both appropriate and cost-effective to Delaware classrooms and teaching styles.<sup>15</sup>

The second curriculum development initiative, which will be funded primarily by LEAs, will be the development of new STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) courses and instructional units, in collaboration with MIT, the University of Delaware, and other institutions. To manage this effort, Governor Markell has created a STEM coordinating council. Beginning in the 2010-11 school year, the council will formalize the State's network of collaborations with Dupont, University of Delaware, MIT, local nonprofits, and others to assist teachers in integrating STEM content across grades and courses, promote effective, relevant instruction, and offer applied learning opportunities for students. The council will review and promote the most effective and most rigorous STEM programs, providing a flexible and up-to-date array of high-quality STEM programs for LEAs to consider.

By the end of 2010-11, the State will begin communicating the details of the new curricular changes to the State's teacher-preparation institutions.<sup>16</sup>

*Implementing DCAS:* All relevant classrooms will be required to use the formative and summative assessment available through DCAS, beginning in September 2010. To help teachers and administrators take advantage of the rich data provided by these assessments, the State will provide embedded professional development on using multi-point student performance data to

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<sup>14</sup> The current standards and Delaware recommended curricula are posted here:  
<http://www.doe.k12.de.us/infosuites/staff/ci/default.shtml>. The new standards will occupy the same place and format.

<sup>15</sup> See appendix (B)(2)-1 for details on the Model Unit Gallery Peer Review Process

<sup>16</sup> See Great Teachers and Leaders section for more strategies to "raise the bar" in teacher prep programs

revise or differentiate instruction. This professional development will be delivered by data coaches, who will work in schools for a period of at least two years (see section (C)(3)). The work of the data coaches will be supplemented by a 2-hour centralized assessment training, a helpline, a webinar, and online manual.<sup>17</sup>

*Improving college- and career readiness:* The State will promote a college- and career-oriented culture in two ways. First, it will implement several college-readiness initiatives in participating LEAs. Second, it will require participating LEAs (and provide support) to expand opportunities for rigorous advanced coursework, particularly in STEM subjects, and to support high-need or low-achieving students in pursuing this coursework (including targeting them for enrollment and supporting them after enrollment).

- *College-readiness:* In the 2010-11 school year, the State will mandate and fund the SAT for all 11<sup>th</sup> graders as a common test of college readiness, and will encourage the PSAT for all 9<sup>th</sup> graders. Also in 2010-11 school year, the State will implement a college-preparedness curriculum for all middle school students to ensure that they have the mindset and preparation at the beginning of high school to pursue college.<sup>18</sup> This program will inform students on what they need do in high school (e.g., which courses to choose) to become college-ready. Students from groups that are underrepresented at the college level will be offered additional course work in the second year of middle school. The State will fund six AP summer institutes in science and mathematics (hosted on college campuses in-state) to train teachers to teach AP courses. This will increase the availability and quality of STEM courses for all students, and provide increased opportunities for students to earn college credit.
- *Advanced coursework:* As part of their local reform plans, participating LEAs will be required to implement rigorous advanced coursework and support high-need or low-achieving students in pursuing this coursework. The STEM coordinating council will support these efforts by helping LEAs develop strategies to prepare more students to take advantage of rigorous coursework in STEM, and to support students from under-represented groups (including female students) in pursuing advanced study in STEM. In

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<sup>17</sup> See Budget for details and financial implications on the introduction to using formative assessment data trainings.

<sup>18</sup> The State is currently exploring the Springboard program from the College Board, but will undergo a full review of available vendors

addition, through the council and in collaboration with Dupont, MIT and other institutions of higher education, LEAs will introduce STEM and technology-integrated learning opportunities to promote college- and career-ready proficiencies.

LEAs will encourage underrepresented, high-need, and low-achieving students to increase college-attendance, college-readiness, and STEM engagement by targeting these students for enrollment in advanced coursework (e.g. Advanced Placement courses), supporting them in such coursework (e.g., with tutoring), and providing focused counseling on college-readiness. For example, students identified through the PSAT may receive special counseling, tutoring, and support to pursue advanced coursework.

### ***Phase III – Reinforcing a college- and career- oriented culture (July 2011 and ongoing)***

Delaware will focus on reinforcing a college- and career- oriented culture in its schools. Building upon the earlier phases of the plan, schools (aided by data coaches) will be expected to monitor, refine, and continuously improve instruction to help students meet high standards. In addition, the State will ensure that DCAS stands as a true measure of these high standards. To this end, the DDOE will use performance trends from 2010-12 to review and adjust DCAS standard levels. The DDOE will also use assessment data to evaluate the effectiveness of curricular units, and, during 2013-14, will develop new curricular units in response to perceived weaknesses in the Delaware Recommended Curriculum. By 2015, Delaware’s vendor contract will expire, and Delaware will transition to the common multi-state assessment.

These activities will build upon the extensive work that the State has already done to reinforce a college- and career-oriented culture, for example:

- *Ensuring students are on-track for college or careers while in middle school or high school.* The State’s Student Success Plans<sup>19</sup>, a part of the Reaching Higher for Success Initiative<sup>20</sup> helps students develop personalized goals and pathways to graduate college-

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<sup>19</sup> Through this program, each student will meet with a teacher, mentor or advisor to set a path and logical steps for academic achievement based on their aspirations and career goals. The plan is developed in eighth grade, so that all incoming freshman will have five-year Student Success Plans in place when they enter high school. All public middle and high schools will have access to an online resource, called Career Cruising, to help students explore their career and college options. It will be linked to their school curriculum, Delaware labor market information, and other information specific to Delaware and the region. This program was piloted in six schools during the 2006-07 school year, and was implemented in eighth and ninth grades statewide in 2007-08.

<sup>20</sup> See P5 for more information on this initiative

and career- ready. The State’s recently purchased Early Warning system measures students’ credits, course distributions, and grades on at least an annualized basis to ensure that each student is on track to graduate. When students miss intermediate goals, parents and teachers are notified so that they can develop an appropriate response.

- *Easing the transition to college.* The State’s graduation requirements are aligned with the entrance requirements for in-state public colleges and universities. The State also provides a scholarship to pay the first year of tuition at an in-state associate’s program for any student with at least a 2.5 GPA. The result has been a 15% increase in enrollment in these programs since 2006.
- *Easing the transition to careers.* The State has technical and vocational districts in all three counties, with graduation requirements that match national certification programs (e.g. industry-based certification). Delaware also offers Jobs for Delaware’s Graduates based on the national program Jobs for America’s Graduates, to provide job and career training and experience to the State’s high-need students.<sup>21</sup>

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

Transitioning to common, internationally benchmarked standards and high-quality assessments requires a coordinated approach between the State and LEAs. The State’s new computer-adaptive assessment system, college-readiness assessments, and consortia will be managed by the State’s DCAS Adaptive Assessment Administrator. The State’s efforts will be lead by the DDOE’s Curriculum and Instructional Support team, which will manage the rollout and implementation of the State’s initiatives. The Curriculum and Instructional Support team will also coordinate the efforts of the STEM coordinating council, external vendors, NGOs, and institutes of higher education involved in this work. In addition, the team will aggregate best practices and oversee accountability. LEAs will be responsible for local development and implementation of new curricula, for providing advanced coursework, and for targeting and supporting high-needs students to participate in that advanced coursework. In addition, LEAs will be responsible for creating the comprehensive and aligned approach to education necessary for college and career success.

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<sup>21</sup> See (P)(5) for more information on these initiatives to create alignment around career and college readiness

## **Conclusion**

By quickly implementing rigorous new standards and modern, high quality assessments, Delaware will promote a college- and career- ready culture in its schools. By the 2011-12 school year, Delaware will have these standards and assessments in place, and will be poised to promote data-driven instruction across all schools. Lessons learned will be shared with other states to aid in their respective transitions.

## Summary: Activities, Timelines, Responsible Parties

Activities	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Responsible parties
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State joins national common core consortium</li> </ul>			September 2009-April 2010							Curriculum group and secretary of education
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State prioritizes current standards to maximize impact and prepare for transition</li> </ul>		September 2008-April 2010								Curriculum group in collaboration with LFS and participating teachers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State adopts new standards, and integrates for final set</li> </ul>			May-July 2010							Curriculum group
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State prepares training for all teachers affected by new standards and prioritization</li> </ul>			July-August 2010							Curriculum group with assistance from consultants
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State trains 7000 teachers affected by new standards</li> </ul>		August 2010 ▲								Curriculum group, consultants, and LEA leadership
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teachers begin instruction based on new standards</li> </ul>			September 2010 ongoing							Teachers in all LEAs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Curriculum refinement based on new standards</li> </ul>			January-May 2011							Organized by Curriculum group with participating teachers

Activities	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Responsible parties
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Secure vendor to develop DCAS assessment system</li> </ul>		December 2009 ▲							DDOE assessments director
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop new assessment aligned with standards</li> </ul>		January-August 2010							Outside vendor
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop end-of-course exams in auxiliary subjects</li> </ul>		September 2010-May 2011							Outside vendor
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Join assessment consortium and compete for June 2010 grant</li> </ul>		January-June 2010							Department of Education
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement DCAS including interim and summative assessments</li> </ul>		September 2010 ongoing							LEAs and teachers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Administer PSAT for all ninth graders and SAT for all 11th graders</li> </ul>		September 2010 ongoing							LEAs and teachers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Training on the use of data in the new assessments, and using professional learning communities</li> </ul>		August 2010 ▲							Curriculum group in collaboration with LFS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide embedded supports for students from under-represented groups in college</li> </ul>			September 2011 ongoing						LEAs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Springboard for all middle school students</li> </ul>			September 2010 ongoing						LEAs in collaboration with outside group
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Form STEM coordinating council</li> </ul>		January 2010 ▲							DDOE with institutes of higher education, businesses, and nonprofits
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Transition to common assessments</li> </ul>						September 2015 ▲			DDOE assessments director



## Performance Metrics

Performance measures	Actual data: baseline		
	(current school year or most recent)	End of SY 2010-11	End of SY 2011-12
Teachers trained on new standards	0	7,000 (100%)	—
Curriculum refined and new instructional units created	0	50%	100%
Courses taught using new assessment system	0	80%	100%
Students receiving PSAT and SAT	~70%	100%	—
Teachers trained on new assessments	0	100%	—

## Summary: Benefits and requirements for all LEAs and Participating LEAs as described in the MOU

For all LEAs/charters, the State will...	For participating LEAs/charters, the State will...	Participating LEAs/charters will...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Review and adopt CCSSO standards</b> by August 2010, as appropriate, and align grade-level expectations to guide curriculum</li> <li>▪ <b>Implement DCAS</b>, a state computer-adaptive assessment system, by the 2010-2011 school year, with up to three formative assessments and a summative assessment per year:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Grades 3-8: Annual summative reading and mathematics exams; Two years of summative exams each for science and social studies<sup>1</sup></li> <li>— High school: End-of-course assessments in ELA, mathematics, science and social studies<sup>1</sup></li> <li>— Grades 2-10: Benchmark growth assessments in reading, mathematics, and, optionally, science<sup>1</sup></li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ <b>Implement a statewide assessment of college-readiness</b> using a nationally-available college-entry exam (e.g., SAT)</li> <li>▪ <b>Provide intensive professional development</b> during the transition to new standards</li> <li>▪ <b>Spearhead a multi-state item bank collaborative (IBC)</b> that can serve as the foundation for shared assessments</li> <li>▪ <b>Transition from DCAS to shared multi-state assessment</b> when available (expected in 2015) and as appropriate</li> <li>▪ <b>Identify and support promising opportunities to engage parents and communities</b> in supporting the academic success of students</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ No additional activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Participate in review</b> of new standards and preparation of grade-level expectations (All LEAs/charters)*</li> <li>▪ <b>Ensure curriculum aligns</b> with standards, is implemented with fidelity, is having expected impact on student achievement, and is modified if ineffective (All LEAs/charters)*</li> <li>▪ <b>Ensure teachers and leaders participate</b> in State's standards-related professional development (All LEAs/charters)*</li> <li>▪ <b>Ensure all students participate</b> in statewide formative and summative assessments and assessments of college readiness (All LEAs/charters)*</li> <li>▪ <b>Build a culture of college- and career- readiness</b> in schools by removing obstacles to, and actively supporting, student engagement and achievement, by               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Providing rigorous advanced coursework (e.g., AP courses, STEM courses that incorporate project-, inquiry-, or design-based contextual learning opportunities, flexible grouping)</li> <li>— Targeting high-need or low-achieving students for enrollment in advanced coursework</li> <li>— Proactively supporting these students in advanced coursework (e.g., AP Summer Institute, extended learning time)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

**(C) Data Systems to Support Instruction (47 total points)**

***State Reform Conditions Criteria***

**(C)(1) Fully implementing a statewide longitudinal data system (24 points – 2 points per America COMPETES element)**

*The extent to which the State has a statewide longitudinal data system that includes all of the America COMPETES Act elements (as defined in this notice).*

*In the text box below, the State shall describe which elements of the America COMPETES Act (as defined in this notice) are currently included in its statewide longitudinal data system.*

**Evidence:**

*Documentation for each of the America COMPETES Act elements (as defined in this notice) that is included in the State's statewide longitudinal data system.*

*Recommended maximum response length: Two pages*

## **(C)(1) Overview**

Delaware is nationally recognized for having one of the country's most sophisticated and robust longitudinal data systems. Today, this system makes it possible for the State to know how every LEA, every school, every teacher, and every student is performing. With Race to the Top support, Delaware can accelerate and fortify plans to use data to support all aspects of performance improvement. This section includes a discussion of Delaware's state-of-the-art data system ((C)(1)), as well as its plans to ensure that the data is used to inform decision-making and instruction, so as to improve student performance ((C)(2) and (C)(3)).

Delaware is one of the few states whose system includes each of the 12 elements of the America COMPETES Act, as well as all 10 "Essential Elements" defined by the Data Quality Campaign. The Delaware Department of Education (DDOE) maintains education reporting for all public schools, and is unique in its ability to coordinate multiple statewide data systems. As a result, the DDOE can easily link student, teacher, school, and LEA data. An overview of these systems is provided below, followed by a description of how the data system meets the America COMPETES Act requirements, and other aspects of the data system's distinctiveness.

### **Delaware's Primary Statewide Education Data Systems:**

***Delaware Student Information System (DELSIS):*** This system gives each student a unique identifier, which follows a student through his or her K-12 career, keeping track of all of the public schools the student has attended in Delaware. DELSIS has provided a unique student ID since 1983 and longitudinal data on students since 1994. DELSIS allows the DDOE to consolidate and link student information from inter- and intra-agency data systems. (This data is also linked with data on students' prekindergarten and postsecondary education at state-sponsored programs and in-state colleges and universities).

***Statewide Pupil Accounting System (eSchoolPLUS):*** This pupil accounting system, hosted by DDOE, receives data inputs from schools and LEAs, and populates a statewide consolidation database called eSchoolMaster. eSchoolMaster contains near real-time data on every public school student in Delaware, providing information such as student attendance, discipline, courses, grades, test scores, college readiness (SAT and ACT scores), and demographics. Furthermore, eSchoolPLUS allows individual student data to be linked to teacher data, based on course assignments and rosters (i.e. students are assigned to courses, and those courses are linked to individual teachers).

***Delaware Educator Data System (DEEDS):*** DEEDS is the statewide educator data system, which has unique identification numbers for teachers and administrators and maintains data on certification, preparation, the colleges teachers and administrators attended, and the specific programs in which they participated (if they went to a Delaware college or university). DEEDS also provides information on individual teachers’ planned and completed professional development.

***Integrated Student Update System (ISDU):*** This system runs quality-control checks on all data nightly. Any data found to be inaccurate, contradictory, or otherwise unsatisfactory is bounced back to LEAs for clean-up.

The following table provides a brief summary of these systems:

**Delaware Data Systems**

<b>System</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
Delaware Student Information System (DELSIS)	Provides students with unique student IDs and enables the tracking of all students
Pupil Accounting System (eSchoolPLUS)	Maintains student information, such as attendance, achievement, and demographics (which individual schools and districts input); enables the linking of teachers with student data
Delaware Educator Data System (DEEDS)	Maintains information on teacher and administrator certification, with unique IDs for teachers and administrators
Integrated Student Update System (ISDU)	Conducts real-time quality control on data updates

**Evidence for (C)(1): Documentation for each of the America COMPETES Act elements that is included in Delaware’s statewide longitudinal data system**

***ACA I:*** Delaware began tracking all students with a unique statewide student identifier in 1983, and does not permit a student to be individually identified by system users except as allowed by Federal and Delaware law. An early tracking system using unique student identifiers evolved into the Delaware Student Information System (DELSIS), with its present web-based interface. DELSIS is DDOE’s master database for tracking statewide student enrollment in the public school system. DELSIS interacts with the eSchoolPlus Pupil Accounting system used by all of the State’s school LEAs.

**ACA 2:** The DELSIS data integrates eSchoolPLUS data, to provide student-level enrollment history, demographic characteristics, program participation information and subgroup data (such as LEP, Special Education, Title I), School Choice and designations for classes taught by highly qualified teachers. DELSIS serves as the master data source for DDOE's statistical reporting on the characteristics and enrollment trends of Delaware's public schools, and aggregated datasets from DELSIS are available to the public on DDOE's Data Warehouse Public Reporting (DWPR) web site.

**ACA 3:** DELSIS can be relied upon, therefore, to report on a student's enrollment throughout his or her career, including the points at which the student exits, transfers in, transfers out, drops out, or completes P-12 education. DDOE then matches P-12 data with data from in- and out-of-State higher education data systems, to provide comprehensive student-level information for P-16 programs.

**ACA 4:** Specifically, DDOE communicates with all in-State higher education data systems and receives their student records, which are matched back to DELSIS at a rate of 99% accuracy. This accuracy will increase as a result of MOUs currently being finalized, which represent a formal and ongoing commitment on the part of higher education institutions to share their data with the DDOE. Five out of six higher education institutions have committed to signing the MOUs to date, with the sixth expected to sign in the next few months. The MOU will define how all data will be shared, safeguarded and governed. Delaware also has a statewide contract with the National Student Clearinghouse that provides the ability to use their Student Tracker data system to track enrollment activity in both in- and out-of-state postsecondary institutions. Aggregated summaries of postsecondary enrollment activity are available on the Data Warehouse Public Reporting web site.

**ACA 5:** Since 1999 the Integrated Student Data Updating (ISDU) system has served as DELSIS' audit system for assessing data quality, validity, and reliability, by conducting real-time auditing. ISDU returns erroneous data to its original point of entry (schools and LEAs) if the data appears to be inconsistent or requires further cleaning. The eSchoolPLUS data entry and reporting system used by the LEAs also has an audit feature, and informs DDOE of changes by users. Furthermore, DDOE holds regular Pupil Accounting Coordinators meetings to inform and train LEA data providers on reporting data in specialized areas, such as testing, special education, and LEP.

**ACA 6:** Delaware’s LDS maintains yearly test records of individual students from the Delaware Student Testing Program (DSTP), as well as measures for No Child Left Behind (NCLB). The DSTP repository has facilitated longitudinal reporting on student testing since 1998, and the DSTP Data Mart in the DDOE K-12 Instructional Data Warehouse stores the data elements needed for state and federal reporting requirements on student achievement. Delaware is transitioning to the Delaware Comprehensive Assessment System (DCAS) in 2009-10, which will provide a new statewide formative and summative online testing system, which will also collect individual students’ test scores (see section (B)(2) for more information).

**ACA 7:** Information on students not tested, by grade and subject is collected at the school-level via ESchoolPlus. This information includes, but is not limited to, data on attendance, discipline, and grades.

**ACA 8:** ESchoolPLUS is the mechanism that gives Delaware the ability to match students with their teachers, by linking the students’ course-level information with the individual teachers who teach those courses (and their employee identification numbers). Course scheduling and teacher assignments are made by LEAs utilizing eSchoolPLUS, which updates DELSIS in the K-12 Instructional Data Warehouse nightly. Teacher certification components, including each teacher’s postsecondary preparation program in Delaware are tracked in the Delaware Educator Data System (DEEDS) using unique identification numbers. Together, these systems allow the linking of extensive student and teacher data.

**ACA 9:** ESchoolPLUS also maintains student-level transcript information for all students, as well as information on courses completed and grades earned. ESchoolPLUS produces non-verified PDF versions of student transcripts. A new Student Record and Transcript Data Exchange Sub-system (planned as part of the LDS grant, described in section (C)(2)) will facilitate on-demand transcript usage, transcript transport, and reporting of select student transcript data elements.

**ACA 10:** DDOE collects SAT, IB, ACT, PSAT, and AP data for all Delaware public school students throughout the school year. The DDOE stores this data in its K-12 Instructional Data Warehouse.

**ACA 11:** Delaware’s P-20 Council commissioned development of the “P-20 Data Cube,” in order to better understand factors that impact student success in college. The P-20 Data Cube provides information regarding the extent to which students transition successfully from

secondary school to postsecondary education, by linking students' course- and test-taking histories in high school with their enrollment, course registrations, and matriculation histories at Delaware's public and private colleges. This includes information on whether students enroll in remedial coursework and indicators of Federal Pell Grant eligibility, all linked to students' enrollment and demographic records in DELSIS. Data for three cohorts of Delaware public school graduates has been collected and stored in the P-20 Data Cube, including the high school classes of 2006-07, 2007-08, and 2008-09.

**ACA 12:** The DDOE provides other information necessary to address alignment and adequate preparation for success in postsecondary education, through data-sharing with Delaware's higher education institutions and relevant agencies. The DDOE already shares data with the Delaware Division of Health and Social Services (DHSS) the Delaware Department of Services for Children, Youth and Families (DSCYF), and higher education institutions, and is working to develop MOUs for data-sharing with the Department of Labor, and increased data-sharing with higher education institutions.

#### **Other points of distinctiveness for the State data system**

Beyond meeting each of the America COMPETES elements, Delaware's data system is distinctive in its accessibility and usability.

**Accessibility:** The LDS is designed to be accessible by all stakeholders. Via the Home Access Module, parents have access to select ESchoolPLUS data, including reports on their children's discipline, attendance, transcripts, and test scores. Teachers have access to their students' information through the Teacher Access Center module, and administrators use the eSchoolPLUS Dashboard, which highlights attendance and discipline issues. All of these stakeholders also have easy access to student test scores through a system called Delaware Student Testing Program (DSTP) online, which will be replaced by the new formative and summative assessment reporting provided by the pending Delaware Comprehensive Assessment System (DCAS). DSTP online reports are available to individual students, to those students' teachers and principals, and in aggregate to the public. Parents receive individual reports of the child's performance. In addition to eSchoolPLUS and DSTP online, the DDOE Data Warehouse Public Reports make data further accessible to LEA and school personnel. These reports include P-20 reporting (for cohorts of students' K-12 and post-secondary academic activities and performance), as well as reports on enrollment, demographics, graduation rates, and drop-out

rates, among other things. For a screen shot of the reports available through the DDOE Data Warehouse, please see appendix (C)(1)-1. Finally, the DDOE website provides public access to in-depth school profiles, including data on assessments, demographics, and graduation rates for individual schools and for the State.

***Usability:*** The statewide LDS is also sophisticated for its ability to support new data collection requirements, reflect real-time data, and respond to data requests from researchers and stakeholders, all while ensuring compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). This is because all data systems and staff are maintained centrally at DDOE, allowing for rapid response to new requests for data collection, reporting, and analysis, and providing oversight that all data storage and use complies with FERPA. In addition to the general accessibility described above, the DDOE provides extensive data to researchers and other stakeholders through the production of specialized data reports. These reports are used to inform decision-making or further research, and are described in greater depth in section (C)(3)(iii). Lastly, the Statewide Pupil Accounting System features nightly updating, allowing for real-time data collection and reporting.

## **Conclusion**

Delaware's development of its sophisticated data system is one of the State's major education accomplishments. The proposed reforms will build on this strength in two main ways: 1) by improving stakeholder access to and use of data to improve instruction, as described in the rest of this section, and 2) by utilizing the rapid collection of extensive data to identify, and replicate, all of the reform activities that prove to be effective. The following sections will describe how Delaware will accomplish the former, by developing a centralized information portal with differentiated dashboards, ensuring implementation of instructional improvement systems, and providing full-time data coaches. The State LDS will ultimately be the key for monitoring the implementation and success of all state education programs, so that DDOE may consistently identify the most successful practices, share those successes among LEAs and other states, and drive towards continuous improvement.



## **Evidence**

### **Evidence for (C)(1)**

- *Documentation for each of the America COMPETES Act elements (as defined in this notice) that is included in the State's statewide longitudinal data system. **See narrative for (C)(1)***

## **Reform Plan Criteria**

### **(C)(2) Accessing and using State data (5 points)**

*The extent to which the State has a high-quality plan to ensure that data from the State's statewide longitudinal data system are accessible to, and used to inform and engage, as appropriate, key stakeholders (e.g., parents, students, teachers, principals, LEA leaders, community members, unions, researchers, and policymakers); and that the data support decision-makers in the continuous improvement of efforts in such areas as policy, instruction, operations, management, resource allocation, and overall effectiveness.*

*The State shall provide its detailed plan for this criterion in the text box below. The plan should include, at a minimum, the goals, activities, timelines, and responsible parties (see Application Instructions or Section XII, Application Requirements (e), for further detail). Any supporting evidence the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers must be described and, where relevant, included in the Appendix. For attachments included in the Appendix, note in the narrative the location where the attachments can be found.*

*Recommended maximum response length: Two pages*

## Overview – Accessing and using State data

### Accessing and using State data

#### Vision

Improve access to, and use of, the State's robust longitudinal data system by creating a data portal with dashboards targeted to different stakeholder groups

#### Strategies

1. Build an Educational Dashboard Portal with differentiated "dashboards" based on stakeholder role
2. Create a governance council to oversee the portal
3. Publicize and provide training in using the portal; solicit feedback and refine accordingly
4. Increase P-20 coordination with MOUs enabling data sharing across relevant agencies and institutions

#### Goals

- 20,000 annual users of the Educational Dashboard Portal by the 2013-2014 school year
- 100,000 annual visits to the Portal by the 2013-2014 school year
- 500 stakeholders providing feedback annually as to how Delaware's education data can be maximally effective
- 90% of Portal users surveyed reporting that the data was used to inform their decision-making
- MOUs for increased data-sharing signed by six out of six in-State higher education institutions by the 2010-2011 school year

Delaware will continue its leadership in educational data by further enhancing the State longitudinal data system and improving the extent to which data is accessible to stakeholders for decision-making. Delaware already makes extensive student, school, LEA, and state data available to a range of stakeholders and researchers through the data systems and reports described in section (C)(1). These reports include, but are not limited to, school profiles, longitudinal student data reports, and reports on individual and class-wide student achievement (for parents and teachers, respectively). Delaware's aspiration is to move from an environment in which general data reports and analyses are available, to one in which different stakeholders can easily access and customize the specific reports and analyses that are most relevant to their decision-making - - from educators, students, and parents, to policymakers and community members.

Delaware's data reform plan will build on the strength of its existing data system, to make data even more accessible and usable to stakeholders through the development of a centralized information portal, with research-based, differentiated dashboards providing correlations and trend analysis. This will be accomplished through the Delaware Automated System for Education Reporting (DASER), a comprehensive data model that, among other things, fosters

one-stop, user-friendly access to past and present data through an Educational Dashboard Portal.<sup>1</sup>

The portal will connect members of various stakeholder groups to customized dashboards, through which to view and use data, and will also generate regular reports targeted to a range of stakeholders. The development of DASER will significantly enhance the DDOE's ability to analyze student-level data from pre-kindergarten through high school, postsecondary education, and the workforce, and will substantially increase the accessibility of data to stakeholders and researchers. These changes will support and drive stakeholders' use of data to inform decision-making, by providing easily accessible, targeted reports and analysis to support policy-making, operations and management, resource allocation, and instruction, among other things. The reform plan will also improve the already extensive use of Delaware's data for research purposes, as described in greater depth in section (C)(3).

## **Goals**

The goal of this plan is to significantly increase the number of stakeholders accessing and using Delaware's education data, and providing feedback as to how the State can further improve data access to drive decision-making. Specifically, Delaware hopes to reach 20,000 annual users and 100,000 visits of the Educational Dashboard Portal by the 2013-14 school year, with 500 stakeholders providing feedback through focus groups, surveys, and an online web tool. For a full list of performance metrics, please see the table at the end of this section.

## **Activities**

In order to fulfill the goals of DASER, the DDOE must develop several new subsystems and processes.<sup>2</sup> First, the State will develop a user identity management system to provide customized user access to the Educational Dashboard Portal. This will give different stakeholders unique user IDs for login, which will indicate their stakeholder roles (e.g. parent,

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<sup>1</sup> While DASER will improve stakeholders' access to and use of data, as described below, it will also significantly increase P-20 coordination, horizontal and vertical alignment, and allow for the overall upgrade of Delaware's LDS. The State hopes to have DASER funded in full by the federal Longitudinal Data System grant, and the overview of the grant application (describing the specific design and capabilities of DASER) is provided in appendix (C)(2)-1.

<sup>2</sup> For a full list of these subsystems and processes that will comprise DASER, (particularly those less-related to this criteria, and more focused on P-20 coordination), please see appendix (C)(2)-1

teacher, principal, superintendent, researcher, policymaker). The system will authenticate logins, and present the appropriate user dashboard.

The dashboards will be built concurrently as part of the Educational Dashboard Portal development. Each will be customized to meet stakeholder needs and interests, and will be designed to provide the necessary data and context to inform common decisions made by each stakeholder group. To this end, all dashboards will feature full longitudinal and trend information, correlations between key statistics, and a range of customization options. Dashboard requirements will be developed based on research into the needs of different stakeholders and the results of focus groups, and all dashboards will comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

The Educational Dashboard Portal will also feature an easy-to-use, customizable reporting tool, which will enable users to select, compare, and filter statistics/indicators for each school or LEA (with privacy protections in compliance with FERPA). DDOE will further use the reporting system to generate and publish regular reports on topics of interest to multiple stakeholder groups, such as a Dropout Early Warning report, which will use known indicators (e.g., attendance and achievement) as well as trend data to identify potential dropouts and alert stakeholders to take pre-emptive action. (A more detailed description of the Dropout Early Warning reporting tool may be found in Appendix (C)(2)-2).

Once the ID system and portal have been developed, the DDOE will publicize the new features and offer training sessions to all LEAs. The DDOE will draft a press release and develop publicity materials, and provide materials to superintendents and principals, who will distribute them to teachers, students and parents. Training for all stakeholders will be offered both online and in select “live” locations. For teachers and leaders in participating LEAs, this effort will be complemented by the work of in-school data coaches, who will analyze data with educators to help them identify opportunities to improve instruction (as described in section (C)(3)).

The DDOE will solicit feedback (through an online feedback tool and surveys) and refine the dashboards and portal accordingly. If granted funding (through the Federal LDS Grant or Race to the Top), the ID system and portal will be developed during the 2010-211 school year and piloted in Fall of 2011, at which point publicity and refinement efforts will begin. (See the end of this section for a detailed list of activities, timing, and responsible parties).

Other DASER activities (described more fully in the LDS grant application summary in appendix (C)(2)-2) include increasing P-20 coordination, by building a “Client ID system” to match student information between agencies; making DASER interoperable with other agencies, states, and systems; and introducing an electronic transcript exchange system that will communicate with in-state and out-of-state colleges and workforce organizations. The State has already established data-sharing agreements with multiple state agencies and higher education institutions. The State is finalizing an MOU with all institutes of higher education, and have all but one institute of higher education included at this time.

### **Responsible parties**

The Technology Management and Design Work Group at DDOE will have primary responsibility for executing the activities described above. The group is staffed with experts in database management, programming, project management, reporting, and other areas that serve to furnish DDOE with a full range IT services. For select biographies from this group, please see appendix section (C)(2)-3.

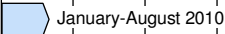
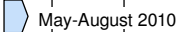
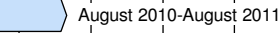

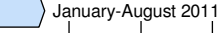
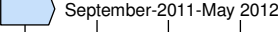

While the Technology Management and Design Work Group will carry out the above activities, the DDOE will further oversee these activities by establishing intra- and inter-agency data governance councils. DDOE intends to recommend implementation of the Enterprise Data Warehouse Governance Council, for inter-agency data, and will establish the K-12 Instructional Data Warehouse Governance Council for intra-agency data. These governance councils will have a number of responsibilities, including, but not limited to, monitoring progress on DASER and the Educational Dashboard Portal, guiding their development, and ensuring that the most relevant information is made available to stakeholders and researchers.

### **Conclusion**

DDOE recognizes that providing data through a central portal and differentiated dashboards is only the first step in increasing the use of data to support continuous improvement in Delaware’s education system. In addition to improving the quality and content of data reporting through DASER, specific training will be necessary to inform educators on how to use data to improve classroom outcomes. Training educators who have not been “data consumers” is a crucial step as the State prepares to introduce the new Delaware Comprehensive Assessment System (DCAS), with its many formative and summative assessments. This training will be guaranteed by the statewide deployment of data coaches, described in depth in the following

section. With the DASER capabilities, access via the Educational Dashboard Portal, and the improved use of data for instructional purposes, teachers will be able to make data-driven decisions about what needs to happen in their classrooms, and all stakeholders will be better able to use data to drive continuous improvement.

**Summary: Activities, Timeline, Responsible Parties**

Activities	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Responsible parties
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sign MOUs for data sharing with higher education and other agencies</li> </ul>								DDOE Technology Management and Design Work Group, representatives from higher ed and workforce agencies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create K-12 Governance Council and Health, Education and Labor Council</li> </ul>								DDOE Director of Technology Management & Design, K-12 Data Governance Coordinator, Enterprise Data Governance Coordinator
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a user identity Management system with "tiered-levels of access" for different stakeholders (in compliance with FERPA)</li> </ul>								DDOE Technology Management and Design Work Group, with contracted programmer support, DDOE Information Security Officer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Build the Educational Dashboard Portal</li> </ul>								DDOE Technology Management and Design Work Group, with contracted programmer support, DDOE Information Security Officer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create different dashboards for stakeholder groups based on leading research of the most useful data</li> </ul>								TLEU Program Manager, with DDOE Director of Technology Management & Design
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Publicize and provide online training in the Portal, with different publicity and training for different stakeholder groups</li> </ul>								TLEU Program Manager to develop publicity and training materials; principals and superintendents responsible for information dissemination
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Solicit feedback through surveys and focus groups, and refine the Portal accordingly (annually in the summer)</li> </ul>								TLEU Program Manager to solicit feedback; DDOE Technology Management and Design Work Group to incorporate technical refinements

**Performance metrics**

Performance measures	Actual data: baseline				
	(current school year or most recent)	End of SY 2010-11	End of SY 2011-12	End of SY 2012-13	End of SY 2013-14
Number of unique Educational Dashboard Portal Users (1 or more login per year)	N/A	N/A	15,000	17,500	20,000
Number of Educational Dashboard Portal visits (per year)	N/A	N/A	50,000	75,000	100,000
No. of stakeholders providing feedback on the Educational Dashboard Portal	N/A	N/A	500	500	500
Number of MOUs signed with Delaware higher education institutions for enhanced data-sharing	5 of 6	6 of 6	—	—	—

## Summary: Benefits and requirements for all LEAs and Participating LEAs as described in the MOU

For all LEAs/charters, the State will...	For participating LEAs/charters, the State will...	Participating LEAs/charters will...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Develop a user identity management system</b> to provide customized user access based on role</li> <li>▪ <b>Build an Educational Dashboard Portal</b> that               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Makes State longitudinal data easily accessible to stakeholders</li> <li>– Provides differentiated “dashboards” based on stakeholder role, with data of interest to the stakeholder (as determined by research), full longitudinal and trend information, and correlations between key statistics</li> <li>– Allows for custom data reports with an easy-to-use, customizable reporting tool that enables users to select, compare, and filter statistics/indicators</li> <li>– Is consistent with FERPA</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ <b>Create a governance council</b> to oversee the portal</li> <li>▪ <b>Publicize and refine the portal</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Actively direct different stakeholders to the portal and solicit feedback for refinement</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ <b>Increase P-20 coordination</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Develop MOUs with early education and higher education institutions; develop Enterprise Data Management</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ <b>Increase inter-agency coordination</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Develop MOUs with other Delaware agencies (e.g., Department of Health and Social Services)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ No additional activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Continue to use the statewide data system</b> in schools (All LEAs/charters)*</li> <li>▪ <b>Provide real-time data</b> that meets quality standards (All LEAs/charters)*</li> <li>▪ <b>Provide input</b> into the development of dashboards (e.g., feedback on which indicators are most relevant to different stakeholders)</li> </ul>

\* All LEAs/charters will have to complete these activities, not just participating LEAs/charters



**(C)(3) Using data to improve instruction (18 points)**

*The extent to which the State, in collaboration with its participating LEAs (as defined in this notice), has a high-quality plan to—*

*(i) Increase the acquisition, adoption, and use of local instructional improvement systems (as defined in this notice) that provide teachers, principals, and administrators with the information and resources they need to inform and improve their instructional practices, decision-making, and overall effectiveness;*

*(ii) Support participating LEAs (as defined in this notice) and schools that are using instructional improvement systems (as defined in this notice) in providing effective professional development to teachers, principals and administrators on how to use these systems and the resulting data to support continuous instructional improvement; and*

*(iii) Make the data from instructional improvement systems (as defined in this notice), together with statewide longitudinal data system data, available and accessible to researchers so that they have detailed information with which to evaluate the effectiveness of instructional materials, strategies, and approaches for educating different types of students (e.g., students with disabilities, English language learners, students whose achievement is well below or above grade level).*

*The State shall provide its detailed plan for this criterion in the text box below. The plan should include, at a minimum, the goals, activities, timelines, and responsible parties (see Reform Plan Criteria elements in Application Instructions or Section XII, Application Requirements (e), for further detail). Any supporting evidence the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers must be described and, where relevant, included in the Appendix. For attachments included in the Appendix, note the location where the attachment can be found.*

*Recommended maximum response length: Five pages*

## (C)(3) Overview – Using data to improve instruction

### Using data to improve instruction

#### Vision

Build the in-school capacity to use data to inform instruction by ensuring implementation of instructional improvement systems and providing support with state data coaches

#### Strategies

1. Ensure implementation of instructional improvement systems meeting certain “best practice” criteria in all schools in participating LEAs
2. Provide designated “data coaches” to support instructional improvement systems and the transition to data-driven instruction
3. Make the data from instructional improvement systems and the statewide LDS accessible to researchers, to allow for the identification and replication of effective practices

#### Goals

- A state-certified instructional improvement system in every school in participating LEAs by January 2011
- 35 state-subsidized data coaches deployed to schools in participating LEAs by Fall of 2011
- Data from instructional improvement systems incorporated into the State LDS by summer of 2011

With its sophisticated, nationally renowned data system already in place, Delaware is ready to rapidly increase the statewide use of data to improve instruction. Delaware will take advantage of its existing longitudinal data system, education results reporting, and the soon-to-be-operational DCAS system (launching in Fall 2010), to move from a “data-rich” environment to a truly “data-driven” culture.

Delaware’s plan for using data to improve instruction is threefold. The State will (1) ensure implementation of instructional improvement systems (IIS)<sup>3</sup> meeting certain “best practice” criteria in all schools in participating LEAs ((C)(3)(i)); (2) provide designated “data coaches” to support instructional improvement systems and the transition to data-driven instruction ((C)(3)(ii)); and (3) make the data from instructional improvement systems and the statewide LDS accessible to researchers, to allow for the identification and replication of effective practices ((C)(3)(iii)). The new Teacher and Leader Effectiveness Unit, described in

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<sup>3</sup> Instructional improvement systems are defined as in the Race to the Top guidance: technology-based tools and other strategies that provide teachers, principals, and administrators with meaningful support and actionable data to systemically manage continuous instructional improvement, including such activities as: instructional planning; gathering information; analyzing information with the support of rapid-time reporting; using this information to inform decisions on appropriate next instructional steps; and evaluating the effectiveness of the actions taken.

section (A)(2), will oversee these activities and provide strategic support, in addition to working to identify and share successful practices within and outside of the State.

## **Goals**

If selected to receive Race to the Top funds, Delaware will have a certified instructional improvement system and designated data coach in every school in participating LEAs by the 2011-12 school year, with all data from instructional improvement systems captured and incorporated into the state longitudinal data system.

## **Activities**

### **(C)(3)(i) Ensure implementation of instructional improvement systems**

Delaware already has many examples of schools and LEAs that are implementing instructional improvement systems and moving towards greater use of data in instruction. For example, 25 schools have worked to develop instructional improvement systems with the support of Focus on Results (as part of the Vision Network, described in section (D)(5)), an organization that provides full-day training sessions, school site visits, and individual coaching to improve the data-driven decision-making capabilities of school leaders. Many Delaware LEAs have also worked with Learning Focused Solutions (LFS) on similar efforts, and over three dozen teachers (affecting over 1,000 students) are in schools that have implemented the eMINTS instructional model as part of Delaware's "Enhancing Education Through Technology Program," which provides a comprehensive model for fully incorporate technology into teaching and learning.

While these are some of the many examples of schools and LEAs increasing data-driven instruction, Delaware will apply a more systematic approach to implementing high-quality instructional improvement programs in all schools. This is particularly critical in order for schools to take advantage of the benefits of DCAS's formative and summative assessments, and to ensure that every teacher and leader has the core technical and pedagogical skills to use data to inform instruction. In order to do this, the State will:

- *Create the technological base for instructional improvement systems:* All instructional improvement systems will use the same technology-based tools, which will be online

reports and analyses based on assessments. Beginning in the Fall of 2011, statewide formative and summative assessments will be provided by the Delaware Comprehensive Assessment System. Reports and analyses based on this system will be managed and created by an assessment analyst, and integrated into the Educational Dashboard Portal for accessibility. See section (B)(3) for information on the assessment analyst, and section (C)(2) for more detail on the Educational Dashboard Portal. Before DCAS is in effect, the technology base for instructional improvement systems will be DSTP online reports, and other formative assessments as determined by LEAs.

- *Establish statewide requirements for the components that all instructional improvement systems must have:* While all instructional improvement systems will have the same technology-base, participating LEAs have flexibility in the strategies they choose to implement as part of their instructional improvement systems. That said, all instructional improvement systems must meet the following State criteria and quality standards: All participating LEAs must provide 90 minutes of weekly collaborative time for teachers<sup>4</sup> and leaders to participate in instructional improvement systems in small, relevant groups (e.g., six 3rd and 4th grade teachers), and all collaborative sessions must be facilitated. Other “goals” and “components” for instructional improvement systems are described in the proposed criteria below<sup>5</sup>:

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<sup>4</sup> For teachers in subjects tested through DCAS – includes subjects covered with end-of-course exams, and represents approximately 7,000 teachers

<sup>5</sup> The State will refine and finalize these criteria after input from relevant stakeholders

## Instructional Improvement Systems

Goals	Components
<p>Programs should have the following three goals, at a minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ <b>Create cultural acceptance</b> for sharing data among peers and leaders</li><li>▪ <b>Build technical skills</b> to access and interpret student-level data from statewide formative and summative assessments, and other assignments</li><li>▪ <b>Build pedagogical and content skills</b> to help teachers differentiate instruction and revise instructional approaches in response to data</li></ul>	<p>Programs should include the following components, at a minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ <b>Facilitated small-group discussions</b>, in which teachers review data for their own students and plan to adjust instruction. These should be:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Weekly</li><li>– At least 90 minutes per session</li><li>– In a small group (of approximately 6 teachers)</li><li>– Attended by an instructional leader</li><li>– Facilitated by an expert in data analysis and instructional techniques</li></ul></li><li>▪ <b>Classroom observation and feedback</b> that follows up on data-driven instructional plans</li></ul>

- *Require all participating LEAs to submit proposals describing how school-level or LEA-level instructional improvement systems (current or proposed) meet state criteria:* LEAs' instructional improvement systems can be developed "in-house" or provided by third party partners (such as Focus on Results or eMINTS), and the State will work with potential third-party partners to develop a list of pre-approved organizations for schools to work with, using the criteria described above. The State will approve instructional improvement systems that meet the criteria above, and if an IIS<sup>6</sup> does not meet State criteria, or the State does not deem the provider/school/LEA capable of implementing the IIS as described, the State will provide feedback on necessary changes. A school or LEA whose proposed IIS is not approved will have the option to submit a revised or new proposal, incorporating recommended changes; if it still does not receive approval upon second review, the school/LEA must use a pre-approved provider.

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<sup>6</sup> Instructional improvement systems are defined as in the Race to the Top guidance: technology-based tools and other strategies that provide teachers, principals, and administrators with meaningful support and actionable data to systemically manage continuous instructional improvement, including such activities as: instructional planning; gathering information; analyzing information with the support of rapid-time reporting; using this information to inform decisions on appropriate next instructional steps; and evaluating the effectiveness of the actions taken.

**(C)(3)(ii) Provide designated “data coaches” to participate in instructional improvement systems and support the transition to a data-driven culture**

A critical component of the State’s reform plan is to shift the culture of schools towards data-driven instruction by leveraging the State’s substantial data infrastructure. This culture shift is dependent upon establishing a core set of technical and pedagogical skills among teachers and leaders. The State expects these skills, and the improvements in student achievement resulting from their use, to make data-driven instruction the norm in all Delaware schools. To trigger this cultural shift, the State will invest in a corps of “data coaches,” who will be embedded in in-school routines with the goal of building these core skills. These coaches provide the critical linkage between the availability of data through the state LDS and DCAS and the use of data to improve instruction and student achievement.

All schools in participating LEAs that have begun to implement an approved instructional improvement system will be eligible to receive a State-subsidized data coach. The role of a data coach is to work with small groups of teachers and instructional leaders, to support the transition to data-driven instruction and the implementation of instructional improvement systems. Coaches will facilitate collaborative planning time, during which they will help teachers develop the technical skills to analyze data and the pedagogical skills to adjust instruction based on the data. Coaches will also observe teachers, and provide feedback on instructional approaches. The State will subsidize approximately 35 coaches for two years, allowing one coach for approximately every 200 eligible teachers and leaders (eligible teachers are those teachers in tested subjects). With 35 data coaches, each small group of about six teachers will have approximately 4.5 hours of data coaching per month, for two years. This translates into three 90-minute blocks per month, including two facilitated sessions and one series of observations.

The State will use the following plan to develop and deploy coaches: In the summer of 2010, DDOE will contract with 2-3 third-party providers to recruit, hire, train and deploy a total of 15 coaches, who will begin work in select schools in January 2011. The coaches will be deployed to schools in participating LEAs based on the number of teachers per school and schools’ interest in participating in the first wave of data coaches. If more than half of the schools in participating LEAs are interested in participating in the first wave, the initial data coaches will be distributed to a diverse representation of the lowest-performing schools, as

selected by The Delaware Secretary of Education. The first semester of the program will be an opportunity for one of the third-party providers to demonstrate the effectiveness of their coaches and approaches. Coaches will be assessed based on peer evaluations from the teachers and leaders they coach, as well as improvements in the students of those teachers, and any other measures as determined by the Teacher and Leader Effectiveness Unit. This will enable the State to understand the true impact of data coaches and gauge their effectiveness.

The data coach evaluations will take place in the spring of 2011, and will be used to improve effectiveness in the following years. In the second year of implementation (the 2011-12 school year), the State will deploy data coaches to all schools in participating LEAs. The State will continue to monitor the effectiveness of coaches and the success of different instructional improvement systems, with the goal of identifying best practices for data use in instructional strategies, and eliminating ineffective ones.

At the completion of the two-year period, schools may choose to sponsor data coaches for further support. However, the State expects the job-embedded training provided by data coaches to build a permanent core skill set among Delaware teachers, such that in-school experts (e.g., teacher leaders) should be able to take over the facilitation of IIS collaborative planning time and accompanying observations.

**(C)(3)(iii) Make the data from instructional improvement systems and the state LDS accessible to researchers**

With one of the richest datasets on public instruction and student performance in the nation, Delaware is committed to making its data available to researchers, and to anyone seeking ways to demonstrate the effectiveness of instructional practices to improve student outcomes. Therefore, the State will ensure continuous improvement by incorporating data on instructional improvement strategies and coaching programs into the statewide longitudinal data system, and by continuing to make that data available to researchers. In fact, Delaware has a history of making its data available to researchers, who complete a simple request form and submit it to the Technology Management and Design Work Group. The DDOE Data Steward and the Data Coordinator, who is responsible for that particular data collection, approve the request, provided that it is in accordance with the State's privacy protections. The Technology Management and

Design Work Group then fulfills the request. A copy of the data request form is provided in the appendix (C)(3)-1. Two examples of the types of data requests the DDOE has fulfilled in the past are provided below:

- *Internal Research Study: Delaware Early Childhood Longitudinal Study:* At the request of the State’s Interagency Resource Management Committee (State Budget Director, Comptroller, Secretary of DHSS, Secretary of DSCYF, and Chair Delaware Secretary of Education), the Delaware Early Childhood Longitudinal Study (DeCLS) was designed to examine the influence of early intervention programs on students’ long-term outcomes. A stratified random sampling process was used to select 717 students who entered kindergarten in the fall of 1997 in eight of Delaware’s LEAs, with varying participation in programs such as Head Start and the State’s funded program for low income 4-year-olds. The study used data from the State’s data system to track those students’ outcomes as third graders, fifth graders, eighth graders, and tenth graders against a control group. The data has helped to identify and quantify the influence of the early intervention programs on students’ long-term outcomes, and to adjust State policies accordingly. Another longitudinal study is underway using the State’s data to assess the influence of those adjustments.

*B. External Research Study: Examination of Early Indicators of Student Dropout (Graduate School of Education, UCLA):* Delaware’s data was used in this study because Delaware was one of the few states that could provide the detailed statewide longitudinal data required. The purpose of the data request was to examine whether early indicators of student risk status for dropping out exist; to examine the efficacy of state-developed “flag models”; and to investigate whether there is significant variability in these factors between schools. State-level data was needed to capture student movement within the State, to provide more accurate dropout data than any single school or LEA is able to provide, and to provide a complete K-12 longitudinal history.

The above describe how Delaware’s data has been made available to researchers within and outside of the State to inform analysis and decision-making. In order to make data from IIS available and accessible to researchers, the State will incorporate detailed information on which data coaches and instructional improvement systems are used by different teachers, schools, and



LEAs into the State LDS, and continue to provide data access to a wide-range of stakeholders and researchers. Since the LDS already includes information on different types of students and their achievement, this easy linkage will make it possible for researchers and relevant stakeholders to evaluate the effectiveness of instructional strategies and approaches for educating different types of students.

### **Responsible parties**

The Teacher and Leader Effectiveness Unit (TLEU), introduced in section (A)(2), will be the primary body responsible for overseeing the activities described above. The PD program manager in the TLEU will be responsible for overseeing the use of data to improve instruction through the following activities, programs, and processes:

- Finalize criteria and quality standards for instructional improvement systems based on stakeholder input
- Develop a list of pre-approved systems/providers that meet the established criteria
- Review and approve (current or proposed) instructional improvement system plans for schools in participating LEAs; recommend improvements to plans that do not meet standards for approval
- Work with third-party contractors to develop and deploy data coaches; evaluate the effectiveness of coaching programs; and work with The Delaware Secretary of Education to identify and replicate best practices

Schools or their LEAs will be responsible for choosing and implementing (or enhancing) instructional improvement systems that meet State criteria; ensuring that systems are implemented with fidelity; and integrating data coaches into instructional routines.

### **Conclusion**

Delaware will dramatically increase the use of data to improve instruction, through its sophisticated data system, state-of-the-art assessments, development of instructional improvement systems, and direct delivery of school- and LEA-level professional development. By encouraging schools in participating LEAs to propose their own instructional improvement

systems, the State will promote ownership and innovation at the school and LEA level; by mandating program requirements and providing state-subsidized data coaches, the State will ensure consistency and fidelity in implementation. The hands-on monitoring of instructional improvement systems and data coaches (with clear consequences for ineffective coaches) will ensure that this job-embedded professional development is rigorous and results-oriented, setting the standard for Delaware's new comprehensive professional development approach (to be further described in section (D)(5)). Ultimately, Delaware's reform plan will enable the State to quickly identify "what works" when integrating data into instructional strategies, in order to replicate those activities within and outside of Delaware.

## Summary: Activities, Timeline, Responsible Parties

Activities	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Responsible parties
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State creates the new technological base to support Instructional Improvement Systems (IIS) in the Educational Dashboard Portal</li> </ul>			September 2010-September 2011					DCAS Vendor and Assessment Analyst in conjunction with DDOE Technology Management and Design Group
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State defines the required criteria and quality standards for instructional improvement systems</li> </ul>			June-August 2010					TLEU Program Manager, in conjunction with the Secretary and relevant stakeholders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State works with potential IIS providers to produce a pre-approved list of IIS meeting criteria and standards</li> </ul>			June-September 2010					TLEU Program Manager, in conjunction with established State and National PD/IIS providers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schools/districts not using a pre-approved IIS provider submit proposals for their current or planned IIS; DDOE reviews proposals and approves or works to improve them</li> </ul>			September-December 2010					School/districts instructional leaders, TLEU Program Manager
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State reviews and re-approves IIS annually</li> </ul>			May-July 2011					TLEU Program Manager
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Schools/districts implement their IIS (ongoing)</li> </ul>			January 2011-October 2012					School/districts' instructional leadership teams
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State incorporates data from IIS's into the State data system, to make that data available to researchers and interested parties (ongoing)</li> </ul>			May 2011-October 2012					TLEU Program Manager, Technology Management and Design Work Group

Activities	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Responsible parties
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State contracts with 2-3 third party providers of data coaches</li> </ul>			June-September 2010					TLEU Program Manager and State or National providers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Third party providers recruit, hire and train data coaches</li> </ul>			September 2010-December 2010					3rd party providers; overseen by TLEU Program Manager
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State deploys "first wave" of data coaches</li> </ul>			January 2011-December 2012					TLEU Program Manager and Instructional Leaders in pilot schools
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State evaluates "first wave" of Data coaches, and selects 3<sup>rd</sup> party provider(s) for continued expanded contract</li> </ul>			May-July 2011					TLEU Program Manager and DDOE PMO
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State deploys "second wave" of data coaches</li> </ul>			August 2011-May 2013					TLEU Program Manager and Instructional Leaders in schools receiving data coaches
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State funding for data coaches ends; schools/districts may choose to continue using data coaches   after 2 years with their own funding</li> </ul>				Jun 2013 ▲				TLEU/Schools/Districts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State integrates all data coach data into the State LDS</li> </ul>			January 2011-June 2013					TLEU program manager, data coaches, and Technology Management and Design Group

## Performance metrics

Performance measures	Actual data: baseline (current school year or most recent)	End of SY	End of SY	End of SY	End of SY
		2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
Number of data coaches deployed	0	15	35	20	0
Percent of participating schools with an approved Instructional Improvement System in place	N/A	100%	–	–	–
Percent of teachers in testable subjects using DCAS as the technology-base for their IIS	0	80%	100%	–	–

## Summary: Benefits and requirements for all LEAs and Participating LEAs as described in the MOU

### For all LEAs/charters, the State will...

- **Create the technological base for instructional improvement systems<sup>1</sup>** (e.g., reports based on formative assessments) and integrate into the Educational Dashboard Portal
- **Define criteria and quality standards for instructional improvement systems<sup>1</sup>**
  - Instructional improvement systems include **collaborative planning time** in which teachers analyze student data, develop plans to differentiate instruction in response to data, and review the effectiveness of prior actions (see box below for more detail)
- **Pre-approve methods and/or providers of instructional improvement systems<sup>1</sup>** meeting these expectations

**Instructional improvement systems** are defined as technology-based tools and other strategies that provide teachers, principals, and administrators with meaningful support and actionable data to systemically manage continuous instructional improvement, including such activities as: instructional planning; gathering information (e.g., through formative assessments, interim assessments, summative assessments, and looking at student work and other student data); analyzing information with the support of rapid-time reporting; using this information to inform decisions on appropriate next instructional steps; and evaluating the effectiveness of the actions taken. Such systems promote collaborative problem-solving and action planning; they may also integrate instructional data with student-level data such as attendance, discipline, grades, credit accumulation, and student survey results to provide early warning indicators of a student's risk of educational failure.

### For participating LEAs/charters, the State will...

- **Recruit, train, deploy, and subsidize data coaches to participate in instructional improvement systems<sup>1</sup>**
  - Data coaches will facilitate collaborative planning time to help teachers and leaders develop the technical skills to analyze data and the pedagogical skills to adjust instruction based on data
  - Data coaches will also provide teachers with feedback on instructional approaches following observation

### Participating LEAs/charters will...

- **Ensure implementation of instructional improvement systems<sup>1</sup>**
  - Provide 90 minutes of weekly collaborative time for teachers<sup>2</sup> and leaders to participate in instructional improvement systems in small, relevant groups (e.g., 6 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade teachers)
  - Implement (or enhance) an instructional improvement system that meets State criteria and quality standards, and includes facilitated collaborative planning time (may choose a pre-approved provider/method or may request approval for other options)
  - Integrate instructional improvement systems as a core job-embedded professional development offering
- **Integrate State data coaches into instructional improvement systems<sup>1</sup>**
  - Use State data coaches to facilitate collaborative time, observe instruction, and provide feedback
    - Minimum of 4.5 hours per month per collaborative planning group (e.g., 6 teachers) for 2 years
    - Provide access to classrooms for data coaches to complete observations of instruction and offer feedback

\* All LEAs/charters will have to complete these activities, not just participating LEAs/charters

<sup>1</sup> As defined in box on this page

<sup>2</sup> For teachers in subjects tested through DCAS – includes subjects covered with end-of-course exams

**(D) Great Teachers and Leaders (138 total points)**

**(D)(1) Providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals (21 points)**

*The extent to which the State has—*

(i) *Legal, statutory, or regulatory provisions that allow alternative routes to certification (as defined in this notice) for teachers and principals, particularly routes that allow for providers in addition to institutions of higher education;*

(ii) *Alternative routes to certification (as defined in this notice) that are in use; and*

(iii) *A process for monitoring, evaluating, and identifying areas of teacher and principal shortage and for preparing teachers and principals to fill these areas of shortage. In the text box below, the State shall describe its current status in meeting the criterion. The narrative or attachments shall also include, at a minimum, the evidence listed below, and how each piece of evidence demonstrates the State's success in meeting the criterion. The narrative and attachments may also include any additional information the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers. For attachments included in the Appendix, note in the narrative the location where the attachments can be found.*

*Evidence for (D)(1)(i), regarding alternative routes to certification for both teachers and principals:*

- *A description of the State's applicable laws, statutes, regulations, or other relevant legal documents, including information on the elements of the State's alternative routes (as described in the alternative route to certification definition in this notice).*

*Evidence for (D)(1)(ii), regarding alternative routes to certification for both teachers and principals:*

- *A list of the alternative certification programs operating in the State under the State's alternative routes to certification (as defined in this notice), and for each:*
  - o *The elements of the program (as described in the alternative routes to certification definition in this notice).*
  - o *The number of teachers and principals that successfully completed each program in the previous academic year.*
  - o *The total number of teachers and principals certified statewide in the previous academic year.*

*Recommended maximum response length: Two pages*

**(D)(1) Overview Provide high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals**

Delaware has shown a commitment to providing and expanding high quality alternative pathways for teacher and leader certification. Currently, Delaware has approximately 8200 teachers, 180 principals, and 200 assistant principals. Each year, approximately 1000 teachers and 60 administrators are hired in Delaware.

Delaware already has legislative and regulatory provisions that permit six alternative routes to teacher certification, and has certified 466 teachers through these routes to date. In the 2009-10 school year almost 13% of new hires were certified through one of Delaware's alternative certification programs, bringing the total number of currently-employed educators from those programs to 362, or 4% of the State's teacher population. These alternative routes are expected to expand, with targeted support provided through Race to the Top funding.

Delaware law already has a provision that allows alternate certification for principals and assistant principals, and the State is actively looking to establish programs for alternate leader certification. The State plans to support the efforts of Delaware's nonprofit and business community, which is working to bring national leaders in alternate certification for teachers and principals to the State.

Finally, Delaware conducts its annual Delaware Teacher and Administrator Supply Survey Analysis, which enables the State to identify areas of teacher and principal shortage. In this way, Delaware may focus its resources on preparing teachers and principals to fill areas of shortage, and on bringing talented young people and career-changers into the highest-need schools and subjects.

**(D)(1)(i) For evidence of these regulations, please see Appendix (D)(1)-1**

**(D)(1)(ii) Alternative routes to certification**

The six alternative routes defined in Delaware's laws and regulations are: the Alternative Routes to Certification (ARTC) program, Teach for America (TFA), Teacher Residency, Master's Plus Certification Program, the Special Institute for Teacher Licensure and Certification, and a local alternative through student teaching. Delaware also has four masters of arts programs for individuals with non-education bachelor's degrees, and participates in the Troops to Teachers Program. Upon completion of each alternate route, teachers receive the same certification as those who pursue a traditional certification route. Furthermore, all teachers certified through an alternative route receive the same induction support as those coming through

a traditional route, which is the three-year statewide New Teacher Mentoring and Induction Program (described in Appendix (D)(1)-2). A full description of the elements, enrollment, and completion rates of each of these programs is provided in Appendix (D)(1)-3. As noted there, the Teacher Residency is the only route that exists in regulation but not in practice, and the DDOE will dedicate Race to the Top funding to its establishment and expansion (described in section (D)(3)(ii)).

The DDOE will also use Race to the Top funding to support the recruitment of leading national organizations to establish alternative certification programs in Delaware (similar to the recent recruitment of Teach for America). The State plans to set aside approximately \$3 million in RTTT funding to jump-start these programs in their first few years of operations. Innovative Schools, a Delaware nonprofit, is currently working to establish partnerships with The New Teacher Project (TNTP) and New York City Leadership Academy (NYCLA), each of which has provided cost estimates and implementation plans for bringing its programs to Delaware. TNTP and NYCLA expect to bring 40-50 teachers and 10 leaders to Delaware per year, respectively, all of whom will work in high-need schools. Additional information about the collaboration with TNTP and NYCLA is available in Appendix (D)(1)-4,5. The DDOE will consider these programs among others for RTTT designated start-up funding.

**(D)(1)(iii) Monitoring, evaluating, identifying, and preparing to fill areas of shortage**

In order to identify high needs areas that are targeted by alternative certification programs, Delaware has a process for monitoring, evaluating and identifying areas of teacher and principal shortage, and for preparing teachers and principals to fill these areas. Since 2002, the University of Delaware has performed an annual Teacher and Administrator Supply Survey Analysis on behalf of the Department of Education, which determines the critical needs shortage areas (defined as any position that 10% or more of LEAs report as being difficult to fill) and provides sophisticated pipeline forecasting. For example, the survey identifies the primary causes for teacher and administrator attrition, as well as the percentage of highly-qualified applicants who have applied for open positions. The executive summary of the 2008-09 Survey Analysis is provided in Appendix (D)(1)-6.

To fill these areas of shortage, there are three legislatively-enacted scholarship programs to encourage teachers to become certified in the critical needs areas identified in the Supply and Demand Survey. First, Critical Need Scholarships are awarded to current teachers who hold

emergency certifications in critical shortage areas and are pursuing full certification. The award is reimbursement for up to three credits taken in the fall and spring terms.<sup>1</sup> Second, the State gives preference to applicants for the Christa McAuliffe Teacher Incentive Program award to students who pursue undergraduate teacher education degrees in subject areas with critical shortages (e.g., math and science). Awards are for \$5,000 per year for students in four-year programs, and \$2,500 annually for students in two-year programs. Third, Delaware Teacher Corps is open to undergraduate or graduate students who attend a Delaware public college and are enrolled in a teacher certification program in a critical need area. The award covers tuition for up to four years and gives top preference to students who intend to teach middle or high school science and math (second preference is given to candidates in special education in any content area). Teachers who participate in the Delaware Teacher Corps or the Christa McAuliffe Teacher Incentive Program also qualify for one year of state loan forgiveness for every year of teaching up to four years. The Supply and Demand Survey also allows the State to qualify for federal loans in critical needs areas.

### **Conclusion**

The Supply Survey Analysis and Delaware's extensive data system will allow the State to maximize the impact of its alternate certification routes. First, the Supply and Demand Survey Analysis allows Delaware to focus resources on alternative certification routes that develop teachers for critical needs areas. Second, the State's ability (under the longitudinal data system) to link individual teachers with data about preparation, evaluation, and student performance allows DDOE to identify and expand the routes that prepare the most effective teachers. Taken together, these factors will enable Delaware to focus on expanding alternative certification routes that produce highly effective teachers in high need subjects, and to share data about the most effective routes across LEAs and other States.

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<sup>1</sup> Delaware provides summer free tuition to all public school teachers at the two state institutions.



**(D)(1) Evidence**

**Evidence for (D)(1)(i)**

- *A description of the State’s applicable laws, statutes, regulations:  
See Appendix (D)(1)-1.*

**Evidence for (D)(1)(ii)**

- *The elements of the alternative certification programs: See Appendix (D)(1)-3.*
- *The number of teachers and principals that successfully completed each program in the previous academic year. See Appendix (D)(1)-3.*
- *The total number of teachers and principals certified statewide in the previous academic year. See Appendix (D)(1)-3.*

**(D)(2) Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance (58 points)**

*The extent to which the State, in collaboration with its participating LEAs (as defined in this notice), has a high-quality plan and ambitious yet achievable annual targets to ensure that participating LEAs (as defined in this notice)—*

*(i) Establish clear approaches to measuring student growth (as defined in this notice) and measure it for each individual student; (5 points)*

*(ii) Design and implement rigorous, transparent, and fair evaluation systems for teachers and principals that (a) differentiate effectiveness using multiple rating categories that take into account data on student growth (as defined in this notice) as a significant factor, and (b) are designed and developed with teacher and principal involvement; (15 points)*

*(iii) Conduct annual evaluations of teachers and principals that include timely and constructive feedback; as part of such evaluations, provide teachers and principals with data on student growth for their students, classes, and schools; (10 points) and*

*(iv) Use these evaluations, at a minimum, to inform decisions regarding— (28 points)*

*(a) Developing teachers and principals, including by providing relevant coaching, induction support, and/or professional development;*

*(b) Compensating, promoting, and retaining teachers and principals, including by providing opportunities for highly effective teachers and principals (both as defined in this notice) to obtain additional compensation and be given additional responsibilities;*

*(c) Whether to grant tenure and/or full certification (where applicable) to teachers and principals using rigorous standards and streamlined, transparent, and fair procedures; and*

*(d) Removing ineffective tenured and untenured teachers and principals after they have had ample opportunities to improve, and ensuring that such decisions are made using rigorous standards and streamlined, transparent, and fair procedures.*

*The State shall provide its detailed plan for this criterion in the text box below. The plan should include, at a minimum, the goals, activities, timelines, and responsible parties (see Reform Plan Criteria elements in Application Instructions or Section XII, Application Requirements (e), for further detail). Any supporting evidence the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers must be described and, where relevant, included in the Appendix. For attachments included in the Appendix, note in the narrative the location where the attachments can be found.*

*Recommended maximum response length: Ten pages*

## (D)(2) Overview - Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance

### Improving teacher and principal effectiveness based on performance

<b>Vision</b>	Improve teacher and principal effectiveness with annual evaluations across multiple dimensions, and require student growth for effective ratings; use evaluations to inform teacher and principal development, rewards, and consequences
<b>Strategies</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Establish a clear approach to measuring student growth in consultation with stakeholder groups</li><li>2. Conduct annual evaluations with the statewide assessment system, revised to require student growth for ratings of “effective” or “highly effective”</li><li>3. Provide development coaches, and require increased documentation, to ensure the rigorous conduct of evaluations</li><li>4. Develop a range of new programs and policies, to ensure that evaluations are used to inform actions</li></ol>
<b>Goals</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ By July 2011, the State will have a single, clear approach for measuring student growth, as part of annual teacher and principal evaluations; all teachers and principals must receive satisfactory student growth to be rated as “effective” or “highly effective”</li><li>▪ Beginning in the 2010-11 school year, all administrators responsible for assessments will receive one-on-one coaching in conducting rigorous annual evaluations</li><li>▪ By the 2011-12 school year, all LEAs will use the statewide evaluation system to develop, compensate, promote, retain, and remove teachers and principals</li><li>▪ By the 2011-12 school year, “tenure” will be granted to teachers only if they demonstrate satisfactory student growth for two or more years, and have no more than one year of “ineffective” teaching</li><li>▪ By the end of the 2013-14 school year, 30% of teachers and principals will be rated “highly effective”; 50% rated “effective”; 15% rated “needs improvement”; and only 5% rated “ineffective”</li></ul>

Delaware is well on its way to becoming the nation’s leader in improving teacher and principal effectiveness. Delaware is unique for its rigorous, multi-faceted annual statewide evaluation system; its ability to link individual teachers with student achievement data; its newly revised regulations that make student growth the critical factor in educator evaluations; and proposed policies and programs that will link specific actions to evaluations. The State will build on this strong momentum by ensuring that all LEAs rigorously conduct evaluations, and by centrally developing, and requiring participating LEAs to develop, new programs and policies to ensure that evaluations are used to inform decisions.

The State and LEAs will use effectiveness information yielded by annual evaluations (and reported by the DDOE’s sophisticated data system) to inform and trigger a range of human capital decisions. At the State level, effectiveness data will be used to increase support to preparation programs and alternate routes that consistently provide effective teachers and principals; to equitably distribute effective teachers and principals; and to identify and certify the

most impactful forms of professional development. The State will further ensure the rigorous use of effectiveness data with its proposed legislative changes, which will require that all new teachers demonstrate satisfactory student growth before receiving continuing licensure and tenure protections. At the LEA level, data on performance will drive decisive action on developing all teachers, rewarding highly-effective teachers with increased responsibilities and compensation, providing appropriate supports to teachers in need of improvement, and removing ineffective teachers.

### **Goals**

With this comprehensive approach to human capital, DDOE expects to reach a number of milestones, which will translate into significant improvements in teacher and leader effectiveness. Specifically, the State plans to implement a clear approach for measuring student growth by July of 2011, and State regulations require that teachers and administrators to receive satisfactory student growth to be rated “effective” or “highly effective” beginning in the Fall of 2011. The State will ensure that all administrators responsible for assessments receive one-on-one coaching in conducting rigorous annual evaluations, by deploying subsidized development coaches. A series of new initiatives (described in this section) will ensure that, by the 2011-12 school year, 100% of LEAs use the statewide evaluation system to develop, compensate, promote, retain, and remove teachers and administrators; and the State will enact legislation raising the bar for new teachers to receive continuing licensure and tenure protections.

The ultimate goal of these efforts is to dramatically increase the effectiveness of Delaware’s teachers and principals, so that, by the end of the 2013-14 school year, 30% of teachers and principals will be rated “highly effective”; 50% rated “effective”; 15% rated “needs improvement”; and only 5% rated “ineffective”. For a full list of performance metrics, please see the table at the end of this section.

### **Success factors**

There are four contributing factors to Delaware’s success in improving teacher effectiveness:

**(1) Delaware’s annual statewide teacher and administrator evaluation system:** Delaware first implemented a statewide appraisal system in the 1980s, which evolved into the Delaware Performance Appraisal System II (DPAS II). DPAS II was piloted in the 2005-2006 school year, and launched statewide in Fall of 2008. DPAS II is based on the Charlotte Danielson method,

and uses multiple rating categories to differentiate effectiveness. DPAS II was designed and developed with teacher and principal involvement, and the State continues to solicit feedback on DPAS II and refine the system accordingly. Delaware regulations require the DDOE to conduct an annual evaluation of DPAS II, including, at a minimum, a survey of teachers and evaluators. The findings of that evaluation are presented to the State Board of Education for review on an annual basis.

*(2) Delaware’s recently revised state regulations regarding DPAS II evaluations:* An educator’s summative rating on their evaluation is determined by the educator’s rating on each of five components, one of which is Student Improvement. The summative ratings that are possible for educators are “Ineffective,” “Needs Improvement,” “Effective,” and, under recently enacted regulations, “Highly Effective. Under prior regulations, all five of the components were weighted equally in determining an educator’s summative rating, and the Student Improvement component did not require student growth.

The recently-approved regulations maintain the same five components of an educator’s evaluation, but make significant changes to the rating system making student growth the critical factor for determining teacher and leader effectiveness. Rather than set a specific percentage that student growth must be weighed in the evaluation, these regulations go much further. In systems that have student growth as merely a percent of overall teacher rating, it is possible that a teacher could still be rated effective without showing satisfactory levels of student growth. In contrast, Delaware mandates that an educator **cannot** be rated effective or better **unless** they have demonstrated satisfactory levels of student growth. In addition, no educator can receive the lowest rating if they show satisfactory levels of student growth. Thus, the regulations reflect a policy choice: An educator simply will not be considered Effective if his/her students are not learning, and an educator will not be considered Ineffective if his/her students are in fact learning. Specifically, the regulations:

- Require that educators show appropriate levels of growth among their students in order for the educator to receive a satisfactory rating on the Student Improvement component;
- Provide that student growth must measure changes in achievement data based on scores on the new statewide assessment for tested subjects and, for both tested and non-tested subjects, other measures of student learning, provided that those measures are rigorous and comparable across classrooms;

- Provide that an educator who receives an unsatisfactory rating on the Student Achievement component cannot be rated “Effective” on the educator’s summative rating – these educators will be rated Needs Improvement or Ineffective, depending on the educator’s rating on the other components;
- Provide that an educator who receives a satisfactory rating on the Student Achievement component will not be rated “Ineffective” on the educator’s summative rating – these educators will be rated Needs Improvement, Effective, or Highly Effective, depending on the educator’s rating on the other components;
- Add a “Highly Effective” summative rating, which requires that the educator’s students show more than one year of growth.

The table below shows how ratings will be assigned under the new DPAS II regulations:

**Assigning ratings under DPAS II**

<b>Total number of satisfactory component ratings</b>	<b>Rating on student improvement component</b>	<b>Summative rating</b>
4 or 5	Satisfactory	Highly Effective (also requires >1 year of student growth)
3, 4, or 5	Satisfactory	Effective
1 or 2	Satisfactory	Needs Improvement
Less than 5	Unsatisfactory	Ineffective

These summative ratings are linked to other significant actions, including providing for additional compensation and career options for educators at the top end of the rating system, triggering certain professional development and coaching requirements for teachers in the Needs Improvement or Ineffective categories, and ultimately providing a statutory basis for termination based on performance at the lowest end of the scale. Because of these linkages between an educator’s rating and other critical decisions, changes to the rating system have significant and broad impact. Therefore, the significant strengthening of the link between student achievement and an educator’s rating by necessity strengthens the impact that student achievement has on all of those critical decisions.

**(3) Delaware’s longitudinal data system:** The State’s longitudinal data system currently measures student achievement, and will improve this capability with the formative and

summative assessments provided by the Delaware Comprehensive Assessment System. The data system easily links specific student results to individual teachers, and this data can be further linked to information on past student achievement, teacher preparation, and the full range of data maintained by the DDOE. This will enable the State to establish a clear approach for measuring student growth, as described below.

***(4) Delaware's ambitious, achievable reforms:*** The State will implement targeted reforms to take advantage of these fundamental success factors, which will be described fully in the narrative below. Three highlights of those reforms are the State's plan to: (1) provide school leaders, Superintendents, and Charter Directors with development coaches to support the rigorous, transparent conduct of DPAS II; (2) develop, and encourage participating LEAs to develop, career pathways that link differentiated compensation and responsibilities to evaluation; and (3) enact legislation requiring novice teachers to show satisfactory levels of student growth before receiving continuing licensure and tenure protections.

### **Activities**

There are four sets of activities that comprise the State's plan to improve teacher and leader effectiveness based on performance: (1) The State, in conjunction with a range of stakeholders, will establish a clear approach to measuring student growth; (2) All LEAs will conduct annual evaluations with DPAS II, in accordance with the recently revised regulations; (3) The State will provide development coaches and require increased documentation to ensure the rigorous conduct of evaluations; and (4) The State and participating LEAs will develop a range of new programs and policies, to ensure that evaluations are used to inform actions.

### **(D)(2)(i) The State, in conjunction with a range of stakeholders, will establish a clear approach to measuring student growth**

Under the revised regulations, student growth will be the critical factor for determining teacher and leader effectiveness. The exact definition and measurement of student growth will be determined between January 2010 and July 2011, when the new regulations go into effect. The definition and means for assessing student growth will be determined by the Delaware Secretary of Education and will represent some level of change in achievement data for an individual student between two points in time, as well as any other measures that are determined to be rigorous and comparable across classrooms, in accordance with the new regulations. The Delaware Secretary of Education will consider input from stakeholder groups during this

process. The State's data system already has the information and technical capabilities needed to capture student growth, which will likely be supplemented with contracted support from a value-added specialist.

**(D)(2)(ii-iii) All LEAs will conduct annual evaluations with DPAS II, in accordance with the recently revised regulations**

The DPAS II evaluation system for teachers and administrators already meets all of the Race to the Top criteria for designing evaluation systems and conducting annual evaluations ((D)(2)(ii) and (D)(2)(iii)). DPAS II is rigorous, transparent and fair; it differentiates effectiveness using multiple rating categories; it takes student growth into account; and it requires the provision of timely and constructive feedback. Under the revised regulations approved in January 2010, each of these aspects of DPAS II will be further developed and refined by the summer of 2011. A full description of DPAS II, and how it requires all LEAs to conduct evaluations, is provided below, with additional overviews and materials provided in Appendix (D)(2)-4.

DPAS II for teachers and specialists is based on the work of Charlotte Danielson; DPAS II for administrators is grounded in the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) Standards for School Leaders. For each group, DPAS II has five Appraisal Components. The first four components of DPAS II are based on Danielson's Framework and the ISLLC standards, respectively; the fifth is Student Improvement. The DPAS II Appraisal Components for teachers, specialists, and administrators are listed below:



## Components of DPAS II for Teachers, Specialists, and Administrators

	<b>Teacher</b>	<b>Specialist</b>	<b>Administrator</b>
<b>Component 1</b>	Planning and preparation	Planning and preparation	Vision and Goals
<b>Component 2</b>	Classroom Environment	The Environment	Culture of Learning
<b>Component 3</b>	Instruction	Delivery of Services	Management
<b>Component 4</b>	Professional Responsibilities	Professional Responsibilities	Professional Responsibilities
<b>Component 5</b>	Student Improvement	Student Improvement	Student Improvement

For each of the first four Components, there is a set of four Appraisal Criteria, or subcomponents. Each criterion has a rubric defining “unsatisfactory,” “basic,” “proficient,” and “distinguished.” A sample criterion for Component 1, “planning and preparation,” is provided below. (Appraisal criteria for all components is provided in Appendix (D)(2)-1)

### Component 1: Planning and Preparation

	-----SATISFACTORY-----			
	UNSATISFACTORY	BASIC	PROFICIENT	DISTINGUISHED
1a: Selecting Instructional Goals	Teacher’s goals represent trivial learning, are unsuitable for students, or are stated only as instructional activities, and they do not permit viable methods of assessment.	Teacher’s goals are of moderate value or suitability for students in the class, consisting of a combination of goals and activities, some of which permit viable methods of assessment.	Teacher’s goals represent valuable learning and are suitable for most students in the class; they reflect opportunities for integration and permit viable methods of assessment.	Teacher’s goals reflect high-level learning relating to curriculum frameworks and standards; they are adapted, where necessary, to the needs of individual students, and permit viable methods of assessment.

Evidence for performance on Components 1, 2, and 3 for teachers and specialists is gathered through observation by administrators trained in assessment, which follows a pre-observation form and conference, and a formative feedback conference. Evidence for performance on Components 1, 2, and 3 for administrators is gathered through a survey completed by professional staff, the administrator's self-assessment on the ISLLC standards and the evaluator's survey data. For Component 4, all educators complete a professional responsibilities form, which details their professional growth, communication with students, parents, and school colleagues, and their contributions to the professional community during the review period. Lastly, all educators engage in goal setting as part of the DPAS II process. Goals are data-driven and measurable, and align with the school or LEA improvement plan. In order to receive a "satisfactory" rating for each of the first four components, a teacher, specialist or administrator must receive a satisfactory ("basic," "proficient," or "distinguished") on at least three of the four criteria specified in the Component.

Under the revised regulations, beginning in July 2011, a satisfactory rating for the fifth Component, Student Improvement, means that the teacher has met the standard for student growth set by the Delaware Secretary of Education. As mentioned previously, that standard will be determined by The Delaware Secretary of Education between now and July 2011, and will represent an appropriate level of change in achievement data for an individual student between two points in time, as well as any other measures that are determined to be rigorous and comparable across classrooms. It is likely that the standard will include value-added student growth analysis as part of the methodology.

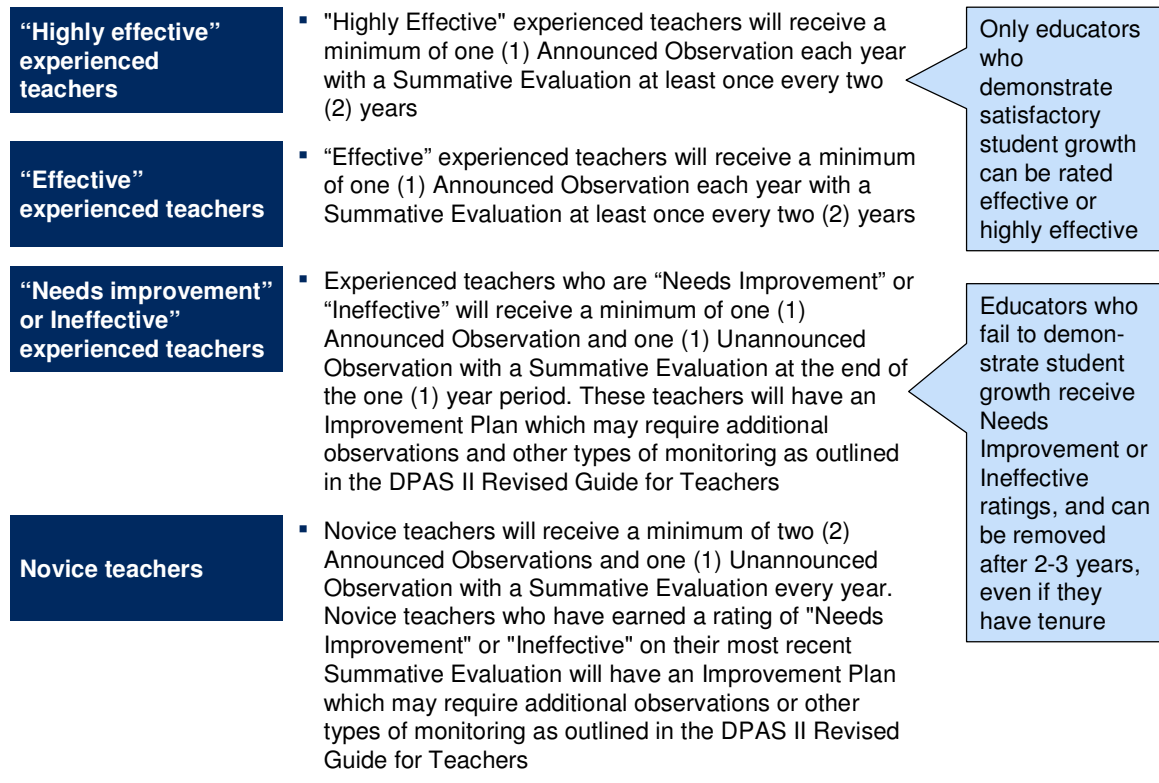
All administrators eligible to conduct evaluations must complete three full days of in-person DPAS II training. The three-day training is mandatory for all new administrators prior to conducting evaluations. It includes in-depth instruction on the techniques of observation, conferencing, and supervising teachers, specialists, and other administrators. The training also includes practice implementation of DPAS II procedures, and a thorough review of the DPAS II Guides Activities. At the conclusion of the training, the administrator must submit written samples of DPAS II forms for a given scenario. After a DDOE education associate reviews these documents, the administrator issued a five-year certificate, which entitles him or her to perform evaluations. Every administrator must recalibrate their DPAS II writing and implementation skills every five years, to ensure that they are updated in any revisions or

changes to the system. Furthermore, all teachers, specialists, and administrators are also trained in the processes and procedures associated with DPAS II, through online and in-person trainings. As part of its reform plan, DDOE will examine and refine all of its DPAS II training, to ensure that it is maximally effective.

As mentioned previously, the State recently made significant, bold revisions to the state regulations around DPAS II. Under the revised DPAS II regulations, educators must demonstrate student growth to be rated Effective or Highly-Effective. The new “Highly-Effective” rating requires teachers to show **more than one grade level** of student growth per year on average in his/her classes. For teachers receiving “Needs Improvement” or “Ineffective” ratings, specific improvement plans must be provided, and instructional coaches (or similar support) offered. Delaware law provides that teachers who are rated “Ineffective” two years in a row may be removed, regardless of whether or not the teacher has tenure. Thus, the new regulations provide a direct link between student achievement and teacher evaluation, and trigger specific consequences for not demonstrating student growth.

Several of these changes are described in more detail below in the table below; for a full description of the new regulations, please see Appendix (D)(2)-2.

## Teacher appraisal cycle frequency based on ratings and experience



For all teachers and leaders regardless of rating, the student improvement component is evaluated each year, and a minimum of one observation (or “formative process” for administrators) is conducted. For “Highly Effective” and “Effective” experienced teachers and leaders, the overall summative evaluation occurs at least every two years (provided that the teacher/leader achieves satisfactory student improvement), and for “Needs Improvement” and “Ineffective” experienced teachers and leaders, the overall summative evaluation occurs at least every year (with additional observations for teachers as required by regulations and improvement plans). All novice teachers receive a minimum of three observations and a summative evaluation every year, and all inexperienced administrators have a minimum of one formative process and summative evaluation each year (with additional observations/formative processes for teachers/administrators who are “Needs Improvement” or “Ineffective,” as required by their improvement plans.) A full description of the appraisal cycles is provided in the regulations in Appendix (D)(2)-2.

**(D)(2)(iii) The State will provide development coaches and require increased documentation to ensure the rigorous conduct of evaluations**

The DDOE understands that the success of DPAS II, particularly under the revised regulations, will depend on execution. To ensure the successful conduct of teacher and administrator evaluations, the State will recruit, train and deploy a corps of “development coaches.” These coaches will support principals, superintendents, and charter directors in the transition to a more rigorous, transparent evaluation process, reduce the administrative burden to evaluators, and improve the accuracy and calibration of DPAS II assessments.

DDOE plans to contract with a third party to provide 15 development coaches to support participating LEAs, roughly one coach per every 40 administrators now trained in evaluation, from January 2011 to January 2013. These coaches will spend approximately one day per month with groups of two evaluators, or one half-day per month in one-on-one coaching. Development coaches will:

- Ensure that the principles and processes of the official DPAS II training are accurately executed
- Offer one-on-one training to assessors in using the DPAS II rubric to provide specific and actionable feedback, including data on student growth, so that they can help educators continuously improve towards “distinguished” ratings
- Offer one-on-one training to assessors in creating the detailed development plans required by regulation
- Assist assessors with calibrating their evaluations, by providing context and comparisons for what “unsatisfactory,” “basic,” “proficient,” and “distinguished” performance looks like in other schools, and how DPAS II envisions different levels of performance

All LEAs will be required to host state development coaches for two years, from January 2011 through January 2013. After the two years, participating LEAs may choose to use some of their Race to the Top allocation to continue funding development coaches.

The Professional Development Program Manager in the Teacher and Leader Effectiveness Unit at the DDOE will oversee the development coach program. The program manager will work with a third-party contractor to recruit, train, hire, and place development coaches in all participating LEAs from January 2011 through January 2013, at which point the manager will

continue to oversee development coaches only if participating LEAs choose to use some portion of their funding for coaches.

The TLEU will also be responsible for evaluating the impact of development coaches, based on: (1) peer evaluations from the administrators they work with; (2) a select audit of evaluators' conduct of DPAS II evaluations, feedback sessions, and improvement plans; (3) observation of development coaches coaching sessions with their evaluators; and (4) other metrics as determined by the TLEU and DDOE program management office. The first review of development coaches will take place in the fall of 2011, and only those development coaches who are assessed to have been effective will be given renewed contracts for the second year of development coaching.

Lastly, the State will further ensure the successful conduct of evaluations through increased documentation requirements and auditing. Evaluators must document their DPAS II activities and conclusions via a new feature on the DPAS II website, noting when their observations were made, how the teacher/administrator performed across the four-part rubric, and other required DPAS II evaluation steps. The TLEU program manager (in conjunction with a third party contractor) will audit this data, to ensure that the DPAS II development coaching is carried out as intended. All effectiveness data will be publicly reported in aggregate on the DDOE website, with the aggregate effectiveness information reported for each in-State preparation program (see section (D)(4)). The State will further internally review detailed effectiveness information for LEAs and charters, to ensure that evaluations are being conducted rigorously. For a full list of activities, timing, and responsibilities, please see the chart at the end of this section.

**(D)(2)(iv) The State and participating LEAs will develop new programs and policies to ensure that evaluations are used as a primary factor in the following actions: developing teachers and principals; granting continuing licensure and tenure protections (State only); removing ineffective teachers and principals; and promoting and retaining teachers and principals**

Note: As part of their participation in the Race to the Top application, participating LEAs will be required to use educator evaluations as a primary factor in teacher and principal development, promotion, advancement, retention, and removal. All participating LEAs' plans will be evaluated for the extent to which they address this requirement.

**(D)(2)(iv)(a) Developing teachers and principals:** Delaware’s revised regulations explicitly outline the required development for teachers and principals, based on evaluations. Specifically, an improvement plan must be developed for any teacher or administrator who receives an “Unsatisfactory” rating on any of the five appraisal components, regardless of the teacher or administrator’s overall rating, and for any teacher or administrator who receives an overall rating of “Needs Improvement” or “Ineffective” on the Summative Evaluation.

As defined in the regulations, all Improvement Plans for teachers and administrators must contain:

- Identification of the specific deficiencies and recommended area(s) for growth
- Measurable goals for improving the deficiencies to satisfactory levels
- Specific professional development or activities to accomplish the goals
- Specific resources necessary to implement the plan, including but not limited to, opportunities for the teacher to work with curriculum specialist(s), subject area specialist(s), instructional specialist(s) or others with relevant expertise
- Procedures and evidence that must be collected to determine that the goals of the plan were met
- Timeline for the plan, including intermediate check points to determine progress
- Procedures for determining satisfactory improvement

The new regulations for teachers also require that teacher Improvement Plans have “multiple observations and opportunity for feedback provided by a trained evaluator, a mentor, a lead teacher, or an instructional coach.” The revised regulations further require that any state or federally funded professional development that is completed during the time that the improvement plan is in effect must be certified by the DDOE, and must directly relate to the areas identified as needing improvement. Teachers and administrators are held accountable for the implementation and completion of their improvement plans, which will be monitored by principals and superintendents, and supported substantially by state development and data coaches. Furthermore, induction support will be provided to all novice teachers, as described in section (D)(5).

**(D)(2)(iv)(c) Granting continuing licensure and tenure:** All Delaware educators must have an initial license to teach in the State, which is valid for three years only. After three years, an

educator must receive a continuing license in order to continue teaching in the State (or receive an initial license extension of one year only, pending LEA and State approval).

The granting of continuing licensure is linked to educator performance. In order to receive a continuing license today, an educator must have no more than one year of “ineffective” DPAS II ratings in their three years on an initial license. The State will propose legislation to significantly strengthen the link between performance and continuing licensure by requiring that new teachers demonstrate at least two years of “Satisfactory” student improvement on DPAS II before receiving their continuing license.

Delaware law provides teachers who have taught in the State for greater than three years and in the same LEA for two years with increased due process protections as well as limited reasons for termination. Similar to the licensure changes, the State will propose legislation to ensure that only those teachers with a proven ability to impact student achievement are allowed to receive these increased protections<sup>2</sup>.

***(D)(2)(iv)(d) Removing ineffective tenured and untenured teachers and principals:***

Delaware law already provides a link between performance and the removal of all teachers, regardless of the license they hold or whether they have tenure protections. All educators are eligible for removal if they demonstrate a pattern of ineffective performance, defined in the regulations as DPAS II ratings of “Ineffective” for two consecutive years, or any combination of ratings of “Ineffective” and “Needs Improvement” over three consecutive years. With the revised DPAS II, Delaware will have a much more accurate way of assessing teacher effectiveness. Given that an educator must show student growth to be effective, the new regulations mean that any educator who does not show student growth for three years will be deemed to have demonstrated a pattern of ineffective performance, making the educator eligible for removal. The procedures for removing an educator once he or she is deemed ineffective are described below.

Once the decision is made to remove a teacher or administrator for a pattern of ineffective performance (or any other reason, as allowed by Delaware law), the individual will be given written notice stating the reasons for the termination. If the teacher has worked less than three years in the State, or less than two years in the LEA, he/she may request in writing the reason for

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<sup>2</sup> For ease of reference, these due process protections for teachers that have met the length of service requirements are referred to in this document as “tenure protections.”



termination, and a conference with the superintendent for the purpose of discussing the reason and attempting to resolve any disputed matter. The conference with the superintendent is final and conclusive. If a teacher has met the length of service requirements, he/she may only be terminated for the reasons provided for in statute. Such teachers may request a private or public hearing by the terminating board. Following the hearing, the decision of the board is final and conclusive, unless the teacher appeals to the Superior Court for the county in which the teacher was employed, and an appeal is granted. The results of the appeal process are final and conclusive.

***(D)(2)(iv)(b) Compensating, promoting, and retaining teachers and principals:*** To compensate, promote, and retain highly effective teachers and principals, Delaware will provide career pathways based on effectiveness, provide retention bonuses to highly-effective teachers and principals in high poverty or high minority schools, and provide school-based performance bonuses to high-performing schools.

*i. Pathways based on effectiveness:* Participating LEAs are required to create a Teacher Leader (or similar) pathway for highly-effective teachers, and must create at least one Teacher Leader position per high-need school beginning in the Fall of 2012. As defined by the Five-State Consortium<sup>3</sup> on Teacher Leadership, Teacher Leaders are “educators who use their expertise to improve student learning by working outside the classroom in formal and informal ways to augment the professional skills of colleagues, to strengthen the culture of the school, and to improve the quality of instruction.” Teacher Leaders must be provided with additional responsibilities in their schools and receive higher compensation (as determined by the LEAs), while continuing their work in the classroom. Only highly-effective teachers may be eligible to be selected for the position, and Teacher Leaders will need to maintain their highly-effective ratings for at least two of every three years to retain their positions.

A Delaware committee with diverse representation has drafted recommended responsibilities for Delaware’s Teacher Leaders (Appendix (D)(2)-3) By the end of the 2010-11 school year, the DDOE will create standards for the role and responsibilities of a Teacher Leader, informed by these recommendations. In addition to providing Teacher Leader roles and responsibilities, the DDOE will support LEAs in creating Teacher Leader positions by

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<sup>3</sup> The Five State Consortium includes Kansas, Ohio, Delaware, Alabama, and Kentucky

developing an evaluation supplement for DPAS II for Teacher Leaders by Fall 2010, and suggesting additional possible selection and retention requirements.

Beyond creating the Teacher Leader pathway, participating LEAs must document in their Race to the Top plans how their existing career pathways link evaluation to professional development, promotion (within and between roles), and compensation, and are further encouraged to use their RTTT allocation to develop new pathways. The State will identify and provide examples of career pathways (e.g., the Teacher Advancement Program), and provide support to LEAs in creating new pathways, particularly through assistance from TLEU experts. These pathways will complement the State's pathways, which, with the new regulations and reforms, include novice teacher, experienced teacher, teacher leader, and school leader.

The State will also use Race to the Top funding to create and fund a Delaware Fellows program in the Fall of 2011, and support University of Delaware's development of a Teacher Residency in the Fall of 2010. Both programs will provide the option of additional responsibilities and compensation for highly-effective teachers and leaders. The Delaware Fellows program will provide initial and ongoing professional development and \$5,000 transfer bonuses to highly effective teachers and leaders willing to work in select high-poverty or high-minority schools. The Teacher Residency program will offer highly-effective teachers in STEM subjects the opportunity to serve as mentors to teacher residents, and to receive a \$3,000 stipend. Both the Fellows program and the Teacher Residency program are described in depth in section (D)(3).

*ii. Compensation based on effectiveness:* In addition to becoming eligible for new pathways and programs, highly-effective teachers and leaders in select high-poverty or high-minority schools will be eligible for substantial retention bonuses, beginning in the 2011-2012 school year (when the DPAS II revisions go into effect). Using examples from other States, for example Prince George's County in Maryland, the State will determine the size of the bonuses, likely about \$10,000 for highly effective principals, \$10,000 for highly effective teachers in critical subject areas, and \$8,500 for highly effective teachers in non-critical subject areas. Retention bonuses will be available to a sub-set of the lowest-performing high-poverty or high-minority schools, and the number of schools eligible will be expanded over the course of the three-year program. All bonuses are contingent upon teaching in the same (or a similarly) high-need school in the year after a highly-effective rating is received.

The State will also use Race to the Top funding to continue its Academic Achievement Award Program, which provides performance-based bonuses to five schools annually. The program uses ARRA funding to provide \$150,000 to each of five schools that have closed the achievement gap significantly and/or exceeded their adequate yearly progress for two or more consecutive years. At least four of those schools must be in the highest quartile of schools with students from low-income families. The current program is set to expire in 2011, and will be continued for two years with Race to the Top funding. The program will be refined based on lessons learned from the first two-years of implementation, most likely to include clear criteria for what schools must do to be eligible for awards, and how awards must be (and are encouraged to be) distributed.

Lastly, the State will encourage participating LEAs to use their RTTT funding to create compensation models that provide differentiated compensation to effective or highly-effective teachers in critical subject areas or hard-to-staff classes (e.g., remedial English vs. AP English). All of these pathways and compensation opportunities ensure that highly-effective teachers and leaders have opportunities to receive differentiated responsibilities and compensation. The DDOE and LEAs will have differing responsibilities for the activities associated with using evaluations to inform decisions, with the DDOE's work led by the Teacher and Leader Effectiveness Unit (TLEU). The DDOE will determine the Teacher Leader responsibilities, require a highly-effective rating for teacher leader selection, suggest additional selection and retention requirements for Teacher Leaders, and provide examples of comprehensive career pathways to LEAs. The TLEU will develop and oversee the Delaware Fellows program and the retention bonus program, support the Teacher Residency program, and will evaluate and expand the Academic Achievement Award program. The TLEU will also rigorously evaluate the effectiveness of these programs. Individual LEAs will be responsible for creating teacher leader or similar pathways, and defining/revising their overall pathways. LEAs will also ensure the successful implementation of the revised regulations to develop, reward, and remove teachers and leaders based on effectiveness. For a full description of the activities, timing, and responsible parties for this criterion, please see the end of this section

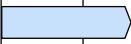



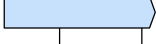
By driving these programs at a state level, while encouraging LEAs to develop their own approaches, the State expects to seed innovation in using evaluation to inform career paths,









promotion, retention, and compensation. In addition, the State expects to evaluate the success of these programs in improving the overall effectiveness of teaching.

### **Conclusion**

Delaware will soon have one of the most robust teacher and leader effectiveness strategies in the country, based on a sophisticated evaluation system with associated rewards and consequences. This robust effectiveness strategy, combined with Delaware's sophisticated data system, will be critical to the success of each of the plans described in this section. The DDOE's regular examination of effectiveness data will: 1) allow the State to better understand the distribution of teachers and leaders, in order to target equitable distribution programs at those individuals who are truly effective; 2) provide a full understanding of which preparation programs are most effective, so the State may expand those programs and require specific improvements in less effective programs; and 3) enable the DDOE to certify and provide only those supports which are proven to impact teacher and leader effectiveness, and subsequently student achievement. Ultimately, a true understanding of teacher and leader effectiveness will not only inform these human capital decisions, but will also help Delaware identify and replicate the most successful education practices across the State, and share those findings across the country.

## Summary: Activities, Timeline, Responsible Parties

Activities	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Responsible parties
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Define "Student Growth" through a stakeholder engagement process</li> </ul>				January 2010-July 2011				Secretary of Education, Representative stakeholders (DSEA, LEAs, etc.), TLEU Analyst
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide high-quality training to all assessors (ongoing)</li> </ul>				January 2010-February 2013				DDOE continues to provide; training refined by TLEU Program Manager
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contract with a 3rd party provider to recruit, hire and train development coaches</li> </ul>			September-December 2010					TLEU Program Manager, 3rd party provider
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development coaches work with administrators on DPAS II transition</li> </ul>				January 2011-December 2012				TLEU Program Manager, school/district administrators responsible for evaluation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Audit DPAS II documentation for compliance and quality (ongoing)</li> </ul>				May 2011- February 2013				TLEU Program Manager, 3rd party auditor

Activities	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Responsible parties
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct DPAS feedback sessions and develop Improvement Plans (ongoing)</li> </ul>				January 2010-February 2013				Development coaches, as overseen by TLEU Program Manager
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Certify and recommend PD based on specific gaps in the DPAS II Rubric</li> </ul>			September 2010-May 2011					TLEU Program Manager certifies, Development coaches recommend
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Propose legislation requiring novice teachers to have two years of Student improvement before receiving tenure</li> </ul>		January-June 2010						Governor's office
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Remove ineffective teachers and principals with a pattern of Ineffective Performance (ongoing)</li> </ul>				September 2011-February 2013				Principals and superintendents, through state regulations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create/define Teacher Leader pathway and other pathways based on evaluation, with differentiated roles and compensation</li> </ul>			September 2010-September 2011					TLEU Program manager defines Teacher Leader role/responsibilities and evaluation supplement, schools/districts create pathways
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create and provide Fellows Program for highly effective teachers and leaders (end SY 2014-15)</li> </ul>				September 2011-February 2013				TLEU Program Manager, additional detail in (D)(3)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide retention bonuses to highly effective teachers and leaders in select schools (end May 2014)</li> </ul>				January 2012-February 2013				TLEU Program Manager, additional detail in (D)(3)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expand the Academic Achievement Award Program (July 2012-13)</li> </ul>				August 2012-April 2013				TLEU Program Manager

## Performance metrics

Criteria	General goals to be provided at time of application	Baseline data and annual targets (Percent)	End of SY	End of SY	End of SY	End of SY
			2010-11 Percent	2011-12 Percent	2012-13 Percent	2013-14 Percent
(D)(2)(i)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Percentage of participating LEAs that measure student growth (as defined in this notice)</li> </ul>	N/A: All LEAs measure student growth to some extent with state assessment data, but there is no clear statewide approach	N/A	100: All LEAs will measure student growth with a clear statewide approach	100	100
(D)(2)(ii)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Percentage of participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems for teachers</li> </ul>	100: All LEAs use DPAS II, a qualifying evaluation system for teachers and principals	100	100	100	100
(D)(2)(ii)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Percentage of participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems for principals</li> </ul>	100: All LEAs use DPAS II, a qualifying evaluation system for teachers and principals	100	100	100	100
(D)(2)(iv)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Percentage of participating LEAs with qualifying evaluation systems that are used to inform</li> </ul>	–	–	–	–	–
(D)(2)(iv)(a)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developing teachers and principals</li> </ul>	100: All LEAs use DPAS II, which requires feedback sessions and improvement plans based on DPAS II evaluations	100	100	100	100
(D)(2)(iv)(b)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Compensating teachers and principals</li> </ul>	5: One LEA is known to use DPAS II ratings to inform compensation	5	100: Highly effective teachers and principals in select high-need schools in all participating LEAs will be eligible for retention bonuses. All high-need schools must also provide the Teacher Leader pathway to highly effective teachers, with associated	100	100

Criteria	General goals to be provided at time of application	Baseline data and annual targets (Percent)	End of SY	End of SY	End of SY	End of SY
			2010-11 Percent	2011-12 Percent	2012-13 Percent	2013-14 Percent
(D)(2)(iv)(b)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promoting teachers and principals</li> </ul>	100: All LEAs use the state evaluations when considering promotion of teachers and principals, but there are no clear requirements for how evaluations must inform promotions	–	100: All teachers will use evaluation as a primary factor; all LEAs will have to define how their career pathways link to evaluation, and create the Teacher Leader pathway for highly effective teachers	100	100
(D)(2)(iv)(b)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Retaining effective teachers and principals</li> </ul>	100: All LEAs use the state evaluations when considering retention of teachers and principals, but there are no clear requirements for how evaluations must inform retention	–	100: Highly effective teachers and principals in select high-need schools will be eligible for retention bonuses, and evaluation will be used as the primary factor in decisions	100	100
(D)(2)(iv)(c)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Granting tenure and/or full certification (where applicable) to teachers and principals</li> </ul>	100: Teachers on initial licenses who receive more than one unsatisfactory ("ineffective") DPAS II rating will not receive a continuing professional license	100	100: Teachers on initial licenses who receive more than one unsatisfactory ("ineffective") DPAS II rating OR who do not receive at least 2 years of satisfactory student growth ratings will not receive tenure	100	100
(D)(2)(iv)(d)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Removing ineffective tenured and untenured teachers and principals</li> </ul>	100: Teachers and principals with any type of license are eligible for removal based on a pattern of ineffective teaching	–	100: Teachers and principals with any type of license are eligible for removal based on a pattern of ineffective teaching; teachers and principals who receive ratings of "needs improvement" for three consecutive years will also be considered to have show	100	100

Criteria	General goals to be provided at time of application	Baseline data and annual targets (Percent)	End of SY		End of SY	End of SY
			2010-11 Percent	End of SY 2011-12 Percent	2012-13 Percent	2013-14 Percent
Optional	▪ Number of development coaches deployed	0*	15	15	0	0
	▪ Percentage of teachers and principals who are rated "highly effective"	15*	15	20	25	30
	▪ Percentage of teachers and principals who are rated "effective"	45*	45	48	49	50
	▪ Percentage of teachers and principals who are rated "needs improvement"	25*	25	21	18	15
	▪ Percentage of teachers and principals who are rated "ineffective"	15*	15	11	8	5

(See methodology in (D)(3) for information on how these metrics were calculated)  
\* Estimates

## Summary: Benefits and requirements for all LEAs and Participating LEAs as described in the MOU

For all LEAs/charters, the State will...	For participating LEAs/charters, the State will...	Participating LEAs/charters will...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Revise DPASII to meet regulations requiring student growth for effective and highly effective ratings</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Define rigorous and comparable measures of student growth in consultation with stakeholder groups</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ <b>Provide high-quality training to assessors</b> on conducting evaluations and providing specific and actionable feedback using the State's 4-level rubric <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Require documentation of evaluations and conduct audits</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ <b>Define the teacher leader role and responsibilities</b> (which will include daily teaching time) and create an evaluation supplement for DPAS II for teacher leaders</li> <li>▪ <b>Define model career ladder</b> (or identify examples)</li> <li>▪ <b>Propose legislation</b> requiring teachers to show appropriate levels of student growth prior to offering continuing licenses and tenure protections</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Recruit, train, deploy, and subsidize development coaches</b> to support the transition to a more rigorous, transparent evaluation process, reduce the administrative burden, and improve calibration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Subsidize ongoing, one-on-one training to assessors in using the State's 4-level rubric and providing specific and actionable feedback</li> <li>– Subsidize ongoing, one-on-one training to assessors in creating development plans in response to evaluation</li> <li>– Assist assessors with calibrating their evaluations</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ <b>Expand the whole-school bonus program</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Integrate development coaches</b> into the evaluation process and ensure assessors have a half-day available monthly to collaborate with coaches <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Minimum 2 years of coaching for each assessor</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ <b>Use State educator evaluations as a primary factor in teacher and principal development plans, promotion, advancement, retention, and removal</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Use the State's 4-level rubric to provide specific and actionable feedback following observations and evaluation (All LEAs/charters)*</li> <li>– Create improvement plans to address needs identified through evaluation (All LEAs/charters)*</li> <li>– Deliver professional development offerings that are aligned with improvement plans (see support section) (All LEAs/charters)*</li> <li>– Use evaluations as a primary factor in making promotion, advancement, retention, and removal decisions (for removal, All LEAs/charters)*</li> <li>– Provide evaluation results, including ratings on the 4-level rubric, to the State (All LEAs/charters)*</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ <b>Define the career ladders already in place</b> (if any) that link evaluation to professional development, promotion, advancement, and compensation</li> <li>▪ <b>Optional: Create new career ladders</b> that link evaluation to professional development, promotion, advancement, and compensation (e.g., proven programs such as TAP (The Teacher Advancement Program))</li> <li>▪ <b>Optional:</b> Create differentiated compensation for effective or highly-effective teachers in critical subject areas or hard-to-staff classes (e.g., remedial vs. AP)</li> <li>▪ <b>Create a teacher leader career path</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Establish and staff teacher leader position(s) in each high-need school, or demonstrate the existence of other similar positions that are open only to highly effective educators (per the State educator evaluation) and meet the responsibilities, differentiated compensation, selection, and retention characteristics described below<sup>1</sup> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ Define teacher leader role and responsibilities in accordance with State's definition</li> <li>▫ Provide differentiated compensation for teacher leaders</li> <li>▫ Implement a rigorous selection process that considers only highly effective teachers for teacher leader roles</li> <li>▫ Require "highly-effective" ratings for at least 2 out of every 3 evaluations for teacher leaders to remain in role</li> </ul> </li> <li>– Optional: Establish teacher leader positions in schools that are not high-need</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

\* All LEAs/charters will have to complete these activities, not just participating LEAs/charters  
1 If approved by the State

**(D)(3) Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals (25 points)**

*The extent to which the State, in collaboration with its participating LEAs (as defined in this notice), has a high-quality plan and ambitious yet achievable annual targets to—*

*(i) Ensure the equitable distribution of teachers and principals by developing a plan, informed by reviews of prior actions and data, to ensure that students in high-poverty and/or high-minority schools (both as defined in this notice) have equitable access to highly effective teachers and principals (both as defined in this notice) and are not served by ineffective teachers and principals at higher rates than other students; (15 points) and*

*(ii) Increase the number and percentage of effective teachers (as defined in this notice) teaching hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas including mathematics, science, and special education; teaching in language instruction educational programs (as defined under Title III of the ESEA); and teaching in other areas as identified by the State or LEA. (10 points)*

*Plans for (i) and (ii) may include, but are not limited to, the implementation of incentives and strategies in such areas as recruitment, compensation, teaching and learning environments, professional development, and human resources practices and processes.*

*The State shall provide its detailed plan for this criterion in the text box below. The plan should include, at a minimum, the goals, activities, timelines, and responsible parties (see Reform Plan Criteria elements in Application Instructions or Section XII, Application Requirements (e), for further detail). In the text box below, the State shall describe its current status in meeting the criterion. The narrative or attachments shall also include, at a minimum, the evidence listed below, and how each piece of evidence demonstrates the State's success in meeting the criterion. The narrative and attachments may also include any additional information the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers. For attachments included in the Appendix, note in the narrative the location where the attachments can be found.*

*Evidence for (D)(3)(i):*

- *Definitions of high-minority and low-minority schools as defined by the State for the purposes of the State's Teacher Equity Plan.*

*Recommended maximum response length: Three pages*



## **(D)(3) Overview - Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals**

### **Ensuring equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals**

<b>Vision</b>	Ensure equitable distribution by using targeted programs to place teachers and principals in high-need schools, and to prepare teachers for high-need subjects; provide financial incentives to retain effective teachers and principals, and work to improve school environments and statewide marketing
<b>Strategies</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Develop programs that place highly effective teachers and principals in high-poverty and high-minority schools</li><li>2. Increase the preparation of teachers in hard-to-staff subjects</li><li>3. Provide incentives to retain highly effective teachers and principals in high-need schools</li><li>4. Improve the State's teaching and learning conditions, as well as marketing and recruitment</li></ol>
<b>Goals</b>	<p>By end of SY 2013-2014 Delaware will have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ 240 teachers and principals who have moved to a high-need school as part of the Delaware Fellows Program</li><li>▪ 100 non-traditional candidates certified as STEM teachers through the Teacher Residency Program</li><li>▪ 600 retention bonuses distributed to highly effective teachers and principals in high-need schools</li><li>▪ 30% decrease in the attrition of highly effective teachers and principals from high-need schools (to 7%)</li><li>▪ 1,000 applicants using the statewide portal for Delaware teaching positions</li><li>▪ 25% increase in the number of applications for Delaware teaching positions</li><li>▪ 55% of teaching and learning conditions survey respondents citing visible improvements in their teaching and learning environments</li><li>▪ The effectiveness distribution spread between educators in high- and low-need schools cut in half, from an estimated 20% to 10%</li></ul>

Delaware has shown a commitment to equitably distributing effective teachers and administrators, through its Highly Qualified Teacher Plan, its annual Supply and Demand Survey Analysis, and various “critical shortage” programs (described in section (D)(1)).<sup>4</sup> With its revised, rigorous evaluation system (see (D)(2)), the State will have detailed assessment information to ensure that equitable distribution efforts target truly effective teachers and leaders, rather than those considered to be high-quality through proxy indicators (e.g., degrees conferred).

Delaware will pursue four strategic sets of activities to ensure equitable distribution of its effective teachers: (1) Develop programs that place highly effective teachers and principals in high-poverty and high-minority schools; (2) Increase the number and percentage of effective teachers in hard-to-staff subjects with targeted preparation programs; (3) Provide incentives to

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<sup>4</sup> These programs include the Christa McAuliffe Teacher Incentive Program, Critical Need Scholarships, and the Delaware Teacher Corps. For more information on these programs, please see section (D)(1).

retain effective teachers and principals in high-need schools; and (4) Improve the State's teaching and learning environments, as well as marketing and recruitment. Delaware will be distinctively capable of achieving equitable distribution in these ways due to its small size, its rigorous evaluation system, and its sophisticated data capabilities, which allow for the rapid implementation and expansion of programs that will significantly impact effectiveness and distribution.

### **Goals**

Delaware's ultimate goal is to ensure that effective and highly-effective teachers and principals are present in the same proportions in the faculties of high-poverty and high-minority schools as they are in schools across the State. (The State defines high-minority and low-minority schools as those schools in the highest and lowest quartiles, respectively, with regard to the percent of minority students enrolled.) With robust teacher and principal evaluations in place in the 2011-12 school year, the State expects to make significant progress towards this goal by 2014. Based on current student achievement data, the State estimates that there is a 20% "spread" in effectiveness between faculties in high- and low-need schools - - i.e only 50% of teachers in high-need schools are effective vs. 70% in low-need schools. Delaware's goal for 2013-14 is to increase the effectiveness of the teacher pool overall (as described in (D)(2)), and to cut this spread in half, to only 10%. Using an assumed baseline distribution of 60% effective and highly effective teachers across the State, with 50% in high-need schools and 70% in low-need schools, Delaware hopes to bring the average to 80% effective or highly effective, with 75% in high-need schools and 85% in low-need schools. (For more information on this methodology, please see the explanation in the performance metrics chart at the end of this section. Baseline evaluation data are estimates based on the current two-tiered system and student achievement data).

The other targets Delaware will meet as part of this goal are described below:

By end of SY 2013-14 Delaware will have:

- 240 teachers and principals who have moved to a high-need school as part of the Delaware Fellows Program, and 100 non-traditional candidates certified as STEM teachers through the Teacher Residency Program

- 600 substantial retention bonuses distributed to highly effective teachers and principals in high-need schools, and a 30% decrease in the attrition of highly effective teachers and principals from high-need schools (to 7%)
- 55% of Teaching and Learning Conditions Survey respondents citing visible improvements in their teaching and learning environments
- 1,000 applicants using the statewide portal for Delaware teaching positions, with a 25% increase in the number of applications for Delaware teaching positions

### **Activities**

Delaware recognizes that achieving its equitable distribution goals will require a multi-faceted strategy that addresses all aspects of the teacher and principal pipeline: from marketing and recruitment, to placement and retention. Together, the different activities below offer a comprehensive approach for ensuring equitable distribution.

#### **(D)(3)(i) Develop programs to ensure that students have equitable access to highly-effective teachers and principals, by placing highly-effective teachers and principals in high-need schools.**

Delaware will establish and expand programs that recruit, select, prepare, and place teachers and principals in high-poverty and high-minority schools. Specifically, Delaware will create the Delaware Fellows Program, expand its partnership with Teach For America (TFA), and work to establish partnerships with alternate certification routes that prepare teachers and principals for high-need schools. The partnerships with TFA and efforts to expand alternative certification routes are described in section (D)(1), and are expected to yield an additional 400 teachers and 40 principals in high-poverty and high-minority schools over the next five years. The Delaware Fellows Program is a new state initiative, which will offer \$5,000 transfer bonuses, special summer training, and monthly professional development to experienced (minimum three years), highly-effective teachers and principals moving to high-poverty and high minority schools.

The goal of the Delaware Fellows program is to bring 215 Teacher Fellows and 25 Principal Fellows to a select sub-set of high-need schools, in cohorts of two or more fellows per year. Because applicants must be rated highly-effective to be eligible, this program cannot begin until the fall of 2012, when the first results of the revised DPAS II will be available. Two rounds of application dates (in March and June) will accommodate teachers and principals with varying needs and schedules. Fellows will receive \$5,000 transfer bonuses (contingent upon a minimum

two-year commitment), and paid training in the summer before their placements (through programs that specialize in preparing instructors to work in high-needs environments, such as the University of Virginia's Turnaround Program). Fellows will also participate in monthly professional development, designed to make teachers and leaders maximally effective in high-poverty and high-minority schools (similar to the ongoing professional development provided by Teach for America and The New Teacher Project). Teacher fellows will be placed in a cohort of at least two teachers at a participating school, to encourage peer learning and support, as well as to incent schools to participate in the Fellows Program.

In order to be eligible to host a cohort of fellows, targeted schools (high-poverty and/or high-minority) must show that they are implementing, or continuing to implement, school-wide strategies to improve teaching and learning environments. For example, a school could demonstrate that it has increased collaborative planning time, established several Teacher Leader positions, developed a comprehensive professional development model, or brought in new leadership. This will ensure that the fellows' experiences are as positive and impactful as possible, and further encourage schools to make the necessary changes to their teaching and learning environments, in order to receive highly-effective fellows. The Delaware Secretary of Education will determine the exact eligibility criteria and selection process for host schools, and the program will ramp up after a pilot in the 2012-13 school year (the goal will be to go from 40 teacher and 5 principal fellows in the first year, to 75 teachers and 10 principals in year two, and 100 teachers and 10 principals in year three). Fellows who continue to be highly-effective in their new roles will be further rewarded through a significant retention bonus program described below. The Teacher and Leader Effectiveness Unit (TLEU) will manage the Fellows Program, and work with the Program Management Office (PMO) to evaluate its success and make improvements where necessary.

**(D)(3)(ii) Increase the number and percentage of effective teachers in hard-to-staff subjects with targeted preparation programs**

Delaware will increase the number and percentage of effective teachers in hard-to-staff subjects and specialty areas by establishing and expanding targeted preparation programs that have been proven to prepare effective teachers, and evaluating the effectiveness of program graduates. As noted in section (D)(1), the State has a process for encouraging the preparation of teachers in critical subject areas (for example, the Delaware Teacher Corps and Critical Need Scholarships)

as well as programs for increasing the number of teachers in special education (such as the Certification Plus Program).

Delaware will supplement these efforts with a Teacher Residency program, which will provide an alternate route to certification for both traditional and non-traditional applicants willing to become STEM teachers in select high-need schools (note: as explained in (D)(1), the Teacher Residency program already exists in Delaware's regulations). The Teacher Residency program will recruit individuals with strong content knowledge and/or professional experience, who will be recruited with the assistance of local corporate sponsors (e.g., DuPont). Residents will be placed in cohorts of two or more in select schools, to encourage the development of a collaborative learning environment. Schools will be selected based on the strength of their STEM faculty, and the availability and willingness of highly effective faculty members to serve as residents' mentors.

During their first year, residents will be paid an \$11,000 stipend, and placed in a classroom with a mentor teacher who receives a \$3,000 supplement. Residents will take University of Delaware courses leading to a teaching credential and master's degree. In the second year, residents will be placed in their own classrooms in high-need schools, with continued strong mentoring for two years. Race to the Top funding will be used to cover the startup costs for this program, including the advertising and marketing plan, professional development, resident tuition and stipends. After the first two years, the LEAs will absorb an increasing share of the costs of the residency program.

**(D)(3)(i-ii) Provide incentives to retain effective teachers and principals**

The activities described above will be critical for attracting more effective teachers into high-need schools and subjects. To retain highly-effective teachers and leaders in high-need schools, Delaware will adopt a retention bonus program, and extend the Academic Achievement Award Program for primarily high-poverty schools that have made significant academic progress (for more information on the Academic Achievement Award Program see section (D)(2)).

The retention bonus program will provide annual bonuses to teachers and principals who are rated highly-effective, and who agree to continue working in their high-poverty schools (or another equally high-poverty school) for the following year. The program will begin with \$1,000,000 in bonuses available in 2011-12, and expand to \$2,500,000 for both the 2012-13 and the 2013-4 school years. The exact amount of individual bonuses will depend on the number of

highly-effective teachers and principals, but the State will limit the number of schools eligible for the program to ensure that each bonus remains significant. Retention bonuses will likely be about \$10,000 for principals and \$8,500 for teachers, with an additional \$1,500 “subject” bonus for teachers in critical subject areas. At those amounts, Delaware would be able to provide 600 retention bonuses through this program. The goal of the retention bonus program is to decrease attrition rates for highly effective-teachers in high need schools. If proven successful, the State will seek private and federal funding (e.g. TIF grants) to sustain and expand the retention bonus program.

**(D)(3)(i-ii) Improve the State’s teaching and learning environments, as well as marketing and recruitment**

Delaware recognizes that differentiated pay is only one component of retaining highly-effective teachers in high-need schools, and that significant efforts must be taken to improve schools’ teaching and learning environments. The DDOE will commission a statewide Teaching and Learning Conditions Survey, which will be analyzed to identify the most critical issues, and potential courses of redress, for improving school environments. Delaware also recognizes that school environments are not shaped by students and educators alone, and will work to improve community and parental involvement in schools. The State will require participating LEAs to use RTTT funding to engage families and communities effectively, in supporting the academic success of students. The State further supports the Rodel Foundation’s initiative to create community-oriented schools that meet students’ social, emotional, and health needs. For the lowest performing schools, the State will require, as part of Partnership Zone negotiations, that schools create on-going mechanisms for parental and community involvement, and that the new school model be community-oriented.

With increased opportunities and support for educators in high-need schools, the DDOE must clearly articulate and market the value of teaching in Delaware (and a high-need school in particular). Marketing and recruitment are critical not only for equitable distribution of teachers and principals, but for the State’s overall effort to attract and retain effective educators.

With Race to the Top funding, Delaware will develop a statewide marketing campaign beginning in the Fall of 2010, to bring more candidates into the pipeline through traditional and alternate routes to certification, and to encourage more certified teachers and principals to work in high-poverty and/or high- minority schools. The campaign will serve as a central vehicle for

publicizing the range of new and existing Delaware programs (through online and print media), and will supplement the decentralized marketing efforts that takes place today. The primary goal of the campaign will be to sharpen and emphasize the value proposition for teaching in Delaware -- for example, the opportunity to work in a State at the forefront of education reform, with comprehensive professional development focused on data-driven instruction, and multiple career pathways and incentives for effective teachers and leaders.

The State will also create a central hiring website, which will list all available job opportunities in public education and provide a common employment application. Applicants will be able to submit all of their application materials through the website, and specify the counties or schools where they would like to be considered. This will make the application process much easier for candidates than the current process, which requires separate applications to each LEA.

Finally, the State will also encourage participating LEAs to use their RTTT allocations to implement any reforms targeted towards increasing the concentration of highly-effective teachers and leaders in high-need schools. In accordance with the RTTT guidance, this may include strategies in such areas as recruitment, compensation, teaching and learning environments, professional development, human resources practices and processes. For a full description of all of the activities, timing, and responsible parties, please see the chart at the end of this section.

### **Conclusion**

Ultimately, the State's goal is to give students in high-poverty and high-minority schools as much (if not more) exposure to effective teaching as other students across the State receive, through a combination of recruitment, preparation, placement, and retention programs. The more rigorous evaluation ratings provided by DPAS II will provide the eligibility criteria for many of these new programs, ensuring that efforts are targeted towards teachers and leaders who are proven to be effective at achieving student growth. The enhanced DPAS II evaluations will also provide rapid feedback to the DDOE on the success of Delaware's efforts to evenly distribute effective teachers. Using statewide data, Delaware will be able to identify which programs are most successful at preparing effective teachers and principals, and placing and retaining them in the schools where they are needed most. By collecting and communicating this information, Delaware will work to ensure that its successful equitable distribution strategies are replicated across the country.

## Summary: Activities, Timeline, Responsible Parties

Activities	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Responsible parties
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create fellows program application process; solicit applications for fellows and host schools</li> </ul>			September 2011-June 2012					TLEU Program manager
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Select "first wave" of fellows, provide summer training and ongoing support, refine and expand program</li> </ul>				July 2012-June 2014				TLEU Program manager and 3rd party training/PD providers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partner with national leaders in alternate certification, expand TFA</li> </ul>	January 2010-December 2012							DDOE, DE business community
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide retention bonuses to highly effective teachers and leaders in select high need schools</li> </ul>				September 2012-January 2015				TLEU Program manager
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expand Academic Achievement Award program</li> </ul>			July 2011-July 2014					TLEU Program manager

Activities	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Responsible parties
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct annual supply and demand report to anticipate critical needs</li> </ul>	January 2010-December 2012							DDOE, University of Delaware
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create STEM teacher residency application process; solicit applications for residents and host schools</li> </ul>		September 2010-June 2011						TLEU Program Manager, University of Delaware
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Place teacher residents, provide training and ongoing support</li> </ul>			July 2011-June 2014					TLEU Program Manager, University of Delaware
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Launch statewide marketing campaign to attract potential teachers and leaders and encourage certified teachers and leaders to work in high need schools</li> </ul>		August 2010 - December 2012						TLEU Program Manager, 3rd party provider advertising firm
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create and publicize a central hiring website and application process</li> </ul>		January-August 2011						Technology Design and Management Work group, TLEU Program Manager
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct Teaching and Learning Conditions Survey</li> </ul>	August-December 2010		September 2011- January 2012					TLEU Program Manager, DSEA, third party provider as needed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify and implement strategies to increase parental and community involvement</li> </ul>		August 2010-December 2012						Participating LEAs, DE Business community



## Performance metrics

Performance measures	Baseline data and annual targets				
	Actual Data: Baseline (Current school year or most recent)	End of SY 2010-11	End of SY 2011-12	End of SY 2012-13	End of SY 2013-14
<b>General goals to be provided at time of application</b>					
▪ Percentage of teachers in schools that are high-poverty, high-minority, or both (as defined in this notice) who are highly effective (as defined in this notice)	▪ N/A	5	13	20	25
▪ Percentage of teachers in schools that are low-poverty, low-minority, or both (as defined in this notice) who are highly effective (as defined in this notice)	▪ N/A	25	29	32	35
▪ Percentage of teachers in schools that are high-poverty, high-minority, or both (as defined in this notice) who are ineffective	▪ N/A	25	29	32	35
▪ Percentage of teachers in schools that are low-poverty, low-minority, or both (as defined in this notice) who are ineffective	▪ N/A	5	4	3	2
▪ Percentage of principals leading schools that are high-poverty, high-minority, or both (as defined in this notice) who are highly effective (as defined in this notice)	▪ N/A	5	13	20	25
▪ Percentage of principals leading schools that are low-poverty, low-minority, or both (as defined in this notice) who are highly effective (as defined in this notice)	▪ N/A	25	29	32	35
▪ Percentage of principals leading schools that are high-poverty, high-minority, or both (as defined in this notice) who are ineffective	▪ N/A	25	20	15	10
▪ Percentage of principals leading schools that are low-poverty, low-minority, or both (as defined in this notice) who are ineffective	▪ N/A	5	4	3	2
▪ (Optional: Enter text here to clarify or explain any of the data)					
Performance measures	Actual Data: Baseline (Current school year or most recent)	End of SY 2010-11	End of SY 2011-12	End of SY 2012-13	End of SY 2013-14
<b>General data to be provided at time of application</b>					
▪ Total number of schools that are high-poverty, high-minority, or both (as defined in this notice)	▪ High Pov: 51 ▪ High Min: 52 ▪ Both: 35				
▪ Total number of schools that are low-poverty, low-minority, or both (as defined in this notice)	▪ Low Pov: 52 ▪ Low Min: 53 ▪ Both: 25				
▪ Total number of teachers in schools that are high-poverty, high-minority, or both (as defined in this notice)	▪ High Pov: 1,589 ▪ High Min: 1,759 ▪ Both: 1,063				
▪ Total number of teachers in schools that are low-poverty, low-minority, or both (as defined in this notice)	▪ Low Pov: 2,215 ▪ Low Min: 2,116 ▪ Both: 1,064				
▪ Total number of principals leading schools that are high-poverty, high-minority, or both (as defined in this notice)	▪ 58				Principals leading schools that are high-poverty only, high-minority only, or high poverty and high minority
▪ Total number of principals leading schools that are low-poverty, low-minority, or both (as defined in this notice)	▪ 68				Principals
▪ (Optional: Enter text here to clarify or explain any of the data)	▪ Reported for all AYP schools based on poverty and minority quartiles				

Performance measures	Baseline data and annual targets				
	Actual Data: Baseline (Current school year or most recent)	End of SY 2010-11	End of SY 2011-12	End of SY 2012-13	End of SY 2013-14
<b>General goals to be provided at time of application</b>					
▪ Percentage of mathematics teachers who were evaluated as effective or better	▪ N/A	60	68	75	80
▪ Percentage of science teachers who were evaluated as effective or better	▪ N/A	60	68	75	80
▪ Percentage of special education teachers who were evaluated as effective or better	▪ N/A	60	68	75	80
▪ Percentage of teachers in language instruction educational programs who were evaluated as effective or better	▪ N/A	60	68	75	80
▪ (Optional: Enter text here to clarify or explain any of the data)					

Performance measures	Actual Data: Baseline (Current school year or most recent)
<b>General data to be provided at time of application</b>	
▪ Total number of mathematics teachers	▪ 587
▪ Total number of science teachers	▪ 464
▪ Total number of special education teachers	▪ 1,779
▪ Total number of teachers in language instruction educational programs	▪ 207    ▪ 305 for foreign language
▪ (Optional: Enter text here to clarify or explain any of the data)	▪ Data for all State teachers (including non-AYP schools)

Performance measures	Actual Data: Baseline				
	(Current school year or most recent)	End of SY 2010-11	End of SY 2011-12	End of SY 2012-13	End of SY 2013-14
<b>Optional</b>					
▪ No. of new teacher fellows selected (for the next SY)	0	0	40	75	100
▪ No. of new principal fellows selected (for the next SY)	0	0	5	10	10
▪ No. of Teacher Residents	0	20	20	30	30
▪ No. of teachers and principals receiving retention bonuses	N/A	5	100	250	250
▪ No. of \$\$ available for retention bonuses	0	0	1,000,000	2,500,000	2,500,000
▪ Attrition rate of highly effective teachers	10.5	10.0	9.0	8.0	7.0
▪ No. of users of central hiring website	N/A	250	500	750	1,000
▪ Increase in applications to Delaware programs and positions (expected impact from marketing campaign)	0	10	15	20	25
▪ % of respondents citing significant improvements in teaching and learning conditions	0	10	25	40	55
▪ Average spread between proportion of highly effective teachers in low-poverty/low-minority vs. high-poverty/high-minority schools	N/A	20	16	12	10

Note: Attrition rate for highly effective teachers is estimated based on attrition rate for all teachers

#### Methodology:

The State recently rewrote its regulations relating to teacher evaluation. While the previous system had only three categories (effective, needs improvement, and ineffective) and no link to student achievement, the new evaluation has added a fourth category (highly effective) and teachers and administrators must demonstrate satisfactory student growth to be rated as effective or highly effective. Because of this recent change, there is not adequate baseline data for the current teacher distribution. In lieu of this information on teachers, the State chose to estimate its baseline distribution using student achievement data. From looking at cohort-matched DSTP scores, the State estimates that 60-65% of Delaware's students are achieving a year of growth. From this, the State assumes 60% of teachers that are evaluated on the basis of student growth will be rated as effective or above under current student achievement levels. The State also estimates that, in looking at detailed distributions of student performance in select LEAs that roughly 15% will be highly-effective and 15% will be ineffective. From this, the State estimates its baseline distribution (15% ineffective, 25% needs improvement, 45% effective, and 15% highly effective). Based on the current achievement gap in Delaware, the State estimates that this teacher distribution will represent a spread of 20% between high poverty - high minority schools and low poverty-low minority schools. Given that a principal is only as

effective as the teachers they lead, the State assumes the same breakdown for principal effectiveness.

Based on an analysis of proposed programs that affect teachers directly (hiring more effective teachers, dismissing ineffective teachers, retaining existing effective teachers, and professional development), and taking into account the contribution of programs that affect student achievement directly (increased learning time, community-oriented schooling, increased parental involvement, and more rigorous standards and curricula), the State estimates that it can shift this teacher distribution. By the 2013-14 school year, the State will create a new baseline teacher distribution, which includes just 5% ineffective teachers, 15% of teachers needing improvement, 50% of teachers effective, and 30% of teachers highly-effective. In addition to this higher baseline distribution, the State will reduce the gap in teacher effectiveness between high poverty-high minority schools and low poverty-low minority from 20% to 10%. The total impact of this effort will double the number of highly effective teachers, halve the percentage ineffective teachers, and increase the total percentage of teachers rated effective from 60% to 80%. The State believes this ambitious target is achievable based on the breadth of the initiatives outlined in this proposal.

**Summary: Benefits and requirements for all LEAs and Participating LEAs as described in the MOU**

For all LEAs/charters, the State will...	For participating LEAs/charters, the State will...	Participating LEAs/charters will...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Establish new (and enhance existing) partnerships that recruit, select, prepare, and place teachers and principals in high-need schools</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Support efforts to replicate or expand proven programs</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ <b>Support the development of a STEM teacher residency</b> to attract non-traditional candidates to STEM teaching positions</li> <li>▪ <b>Create a statewide recruitment campaign</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Develop a central website for applications</li> <li>– Create a marketing campaign</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Develop an equitable distribution fellowship program</b> to attract highly qualified educators to high-need schools           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– The program will offer specialized training, professional development, and financial incentives to highly effective teachers and leaders who transfer to high-need schools</li> <li>– Educators will be placed in cohorts at high-need schools</li> <li>– Implementation will focus on a sub-set of high-need schools, as selected by the Secretary of Education based on teaching and learning environments</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ <b>Use incentives to retain highly effective teachers and leaders</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Provide financial incentives for highly effective teachers and principals in selected high-need schools</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Increase the concentration of highly-effective teachers and leaders</b> in high need schools</li> <li>▪ <b>Nominate high-need schools</b> that demonstrate commitment to improving teaching and learning environments (e.g., schools that have a strong leader in place) to participate in equitable distribution fellowship program</li> <li>▪ <b>Implement strategies to engage families and communities effectively</b> in supporting the academic success of students (e.g., creating community-oriented schools that meet students' social, emotional, and health needs)</li> <li>▪ <b>Participate in statewide recruitment campaign</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Use central website for applications (All LEAs/charters)*</li> <li>– Forecast hiring needs for teachers and leaders and use succession planning to identify high-potential candidates for school leadership positions</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

\* All LEAs/charters will have to complete these activities, not just participating LEAs/charters

**Evidence**

**Evidence for (D)(3)(i):**

- *Definitions of high-minority and low-minority schools as defined by the State for the purposes of the State's Teacher Equity Plan: **See glossary***

**(D)(4) Improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs (14 points)**

*The extent to which the State has a high-quality plan and ambitious yet achievable annual targets to—*

*(i) Link student achievement and student growth (both as defined in this notice) data to the students' teachers and principals, to link this information to the in-State programs where those teachers and principals were prepared for credentialing, and to publicly report the data for each credentialing program in the State; and*

*(ii) Expand preparation and credentialing options and programs that are successful at producing effective teachers and principals (both as defined in this notice).*

*The State shall provide its detailed plan for this criterion in the text box below. The plan should include, at a minimum, the goals, activities, timelines, and responsible parties (see Reform Plan Criteria elements in Application Instructions or Section XII, Application Requirements (e), for further detail). Any supporting evidence the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers must be described and, where relevant, included in the Appendix. For attachments included in the Appendix, note in the narrative the location where the attachments can be found.*

*Recommended maximum response length: One page*

**(D)(4) Overview - Improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs**

**Improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs**

<b>Vision</b>	Improve preparation programs by assessing the effectiveness of their participants, publicly reporting that information, expanding successful programs, and improving or removing less successful programs
<b>Strategies</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Link teacher/principal effectiveness to preparation and certification programs, and publicly report the aggregate data for each preparation/certification program</li><li>2. Improve or remove less successful programs and routes through public reporting, communication with program leadership, and the re-certification process</li><li>3. Expand successful programs and routes with a preparation expansion grant</li></ol>
<b>Goals</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Effectiveness data on graduates from all in-State preparation programs publicly accessible by Fall of 2012 (including overall effectiveness ratings and graduates' impact on student achievement and student growth)</li><li>▪ \$150,000 annually in State-funded expansion grants available to effective preparation/certification programs by Fall of 2012</li><li>▪ 70% of all preparation/certification programs (including alternative routes) applying for expansion grants by the 2013-14 school year</li></ul>

Delaware will be able to rapidly, and continually, improve the effectiveness of the State's preparation programs for three reasons. First, Delaware has just four higher education preparation programs for teachers, and three for principals: at the University of Delaware, Delaware State University, Wilmington University and Wesley College (teacher preparation only). Together, these programs provided half of the new teachers in Delaware in the 2009-2010 school year. The small number of programs allows the DDOE to be in frequent communication with the leadership of each program, and to work collaboratively with all programs on continuous improvement.

Second, the DDOE plays an active role in the re-certification of in-State credentialing programs. Representatives from the DDOE participate in the NCATE re-certification process, and the DDOE has ultimate authority to approve or refuse to re-certify preparation programs that do not receive NCATE accreditation. (For the State regulations detailing this process, please see Appendix (D)(4)-1).

Lastly, the State's data system can already link student achievement data to students' teachers and principals, and to the in-State programs where those teachers and principals were prepared. With the addition of more thorough evaluations (as described in section (D)(2)) and

public reporting, the DDOE, LEAs, and the general public will be able to clearly see which programs are producing effective teachers and principals, and program graduates' impact on student growth. This increased reporting, combined with the re-certification process and a newly created preparation expansion grant, will ensure that successful programs are expanded, and that less successful programs are improved or removed.

### **Goals**

Delaware's goals for improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs include publicly reporting effectiveness data for all programs beginning in Fall of 2012, and using this data to help programs identify opportunities for improvement. The State will also help the most effective programs expand by providing at least one grant per year for three years beginning in 2011.

### **Activities**

**(D)(4)(i) Link student achievement, student growth and educator effectiveness data to the in-state programs where teachers and principals were prepared for credentialing, and publicly report the data for each credentialing program in the State (including alternative routes)**

The DDOE began developing a monitoring and reporting system for the DPAS II in August 2009, which will be implemented in August of 2010 (for a full description of activities and timing, please see the timeline at the end of this section). As mentioned above, Delaware already has the ability to link student achievement data to students' teachers and principals, and to the programs where they were prepared for credentialing. With the revised laws improving Delaware's evaluation system and the new reporting system, Delaware will be able to not only clearly link teacher and leader preparation to student achievement and growth, but to also link to overall DPAS II ratings. This information will be publicly reported via a new feature on the Department of Education website, which will show, in aggregate, the DPAS II effectiveness ratings of graduates from different in-State programs. Specifically, the tab will allow browsers to see the aggregate rating distributions for all graduates, as well as for specific years of graduates. This feature will highlight which programs are most successful, allowing LEAs to make more informed hiring decisions, and providing valuable information to researchers and the general public.



Furthermore, the DDOE will maintain more detailed information on the exact DPAS II ratings of programs' graduates, which will be available to the preparation programs' leadership and approved researchers. Specifically, the TLEU will produce an annual report, which will highlight programs' apparent strengths and weaknesses based on effectiveness data. For example, a single program may produce a large number of graduates who consistently receive "unsatisfactory" ratings on "Planning and Preparation," or one of the criteria under the component. This will allow preparation programs, and approved researchers, to see detailed performance information for program graduates, and to link the data with their own information (e.g. graduates' course loads, GPAs, demographics), to enable pattern recognition for the factors that most often correlate with future effectiveness. The TLEU program manager will work with preparation programs to capture these insights, and to share them with all in-state preparation programs.

**Use the re-certification process to ensure the improvement or removal of ineffective programs**

Once the DDOE has detailed data on preparation programs' effectiveness, it will be able to use this information to ensure that programs address their areas of weakness. While the DDOE expects all preparation programs to take action to address any potential areas of weakness, as indicated by the TLEU report, this is particularly crucial for those programs that are up for re-certification. In those instances, the DDOE representative engaging in the NCATE accreditation process will communicate the DDOE's expectations for improvement to the preparation program leadership. Program leadership will be responsible for proving that the program has taken action to, or plans to take action to, address the specific identified areas for improvement, or they will risk losing their accreditation.

**(D)(4)(ii) Expand preparation and credentialing options and programs that are successful at producing effective teachers and principals with an expansion grant program**






The DDOE will also allocate \$150,000 of Race to the Top funding annually to a preparation expansion grant program. This money will be available to any traditional or alternate route to certification in the State. In order to be eligible for this funding, a certification program must have a proven track record of effectiveness (as indicated by the DPAS II ratings of its graduates), as well as a clear plan for using the funding to expand - be it for marketing, recruiting, additional course offerings, or other uses. The TLEU will be responsible for

developing the specific application and selection process, and The Delaware Secretary of Education will have final approval over the grant winners.

**Conclusion**

Given the small number of in-State preparation programs, the ability to easily link student and teacher data, and the multiple points of State leverage, Delaware will be able to profoundly impact the success of its teacher and leader preparation. Significantly, this ability is not limited to in-State programs alone. By linking the detailed DPAS II evaluations to all teachers and principals and their preparation programs, Delaware will also be able to target its out-of-state recruiting on those program that have consistently produced effective teachers and principals. Perhaps more importantly, the State will be able to compile information on the effectiveness of any in- or out-of-State program whose graduates are teaching in Delaware, and to share this information with preparation programs, researchers, other DOEs and LEAs, and the public at large.

**Summary: Activities, Timeline, Responsible Parties**

Activities	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Responsible parties
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Publicly report aggregate effectiveness rating data for preparation program graduates on the DDOE website</li> </ul>			 June-August 2012					Technology Design and Management Work group, TLEU Program Manager
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a detailed internal report on effectiveness of prep programs' graduates (based on the specific DPAS II rubric and student achievement)</li> </ul>			 June-August 2012					TLEU program manager
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Share internal report with prep programs to identify strengths and weaknesses, and require improvement plans if not clearly effective; enforce improvement needs with recertification process (ongoing)</li> </ul>			 September-December 2012					TLEU program manager and analyst; preparation programs' leadership; DDOE participants in recertification process, NCATE, TLEU program manager
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop an expansion grant application process for those prep programs (alternate or traditional) with proven effectiveness and clear expansion plans, solicit applications (annually)</li> </ul>			 June-August 2012					TLEU program manager, Secretary Lowery
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Select and distribute expansion grants (annually)</li> </ul>			 September-December 2012					TLEU program manager

## Performance metrics

Performance measures	Baseline data and annual targets				
	Actual data: baseline (current school year or most recent)	End of SY 2010-11	End of SY 2011-12	End of SY 2012-13	End of SY 2013-14
<b>General goals to be provided at time of application</b>					
Percentage of teacher preparation programs in the State for which the public can access data on the achievement and growth (as defined in this notice) of the graduates' students	0	0	100%	100%	100%
Percentage of principal preparation programs in the State for which the public can access data on the achievement and growth (as defined in this notice) of the graduates' students	0	0	100%	100%	100%
<b>General data to be provided at time of application</b>					
Total number of teacher credentialing programs in the State	4	–	–	–	–
Total number of principal credentialing programs in the State	3	–	–	–	–
Total number of teachers in the State	8,221	–	–	–	–
Total number of principals in the State	183	–	–	–	–
% of programs applying for preparation expansion grant with expansion plans	0	0	30%	50%	70%
\$\$ distributed in expansion grants to the most effective preparation programs	0	0	150,000	150,000	150,000

## Summary: Benefits and requirements for all LEAs and Participating LEAs as described in the MOU

For all LEAs/charters, the State will...	For participating LEAs/charters, the State will...	Participating LEAs/charters will...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Link teacher/principal effectiveness to preparation and certification programs</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Measure programs based on the effectiveness the teachers/principals they prepare/certify, including the impact of those teachers/principals on student growth</li> <li>– Publicly report the aggregate data for each preparation/certification program</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ <b>Expand successful programs and routes, improve or remove less successful programs and routes</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Provide feedback on improvement areas, and possible changes to entry and exit requirements, and curriculum</li> <li>– Rigorously conduct re-certification process</li> <li>– Support the expansion of successful programs</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ No additional activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Target recruiting and hiring</b> to the most effective preparation programs, as demonstrated by the effectiveness of the teachers/principals they prepare/certify</li> <li>▪ <b>Provide input</b> into feedback for preparation and certification programs</li> </ul>

**(D)(5) Providing effective support to teachers and principals (20 points)**

*The extent to which the State, in collaboration with its participating LEAs (as defined in this notice), has a high-quality plan for its participating LEAs (as defined in this notice) to—*

*(i) Provide effective, data-informed professional development, coaching, induction, and common planning and collaboration time to teachers and principals that are, where appropriate, ongoing and job-embedded. Such support might focus on, for example, gathering, analyzing, and using data; designing instructional strategies for improvement; differentiating instruction; creating school environments supportive of data-informed decisions; designing instruction to meet the specific needs of high need students (as defined in this notice); and aligning systems and removing barriers to effective implementation of practices designed to improve student learning outcomes; and*

*(ii) Measure, evaluate, and continuously improve the effectiveness of those supports in order to improve student achievement (as defined in this notice).*

*The State shall provide its detailed plan for this criterion in the text box below. The plan should include, at a minimum, the goals, activities, timelines, and responsible parties (see Reform Plan Criteria elements in Application Instructions or Section XII, Application Requirements (e), for further detail). Any supporting evidence the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers must be described and, where relevant, included in the Appendix. For attachments included in the Appendix, note in the narrative the location where the attachments can be found.*

*Recommended maximum response length: Five pages*

## (D)(5) Overview - Providing effective support to teachers and principals

### Providing effective support to teachers and principals

<b>Vision</b>	Provide effective, coherent, and data-informed professional development and supports that have a positive impact on student learning, and that allow educators to continuously improve
<b>Strategies</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Ensure that professional development is coherent, by requiring participating LEAs to identify or adopt a comprehensive PD model</li><li>2. Ensure that professional development is data-informed, by providing targeted statewide supports for using data to improve instruction and to develop teachers and principals</li><li>3. Ensure that all professional development and supports are effective, by creating a statewide PD certification system for professional development, measuring student and participant outcomes, and continuously improving programs</li></ol>
<b>Goals</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Double the percentage of highly effective teachers and leaders</li><li>▪ Certify 100% of professional development offerings</li><li>▪ All participating districts can show a coherent approach to professional development</li><li>▪ 100% of novice and high-need principals complete intensive leadership training</li><li>▪ All other principals participate in the SAMs program</li></ul>

Providing effective support to teachers and principals is a recurring theme throughout Delaware's reform agenda, as the State will ensure that supports are provided to make Delaware's educators (and subsequently the State's reform plans) maximally effective. Delaware's vision is to provide effective, coherent, and data-informed professional development and supports that have a positive impact on student learning, and that allow educators to continuously improve. Delaware is uniquely capable of achieving this vision, due to its ability to rapidly implement statewide professional development, and to use its extensive data system to evaluate all supports and continue only those with proven impact on educator and student outcomes.

To reach this vision, the State will build upon its existing foundation of professional development and supports with three strategies:

- Ensure that professional development is **coherent**, by requiring participating LEAs to identify or adopt a comprehensive professional development model
- Ensure that professional development is **data-informed**, by providing targeted statewide supports for using data to improve instruction and to develop teachers and principals

- Ensure that all professional development and supports are **effective**, by creating a statewide certification system for professional development, measuring student and participant outcomes, and continuously improving programs

## **Goals**

The State expects these strategies to dramatically increase the capabilities of Delaware educators, helping to double the percentage of highly effective teachers, as described in Section (D)(3). 100% of professional development offerings will be certified, and professional development offerings that do not meet standards will be identified for discontinuation of state support. 100% of participating LEAs will be able to demonstrate a coherent approach to professional development. 100% of principals in high-need schools and 100% of novice principals will complete the State’s intensive leadership training. All other principals will receive support from School Administrative Managers to increase the amount of time they spend on instructional leadership.

## **Activities**

In order to execute the strategies, there are three corresponding sets of activities the State will complete.

### **(D)(5)(i) Require participating LEAs to identify or adopt a comprehensive PD model**

All participating LEAs must adopt a comprehensive professional development model, or identify how their existing professional development contributes to a comprehensive development approach. Specifically, these models must: (1) align professional development programs, coaching, induction, common planning and collaboration time, and other supports to create a coordinated approach to teacher and leader growth and development; (2) emphasize ongoing, job-embedded learning; and (3) link offerings with specific tenures, skills, and roles. These models should ensure that supports are fully aligned, and that any barriers to effective implementation are removed. For a description of some of the State’s current professional development offerings, see Appendix (D)(5)-2.

The State expects all models to be comprehensive, articulating how schools can coordinate different types of supports: supports that are available to all teachers and principals, and differentiated supports based on tenure, role, and evaluation. These supports are illustrated in the diagram below, and must be addressed in the RTTT plans for all participating LEAs.

## Types of professional development and supports

		Type of offerings:	
		Core (Undifferentiated)	Differentiated (Based on evaluation)
Required for:	All teachers and leaders	<b>Job-embedded core</b> PD embedded into regular routines  (Example: instructional improvement systems)	<b>Differentiated skill- building</b> PD to overcome skill gaps or build on strengths  (Example: individual improvement plans)
	Select teachers and leaders (based on tenure and role)	<b>Tenure-related core</b> PD at specific points in the career  (Example: new teacher induction)	<b>Differentiated role- preparation</b> PD for specific roles and career paths  (Example: teacher leaders or turnaround leaders)

In the 2010-11 school year, the State will expect LEAs to do one of the following: (1) demonstrate that they already have a coherent approach to professional development; (2) develop a coherent approach to professional development; or (3) adopt a coherent approach to professional development that has been pre-approved by the State. To ensure that every participating LEA is able to identify and implement a coherent approach to professional development that meets its needs, the State will develop or (preferably) identify one or more existing model approaches to professional development and supports. The TLEU will lead this effort.

To accomplish this, the State will research promising approaches within the State and the nation that meet the criteria listed below by November 2010. Based on this research, the State will determine whether a local model needs to be developed, or if existing models (e.g., the national Teacher Advancement Program) may be sufficient to provide LEAs with a set of pre-approved professional development models. By February 2011, the State will make these model(s) available to LEAs. The model(s) will include: (1) a clear theory of change for how teachers and leaders grow and develop over time; (2) how professional development and other supports are coordinated; (3) what types of offerings are prioritized; (4) how professional development and supports are delivered (including job-embedded offerings); (5) what tracks are offered for specific skills, tenures, and roles; and (6) how the offerings are evaluated.

Throughout this process, the State will review national models for professional development, and will draw from pockets of excellence in professional development already in place, where schools, LEAs, and Delaware nonprofits have taken the initiative to develop coherent approaches to teacher and leader growth and development. As noted above, these coherent approaches align professional development and supports, emphasize ongoing, job-embedded learning, and link offerings with specific tenures, skills, and roles. Thus, they prioritize opportunities that matter most to teacher and leader growth, and to student achievement, providing a clear path by which educators can improve over time.

One example of an effective model for professional development that has been developed in Delaware is the nationally-recognized Vision Network, a collaboration among Delaware's nonprofit, higher education, business, and public education communities, which grew out of the Vision 2015 initiative described in Section A. The Vision Network provides a coordinated approach to professional development by focusing on instructional leadership, data-driven instruction and decision-making, research-based best practices, and collaborative planning. In operation since 2007, the Vision Network now includes 25 schools. For the results of a recent evaluation of the Vision Network, please see Appendix (D)(5)-1.

**(D)(5)(i) Provide targeted statewide supports for using data to improve instruction and to develop teachers and principals**

In addition to requiring that participating LEAs develop and/or identify a comprehensive model, the State will ensure that professional development is data-informed and effective by providing targeted statewide training in each of the four areas that professional development models must address (illustrated in the diagram above). The training described below does not include all the professional development provided by the State; rather, it describes several critical offerings that are being created or strengthened through Race to the Top to support this reform effort.

A) Job-embedded core: The State will support job-embedded professional development by providing statewide training in mastering new standards, and state-subsidized data coaches to support the use of data to improve instruction. In accordance with Race to the Top criteria, this support will focus on analyzing and using data; designing instructional strategies for improvement; differentiating instruction (including to meet the specific needs of high need students) and creating school environments supportive of data-informed decisions. A key



component of this strategy will be facilitated, collaborative planning time for small teams of teachers during the school week, and well-designed instructional improvement systems that allow teachers to focus their planning efforts on the specific weaknesses of their students. For more information on these supports, please see section (B)(3) for mastering new standards, and (C)(3) for detail on data coaches and instructional improvement systems.

B) Differentiated skill-building: The State will support differentiated skill-building professional development, by providing development coaches to ensure that evaluations are conducted rigorously, and that data from evaluations are used to inform specific development plans. (For more information on the evaluation system and development coaches, see section (D)(2)).

To support teachers in addressing areas for improvement identified in evaluations, the State will map professional development offerings to the specific skills in the State evaluation. The State will make this mapping available to assessors as a tool that they can use in creating development plans based on evaluations. Thus, assessors will be aware of the menu of options to build specific skill sets (e.g., lesson planning) that are available to the educators they work with.

C) Tenure-related core: The State will support the tenure-related core by continuing its induction training, and strengthening it where needed. The induction and mentoring program is a structured, long-term (typically three-year) learning experience that combines mentoring, collaborative workgroups, and individual study to build specific skills outlined in Charlotte Danielson’s *A Framework for Teaching* and the State educator evaluation<sup>5</sup>. Using a mentor, the program walks new teachers through best practice for “The Classroom Environment,” “Planning and Preparation,” and “Instruction.” The training incorporates observation and feedback, scoring based on the State’s four-part evaluation rubric, and video-based learning of best-practices. The program also engages teachers in learning groups with a focus on assessment, a critical link between Danielson’s domains and student improvement. Lastly, the program engages the teacher in self-assessment of his or her own content and pedagogical skills. For more information on the induction program see Appendix (D)(1)-2.

D) Differentiated role preparation: The DDOE will support differentiated role-preparation by

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<sup>5</sup> The induction program is based on: Charlotte Danielson’s *Enhancing Professional Development: A Framework for Teaching*, Richard J. Stiggins’ *Classroom Assessment for Student Learning*, and The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards’ *Five Core Propositions*

providing high-quality training and supports to develop the instructional leadership capabilities of principals, teacher leaders, and teacher fellows. Training for teacher leaders is described in section (D)(2), and training for teacher fellows is described in section (D)(3). Training for principals is described below.

Over the last three decades, much research has demonstrated that school leadership is one of the most important factors contributing to student achievement.<sup>6</sup> Great schools need great leaders to succeed. These leaders give teachers the feedback, direction, and support they need to develop into effective instructors, making them essential to the support and professional development of teachers. Thus, a core part of Delaware’s strategy for reform centers on building school leaders into great instructional leaders.

Recognizing the central role that school leaders play, the State intends to make an intensive, high-quality training program available to principals across Delaware. This will complement Delaware’s progress thus far. The State was cited by The RAND Corporation in the paper, “Building Cohesive Systems to Improve School Leadership”, as a state that was a potential model for demonstrating an advanced and cohesive approach to leadership.

The new leadership training program will build a common set of skills and a common language to improve the quality of school leadership statewide, and will accelerate the improvement of the State’s high-need schools. Over a two-year period, the State will subsidize all early career principals, and principals of high-need schools to participate in this program<sup>7</sup>. For the remainder of the grant period, the State will continue to subsidize novice principals. In addition, LEAs may sponsor additional principals to participate.

To offer its statewide school leader training, the State will contract with a third-party provider, and will manage the effort through the TLEU. In choosing a provider, the State will prioritize programs that are:

- Focused on improving student achievement by building the capacity of school leaders to improve instruction
- Proven to have impact on student achievement and school leader behavior

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<sup>6</sup> Much work documenting the link between leadership and student achievement can be found in the book “School leadership that works: From research to results” (2005) by RJ Marzano, T Waters, and A McNulty

<sup>7</sup> Excluding novice principals who have completed a similarly rigorous preparation program (e.g., New Leaders for New Schools) and principals who, based on evaluation or retirement plans, are not expected to continue as school leaders in Delaware schools beyond the next 24-48 months.

- Research-based, incorporating best-practice from education and other sectors
- Ongoing, with at least 12-18 months of learning, including practical and job-embedded components
- Aligned with the Interstate School Leadership Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) standards for school leadership<sup>8</sup>
- Able to build State capacity to continue training over time (e.g., include a train-the-trainer component that can ensure future leaders receive training, perhaps at a lower cost)

To identify the statewide school leader training program, the State will research promising programs meeting the State’s priorities (as stated above) by October 2010, and by December 2010, the State will select a provider and develop a rollout plan, including the timing and sequencing of cohorts, a process for identifying who will participate in each cohort, and specific plans for assessment of program impact and revising the approach, if necessary. While the final launch schedule will depend on the provider and program chosen, the State’s goal will be to complete the majority of training in approximately three years. The first cohort will begin in the Spring of 2011, with additional cohorts launching by Fall of 2012. The State will rigorously assess the impact of the program, particularly in its early months, and will work with the provider to adjust offerings as needed. By October 2012, the State will develop a plan for continuing the training over time, if LEAs signal demand for continued access to the program.

In addition to the statewide school leadership training program, the State will also encourage the use of distributed leadership in schools to ensure school leaders dedicate sufficient time to instructional leadership. Recently, Delaware schools have seen progress towards this goal by implementing the national School Administration Managers (SAMs) program<sup>9</sup>. The SAMs program involves integrated use of: (1) School Administrative Managers who take on some of the administrative tasks of the school leader (usually an existing staff person); (2) time studies tracking how school leaders allocate their time; and (3) coaching to help school leaders reallocate time to instructional leadership<sup>10</sup>. Together, these activities not only free school leader time, but also give them the necessary support to know how to reallocate that time

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<sup>8</sup> Upon which Delaware’s school leader evaluation is based

<sup>9</sup> Delaware’s early experience with the SAMs program mirrors the results seen nationally: a significant increase in time that school leadership spends on instructional leadership as opposed to administrative tasks. Based on the 8 schools in Delaware that participated in the pilot, the State feels confident that expanding the program will yield positive results.

<sup>10</sup> The SAMs program is coordinated through the Delaware Academy for School Leadership (out of the University of Delaware)

effectively. This approach has been demonstrated to improve instructional leadership<sup>11</sup>, therefore, the State will encourage LEAs to adopt similar approaches to reduce administrative burdens and increase instructional leadership. Beginning in the 2011-12 school year, the State will sponsor the SAMs program for two years for all principals who do not attend the State's intensive leadership training described above.<sup>12</sup> For more information on SAMs, please see Appendix (D)(5)-3.

**(D)(5)(ii) Create a statewide certification system for professional development, measure student and participant outcomes, and continuously improve programs**

Recently, Delaware's Professional Development Plan Task Force commissioned an audit of the State's professional development by the National Staff Development Council (NSDC)<sup>13</sup>. Following this audit, the committee's recommendations included:

- Ensuring all professional development meets the National Staff Development Council's (NSDC) standards for staff development
- Implementing an evaluation system to measure professional development design, delivery, and outcomes
- Prioritizing professional development opportunities geared to critical skills (e.g., training for administrators in providing feedback following observation)

The State's plan to ensure that professional development is effective builds on these recommendations. The State will first create a certification system for professional development to ensure that offerings are high quality and high impact. The certification system will be developed in the Fall of 2010, and launched by February 2011. The State expects that certified offerings will need to: (1) meet the NSDC's context, process, and content standards (please see Appendix (D)(5)-4 for a description of these standards) for initial certification, and (2) demonstrate impact on participant and student outcomes for ongoing certification.

The State is committed to continuous improvement of its professional development system. To ensure it can measure and track the impact of professional development on outcomes, the

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<sup>11</sup> Numerous national reports demonstrate a statistically significant change in leadership practice, resulting in a much stronger focus on instructional leadership. (e.g. "Out of the Office and into the classroom". 2008. H Holland. The Wallace Foundation)

<sup>12</sup> The State expects its intensive leadership program to adequately prepare principals to distribute leadership in their schools. Therefore, also sponsoring the SAMs program, which has a large coaching component, may be redundant.

<sup>13</sup> NSDC is the largest non-profit professional association committed to ensuring success for all students through staff development and school improvement

State will create an evaluation system to assess the delivery and outcomes of professional development offerings. This system will be developed from September 2010 to December 2010, and is expected to use online evaluations (e.g., participant evaluation forms), student achievement data (as captured by formative and summative statewide assessments), and educator evaluation data (when available following the 2011-12 school year) to demonstrate impact on participant behaviors and student achievement. The new professional development evaluation system will ensure that these data are linked with program participants and connected to input from online evaluations. Offerings will be evaluated both at the program and provider level. For example, induction mentors may be evaluated for the impact they have on the new teachers they guide, or providers of data coaches may be evaluated based on student outcomes in the classrooms of teachers their coaches work with. Following the 2011-2012 school year, the State will review data again to determine whether professional development offerings remain certified.

The State will set high standards for effectiveness in professional development, based on the measurable impact of the best programs in the State. Programs/providers will be given opportunities to improve based on feedback from the State (informed by outcomes data) during the 2012-2013 school year. Only programs/providers with high-impact results will be invited to continue following the 2012-2013 school year.

The goal of this process will be to focus State and LEA resources on the professional development offerings with the highest impact, and to help providers of professional development to continuously improve their impact.

The above process will build upon the DDOE's already existing statewide system for ongoing professional learning, called eLearning Delaware.<sup>14</sup> ELearning is a Web-based model that provides high-quality professional development online. Since the spring of 2006, the State has delivered over 130 online courses to over 2,000 Delaware educators and has developed online courses related to the Delaware Recommended Curriculum and required science training. Through eLearning Delaware, the State has a platform to build teachers' content knowledge and teaching practices, and to ensure that all professional development is effective.

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<sup>14</sup> eLearning Delaware is Delaware's implementation of the e-Learning for Educators Initiative, a project funded through a federal Ready to Teach grant and a collaboration between ten state education agencies and associated public broadcast stations

## **Responsible Parties**

All three activities related to teacher and leader professional development and supports will be managed by the professional development program manager in the TLEU, with assistance from existing DDOE working groups. The program manager will:

- Develop the strategy for professional development across the State to ensure that offerings are high-quality and high-impact
- Secure and manage contracts with providers of data coaches, development coaches, and statewide school leader training
- Develop the standards for professional development certification and evaluation. (Subject-specific working groups within the DDOE will complete the review of professional development offerings and the ongoing evaluation and certification, feeding data back to the TLEU professional development program manager.)
- Develop standards for mapping offerings to the statewide evaluation (Subject-specific working groups with the DDOE will complete the mapping, feeding data back to the TLEU professional development program manager)

For a full description of responsible parties, activities, and timing, see the end of this section.

## **Conclusion**

Providing effective support to teachers and principals is a critical component of improving teacher and leader effectiveness, and subsequently student outcomes. The supports the DDOE will provide span the State's reform plan (and Race to the Top application), from coaching in data use and assessments, to training in new standards and turnaround environments. With its plan to require comprehensive professional development models and to evaluate and certify all professional development, the State will ensure that these supports are integrated and maximally effective. The State's investment in school leadership will further ensure the success of integrated, effective professional development, by fostering instructional leadership in Delaware's principals. Ultimately, the State will be able to use its extensive data system to clearly see which supports are most effective and how, in order to share that information with LEAs, researchers, and educators and policy-makers across the country.

## Summary: Activities, Timeline, Responsible Parties

Activities	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Responsible parties
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research comprehensive PD models</li> </ul>		September 2010	November 2010					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TLEU program manager</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop or identify a pre-approved comprehensive model</li> </ul>		November 2010	February 2011					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TLEU program manager</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Require participating LEAs to develop their models for approval</li> </ul>		February 2011	April 2011					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TLEU program manager; Principals/superintendents</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review, refine, and approve PD models</li> </ul>		April 2011	June 2011					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TLEU program manager</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement coherent approaches to professional development</li> </ul>			June 2011	June 2012				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participating LEAs/principals</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Map PD offerings to the specific skills in the State evaluation that educators are meant to improve</li> </ul>		September 2010	November 2010					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TLEU program manager</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research-intensive, high-quality leadership training programs</li> </ul>		September 2010	November 2010					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TLEU program manager</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Contract with a 3rd-party provider for leadership training based on research</li> </ul>		November 2010	January 2011					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TLEU program manager; 3rd-party provider</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide leadership training to novice and high-need school principals</li> </ul>				January 2011	June 2013			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3rd-party provider</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluate leadership training</li> </ul>			September 2011	November 2011				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TLEU program manager</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop PD certification system</li> </ul>		September 2010	November 2010					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TLEU program manager; Technology and Design Management Workgroup</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Certify offerings</li> </ul>		November 2010	February 2011					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PD Workgroup</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create an evaluation system to assess the delivery and outcomes of PD offerings</li> </ul>		September 2010	December 2010					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TLEU program manager; Technology and Design Management Workgroup</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recertify, improve, or remove PD based on evaluation outcomes</li> </ul>				June 2012	July 2012			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TLEU program manager</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review effectiveness of induction program and improve system</li> </ul>		April 2011	July 2011					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TLEU program manager</li> </ul>

## Summary: Benefits and requirements for all LEAs and Participating LEAs as described in the MOU

For all LEAs/charters, the State will...	For participating LEAs/charters, the State will...	Participating LEAs/charters will...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Establish standards for professional development and enforce via a certification and monitoring process</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure approved offerings are high-quality and high-impact by reviewing evidence of impact on student achievement, including measuring outcomes for participants and students</li> <li>Eliminate ineffective professional development</li> <li>Map approved professional development offerings to skills in the State educator evaluation</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>Identify or develop coherent model approaches to professional development</b> that link offerings to specific skill and role expectations, and to the State educator evaluation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Make intensive training in instructional leadership available to school leaders, particularly novice principals and principals of high-need schools<sup>1</sup></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure a high-quality, research-driven training program is available</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Adopt a State-identified model or another coherent approach to professional development (as approved by the State)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide effective, data-informed professional development, coaching, induction, and common planning and collaboration time to teachers and principals that are, where appropriate, ongoing and job-embedded</li> <li>Integrate professional development offerings, including support from embedded mentors and coaches, into a single approach to teacher and leader growth</li> <li>Link professional develop to career paths, specific skill and role expectations, and to the State educator evaluation</li> <li>Review existing professional development to determine if it is high-quality and high-impact according to State standards</li> <li>Discontinue participation in professional development that does not meet State standards</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>Prioritize participation in high-impact professional development offerings</b> that address needs identified in the State educator evaluation, in accordance with development plans (All LEAs/charters)<sup>2</sup></li> <li><b>Accelerate the development of instructional leaders</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure novice principals and principals of high-need schools<sup>1</sup> participate in intensive State instructional leadership training</li> </ul> </li> <li><b>Distribute leadership in schools through the integrated use of school administration managers, time studies, and coaching</b> to ensure that school leaders spend more of their time on instructional leadership</li> </ul>

**(E)(1) Intervening in the lowest-achieving schools and LEAs (10 points)**

*The extent to which the State has the legal, statutory, or regulatory authority to intervene directly in the State's persistently lowest-achieving schools (as defined in this notice) and in LEAs that are in improvement or corrective action status.*

*One Page*



## **(E)(1) Overview**

Delaware law gives the DDOE substantial capacity to intervene in the State’s persistently lowest-achieving schools and in LEAs that are in improvement and corrective action status. Specifically, Delaware law requires the DDOE to hold schools and LEAs that have not made AYP for at least two years accountable for improving performance.<sup>1</sup>

### **Authority to intervene in persistently lowest-achieving schools**

Delaware regulations define an approach to turning around persistently lowest-achieving schools that combines authority with flexibility, and that promotes rapid reform within a collective bargaining environment. The regulations give the State the authority to intervene in persistently lowest-achieving schools in four critical ways: First, the regulations give the State the ability to select persistently lowest-achieving schools for turnaround; second, for selected schools, the State has to sign off on the LEA’s choice of one of the four intervention models defined in Race to the Top; third, the LEA must secure an agreement with the local bargaining unit for sufficient operational and staffing flexibility for the model to be implemented successfully; fourth, if the LEA and the collective bargaining unit cannot agree, the Secretary of Education can break a stalemate and choose whichever side has the strongest plan for reform. Thus, the regulations put the State in a very strong position to support bold approaches to turnaround. For the complete regulations, see Appendix (B)(1)-1.

Specifically, the regulations prescribe the following:

(1) The regulations establish a new regulatory classification for Persistently Lowest-Achieving (PLA) Schools and give the State authority to select schools in this classification for inclusion in its “Partnership Zone,” where there are special conditions that promote rapid improvements in school performance (described below).

(2) LEAs that have schools that are part of the Partnership Zone must, in partnership with the State, select one of the four intervention models defined in Race to the Top. The regulations require that the DDOE and the LEA enter an MOU regarding the selection of the model – closure, restart, turnaround, or transformation – as well as regarding the details of the implementation of the plan. For each of the four options, certain elements are mandated by

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<sup>1</sup> State statute requires the DDOE to develop a program for schools and LEAs that have missed AYP that must “be at a minimum consistent with any sanctions prescribed by the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) 20 U.S.C. § 6301 et seq.” 14 Del. C. § 154(d) and 14 Del. C. § 155(d).

regulation (the elements are the same as those described in the Race to the Top guidance). No matter which model is selected, the MOU must provide for regular oversight of the school by the DDOE.

The State's authority to impact the model selected and the details of its implementation is significant. If the State does not agree with the LEA's proposal, the State can refuse to agree to the MOU. The regulations provide that if an MOU is not agreed to within 120 days, the LEA's options are then limited to closure, reopening the school as a charter, or contracting with a private management organization to operate the school. The limited options available as alternatives to the MOU provide strong incentive for a meaningful agreement to be reached.

(3) The regulations require the LEA and the local bargaining unit to secure an agreement that provides sufficient operational and staffing flexibility for the model to be implemented successfully. As with the MOU, the assurance that the LEA and the local bargaining unit will negotiate meaningful change at this point is provided by a combination of the parties' interest in rapidly turning around the school, the limited alternative choices available, and the authority granted to the DDOE in the regulation, described below.

(4) The regulations provide that if the LEA and the collective bargaining unit cannot reach agreement with respect to necessary changes to the collective bargaining agreement within 75 days, the LEA and the collective bargaining unit must each provide their last offer to The Delaware Secretary of Education, who will then have final authority to select one of those options for implementation. If The Secretary does not find that either of the options is satisfactory, she may send the parties back to continue negotiations for an additional 30 days. If agreement is not reached in that timeframe, the LEA will be forced to enter an MOU selecting a different model. If no MOU is entered within 120 days from the date of notification that the school was selected for the Partnership Zone, the LEA's options are limited to choosing between closure, reopening the school as a charter, or contracting with a private management organization to operate the school.

Once a plan is agreed upon and implemented, the regulations again provide the State with the authority to intervene to ensure rapid improvements in performance. In addition to regular monitoring of progress, the regulations provide that if, after two years of operations, the school has not made AYP, the MOU process will be repeated. The school will again have the

opportunity to pursue further reform, secure additional flexibilities in staffing and operations, and, if necessary, narrow the set of options further to exclude the failed option.

Thus, the law puts the State in a very strong position to support bold approaches to turnaround. When combined with strong central supports from the State that provide access to expertise, training, and resources, this flexible yet rigorous approach has the potential to be a national model for school turnaround.

### **Authority to intervene in LEAs in improvement and corrective action**

In addition to the ability intervene in persistently lowest-achieving schools, the State can also intervene more broadly in LEAs that are in improvement or corrective action. Interventions include notifying parents that their child's LEA is in improvement or corrective action, and informing them of their right to remove the student from the LEA under statewide school choice. In addition, the State regulations require LEAs to submit corrective plans, to be approved by the DDOE, that describe actions the LEAs will take to become compliant with the ESEA. Plans instruct LEAs to:

- Address the fundamental teaching and learning needs of schools in the LEA, especially the academic problems of low-achieving students;
- Define specific measurable achievement goals and targets for each of the student subgroups whose disaggregated results are included in the State's definition of AYP;
- Incorporate strategies grounded in scientifically based research that will strengthen instruction in core academic subjects;
- Include, as appropriate, student learning activities before school, after school, during the summer, and during any extension of the school year;
- Provide for high-quality professional development for instructional staff that focuses primarily on improved instruction;
- Include strategies to promote effective parental involvement in the schools served by the LEA; and
- Include a determination of why the LEA's previous plan did not bring about increased student academic achievement.

Plans must also specify the fiscal responsibilities of the LEA and detail the required technical assistance that the Delaware Department of Education will provide. Failure to enact an appropriate plan can lead to changes in Title I distributions.

## **Conclusion**

The State's regulations give the DDOE the ability to intervene in all categories of schools not meeting AYP for two or more years and provide critical authority to the DDOE to help LEAs rapidly improve persistently lowest-achieving schools.

**(E)(2) Turning around the lowest-achieving schools (40 points)**

*The extent to which the State has a high-quality plan and ambitious yet achievable annual targets to—*

*(i) Identify the persistently lowest-achieving schools (as defined in this notice) and, at its discretion, any non-Title I eligible secondary schools that would be considered persistently lowest-achieving schools (as defined in this notice) if they were eligible to receive Title I funds; and (5 points)*

*(ii) Support its LEAs in turning around these schools by implementing one of the four school intervention models (as described in Appendix C): turnaround model, restart model, school closure, or transformation model (provided that an LEA with more than nine persistently lowest-achieving schools may not use the transformation model for more than 50 percent of its schools). (35 points)*

*The State shall provide its detailed plan for this criterion in the text box below. The plan should include, at a minimum, the goals, activities, timelines, and responsible parties (see Reform Plan Criteria elements in Application Instructions or Section XII, Application Requirements (e), for further detail). In the text box below, the State shall describe its current status in meeting the criterion. The narrative or attachments shall also include, at a minimum, the evidence listed below, and how each piece of evidence demonstrates the State's success in meeting the criterion. The narrative and attachments may also include any additional information the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers. For attachments included in the Appendix, note in the narrative the location where the attachments can be found.*

Evidence for (E)(2) (please fill in table below):

- The State's historic performance on school turnaround, as evidenced by the total number of persistently lowest-achieving schools (as defined in this notice) that States or LEAs attempted to turn around in the last five years, the approach used, and the results and lessons learned to date.

*Recommended maximum response length: Eight pages*

## Overview

### Supporting LEAs in turning around the persistently lowest achieving schools

<b>Vision</b>	Support LEAs in enacting turnaround within a collective bargaining environment, using the Partnership Zone MOU process described in law, and support this turnaround with a State Turnaround Office and a network of support and management partners
<b>Strategies</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Identify persistently lowest-achieving schools and select a subset annually for participation in the Partnership Zone</li><li>2. Establish a Turnaround Office to build local capacity and support LEAs in planning and implementation</li><li>3. Monitor progress and hold LEAs accountable for results</li></ol>
<b>Goals</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Three schools launch within Partnership Zone in 2011-2012 school year</li><li>▪ Seven schools launch within Partnership Zone in 2012-2013 school year</li><li>▪ All schools achieve AYP within two years of operations within the Partnership Zone</li></ul>

Delaware is committed to rapidly improving its lowest-achieving schools, and will lead at least 10 failing schools (approximately 5% of all public schools in Delaware) to achieve AYP over the next five years. To accomplish this goal, the State will implement a comprehensive plan to identify lowest-achieving schools and support LEAs in turning them around. The plan has five main components:

**(1) Identifying persistently lowest-achieving schools and selecting a subset annually to pursue rapid reform through the State’s Partnership Zone.** The State’s plan to support turnaround begins with its regulations, described in section E1, which mandate a process for identifying lowest-achieving schools, and initiating reform through the State’s Partnership Zone.

**(2) Using the significant authority provided by recently enacted regulations to ensure that meaningful, effective change occurs in Partnership Zone schools.** Each year, schools that have been selected to participate in the Partnership Zone will be required by law to implement one of the four school intervention models outlined in the Race to the Top guidance. Delaware law now requires local bargaining units to work with LEAs to modify collective bargaining agreements to secure the flexibility necessary for that implementation to be successful.

**(3) Establishing a Turnaround Office, in collaboration with Mass Insight, to build local capacity and support LEAs in planning and implementation.**

The State's Turnaround Office will provide a range of supports to LEAs as they turn around lowest-achieving schools, from the point of entry into the Partnership Zone, to the planning process, to recruitment of leaders and staff, and finally, to the launch and operations of the turnaround school. Supports will include providing access to turnaround experts and mentors, providing help with recruiting operational partners, and identifying and disseminating best practices. Schools that choose to convert to a charter school will be supported by both the Turnaround Office and the Charter Management Office. The State has established a partnership with Mass Insight to support its turnaround efforts, making it one of a handful of states selected for partnership with this national leader in school reform.<sup>2</sup> See appendix (E)(2)-3 for a copy of the MOU with Mass Insight.

**(4) Monitoring progress and holding LEAs accountable for results.** The State will enter into MOUs with LEAs, requiring schools to achieve adequate yearly progress (AYP) within two years of operations within the Partnership Zone. The State will monitor progress and provide supports and consequences if schools are off-track to meeting their AYP targets.

**(5) Providing comprehensive supports and monitoring for schools at-risk of failure.** The State will support LEAs in improving more than just the persistently lowest-achieving schools through the use of quantitative and qualitative assessments, improved reform plans, and added capacity, support, and oversight. The goals of these efforts are to prevent schools from being defined as PLA.

**Goals**

As noted above, Delaware expects to turn around at least 10 lowest-achieving schools by 2014, with each school reaching AYP within two years of launch. The State will initiate three interventions in the 2011-12 school year, and will initiate seven more for the 2012-13 school year.

**Activities**

Delaware's plan to turn around its lowest-achieving schools includes the following activities:

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<sup>2</sup> Mass Insight is a national leader in turnarounds, and has set up a network of states willing to actively support LEAs in enacting school reform .

**(E)(2)(i) Identifying persistently lowest-achieving schools and selecting a subset annually to pursue rapid reform through the State’s “Partnership Zone.”**

*Identifying persistently lowest-achieving schools.* Delaware state law includes a “persistently lowest-achieving” (PLA) accountability classification for schools (see section (E)(1) for further detail). This classification, written into regulation and worded to reflect the Race to the Top guidelines, includes the lowest 5% or five Title I schools in school improvement, corrective action and restructuring, the lowest 5% or five Title I eligible secondary schools in school improvement, corrective action, and restructuring, and any secondary school with a graduation rate less than 60%.<sup>3</sup> Any other secondary school that would be defined as persistently lowest-achieving if it were Title I eligible is also included in the PLA classification.

Each year, beginning in 2010, Delaware will identify the schools that fit the PLA classification by reviewing student performance on state exams<sup>4</sup> in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics. It will weigh two components equally:

- 50%: Performance by students in the “All Students ELA” and “All Students Mathematics” categories of the current AYP system in the given year
- 50%: The trend in these data over a period of three years

In addition, any secondary schools with a graduation rate less than 60% will automatically be defined as PLA.<sup>5</sup> The above criteria will be the only factors used in determining PLA status.

*Selecting a subset of PLA schools to enter the State’s Partnership Zone.* Following each year’s identification of PLA schools, the DDOE will select a subset of PLA schools to initiate turnaround interventions by entering the State’s Partnership Zone.<sup>6</sup> As noted in section (E)(1), schools in the Partnership Zone will be required by law<sup>7</sup> to implement one of the four school intervention models outlined in the Race to the Top guidance and to modify collective bargaining agreements to secure the flexibility necessary for that implementation be successful.

While the process to identify PLA schools is quantitative and objective, the process to select PLA schools to enter the Partnership Zone will include qualitative components.

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<sup>3</sup> See regulations 103 1.2 for definition of persistently lowest achieving, available in Appendix E.1

<sup>4</sup> As required by ESEA for accountability purposes

<sup>5</sup> Delaware currently has only one high school with a graduation rate less than 60%

<sup>6</sup> Defined in regulation 103 7.6 and requiring the State MOU approach to turnaround described in section (E)(1)

<sup>7</sup> Regulation 103 7.6



Partnership Zone schools will be selected at the discretion of The Delaware Secretary of Education. In addition to considering the relative ranking of PLA schools based on the student performance measures used to determine their PLA status, The Secretary will also weigh factors critical to successful turnaround (e.g., geographic proximity to other turnaround schools, level of community engagement in the LEA and/or school, recent changes in school leadership), and other academic indicators (e.g., number of highly effective teachers on staff, dropout rates, attendance rates). The Delaware Secretary of Education may also choose to consider the results of a Comprehensive Success Review (CSR)<sup>8</sup> of PLA schools. The CSR is a 9-day qualitative school assessment designed to identify root causes of poor performance and to inform efforts to improve performance. It includes site visits, interviews, trend analysis, and analysis of key performance indicators. The CSR is applied to all schools that miss AYP to ensure that LEAs have the knowledge to address problems proactively.

Together, the quantitative process for identifying PLA schools and the qualitative process for selecting Partnership Zone schools will allow the State to sequence its turnaround efforts to best position schools for success.

The State's planned timeline for implementation is as follows: In March 2010 (using 2009 data), the State will identify an initial list of PLA schools. By September 2010, the State will select at least three schools from this list to enter into the Partnership Zone and begin preparations to implement one of the four intervention models in the 2011-2012 school year. By the end of July 2011, the State will again identify a list of PLA schools, and in August of that year, the State will select at least seven more schools to enter into the Partnership Zone. These schools will immediately begin preparations to implement one of the four intervention models in the 2012-13 school year. In this way, Delaware will launch interventions in 10 schools by the 2012-13 school year. These 10 schools will represent nearly **5% of all schools** in the State, and more than 25% of all schools currently in school improvement, corrective action, or restructuring. The identification process will repeat annually in July based on accountability assessment results, with additional schools selected for the Partnership Zone as determined by The Delaware Secretary of Education.

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<sup>8</sup> See appendix (E)(2)-1 for a full explanation of the CSR

**(E)(2)(ii) Use the significant authority provided by recently enacted regulations to ensure that meaningful, effective change occurs in Partnership Zone schools.**

Delaware’s regulations give the State the authority to identify its lowest-achieving schools (this process is described in detail in section (E)(1)), and then to select a subset of those schools to be reformed within the State’s “Partnership Zone.” As described above, the law defines a process to guide the reform and involve the DDOE in regular oversight and assistance to the school. Through this process, selected LEAs (those containing schools that have been defined as persistently lowest achieving<sup>9</sup> and selected for entry into the Partnership Zone by The Delaware Secretary of Education) will enter negotiations, in which the State will participate and either approve or reject:

- The LEA and the State will enter into a negotiation in which one of four school intervention models (closure, restart, turnaround or transformation, as defined in the Race to the Top guidance and State regulations) must be selected, and a detailed, credible plan for enacting the model must be outlined.
- The LEA and the local teachers’ union will enter into a 75-day negotiation period to secure collective bargaining agreement carve outs providing the necessary staffing and operational flexibility to enact the reform plan. If an agreement cannot be reached, both sides will present their final options to The Delaware Secretary of Education, who will pick one, or, if none is credible, will require an additional 30 days of negotiation. If no agreement can be reached in that timeframe, the LEA must select another model and successfully negotiate an MOU to implement that model, or, if an MOU cannot be entered within 120 of notification of the school’s Partnership Zone status, the LEA must choose to close the school, reopen as a charter, or contract with a private management organization to operate the school.

In this way, The Delaware Secretary of Education will have the authority to: (1) require effective intervention in persistently lowest achieving schools; and (2) support LEAs in getting the necessary flexibility to enact effective intervention within a collective bargaining environment.

This approach, which was designed in collaboration with stakeholders, including the State teachers’ union, is appropriate for Delaware, a small state with a strong tradition of local

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<sup>9</sup> See (E)(2) for definition of Persistently lowest achieving and for the process of entering this category.

control. Delaware’s regulations will supplement intervention strategies developed locally with the experience, capacity, resources, and ultimate authority of the DDOE.

**(E)(2)(ii)(continued) Establishing a Turnaround Office in collaboration with Mass Insight to build local capacity and support LEAs in planning and implementation.**

Delaware recognizes the challenge faced by LEAs in turning around the State’s lowest-performing schools. With a long history of failure, these schools require radical reform to achieve sufficient academic progress among students. To this end, Delaware has established strict requirements for the four intervention models required by State law (which are equivalent to the turnaround, closure, restart, and transformation options described in the Race to the Top guidelines). In addition, Delaware expects rapid progress – schools in the Partnership Zone will need to achieve AYP in just two years.

Given the degree of challenge this represents, LEAs will require two kinds of support from the State. First, LEA leaders who are willing to embrace rapid reform will need the State’s support as they select their intervention model, write intervention plans, and enter into negotiations with teachers’ unions. To support these leaders, The Delaware Secretary of Education will need to be willing to use the authority granted to her in the State turnaround regulations to authorize reform plans that are most likely to result in rapid reform for students. Second, all LEAs will benefit from access to expertise and best practice in school intervention to help them build long-term capacity to manage turnaround efforts.

To meet this need, a newly-formed State Turnaround Office will provide a range of services to LEAs, beginning when a school is selected for the Partnership Zone. The Turnaround Office will bring the nation’s best thinking on, and experience with, school intervention to Delaware, by working with Mass Insight, the nation’s leading organization for turnarounds, and by recruiting a highly qualified staff. The Turnaround Office staff will have turnaround experience, demonstrated ability to improve student performance, and expertise in management. The State will leverage its partnership with Mass Insight to help to recruit and select the best possible candidates. For more information on Mass Insight and the nature of this partnership, see Appendix (E)(2)-2.

The Turnaround Office will: (1) Run a “Partnership Zone Institute” to inform LEAs selection of an intervention model and provide access to a network of potential operational

partners; (2) Provide support and constructive feedback during the MOU process (described above) as LEAs choose a model and determine the details of their implementation approach; (3) Provide support during the MOU process, as LEAs and teachers' unions establish necessary flexibility; (4) Assist with recruiting, selecting, and training school leaders, teachers, and other staff; (5) Provide mentorship and access to expertise, resources, and best practice; and, (6) Provide supplemental funding above School Improvement 1003g grants.

These activities will be repeated each time the State selects a cohort of Partnership Zone schools. Below are the details of the State's implementation plan for its first cohort of three Partnership Zone schools:

*1. Run a "Partnership Zone Institute" to inform LEAs selection of an intervention model and provide access to a network of potential operational partners:*

By July 2010, the State will host a "Partnership Zone Institute," for LEA leaders. The Institute will provide a short, intense education process to ensure that local leaders are knowledgeable about the full range of available school intervention models, best practices, and potential operational partners. The Institute will begin with a one-day conference, providing in-depth reviews of the turnaround, closure, restart, and transformation models, including presentations by school intervention experts and support organizations. For example, the State and Mass Insight might run a workshop to share early results and experience from other turnaround states within the Mass Insight network. Next, the Institute will host a series of visits to schools nationwide that have been successfully reformed. Finally, as LEAs may choose to outsource management of Partnership Zone schools to a third party operating partner,<sup>10</sup> the State will facilitate introductions to potential partners that have a proven track record and an interest in expanding to Delaware (this may require a second one-day conference). As planning and implementation continue, the Turnaround Office will provide additional assistance with recruiting partners, should LEAs be interested.

*2. Provide support and constructive feedback during the MOU process, as LEAs choose a model and negotiate necessary changes to the collective bargaining agreements:* The MOU

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<sup>10</sup> One model for outsourcing management of schools in turnaround is known as the "lead partner" model. These partners are granted operating freedom (e.g., authority to recruit and manage personnel) in exchange for accepting accountability for performance. Lead partners provide all academic and non-academic services at the school, actively develop a new school culture, and establish a full-time presence on site in the school.

and collective bargaining agreement negotiations will begin in August 2010. Each LEA will choose one of the four school intervention models defined in Delaware state regulation<sup>11</sup> (as noted earlier, these models include a series of required and recommended activities, as specified in the Race to the Top guidance), and will develop an implementation plan. This will require decisions, for example, on structures for extended learning time, school curriculum, and parental involvement policies that are required or recommended by the choice of plan. The Turnaround Office's role will be to assist the LEA in choosing the most appropriate model and developing a credible strategy to execute that model, given its understanding of root causes of the school's failure (based on the Comprehensive Success Review), the LEA's capabilities, the operating context of the turnaround, and the presence of partners or school leaders with appropriate expertise. During this period, the Turnaround Office will ensure that LEAs have access to a library of best practice techniques, relevant research, and available expertise to create their implementation plans.

As LEAs develop their implementation plans, the Turnaround Office will review interim work products and will counsel LEAs to be more aggressive if plans are not sufficiently comprehensive to be successful. In this way, the MOU process itself is a key support, ensuring that LEAs have a proper understanding of the scope of the work, achievable goals, concrete plans, and sufficient organizational flexibility to execute turnarounds successfully.

The goal of the collective bargaining negotiations will be to obtain the necessary staffing and operational flexibility (through collective bargaining agreement carve outs) to execute the school intervention plan successfully. The Turnaround Office will support this negotiation by acting as a mediator, if necessary, and providing information to help the negotiators understand best practice, and the types of flexibility necessary to achieve the LEA's stated goals.

Once the collective bargaining negotiation is complete, The Delaware Secretary of Education will either approve the proposed arrangements or send the parties back to negotiations. In the case of a stalemate, each side will present its best proposal for staffing and operational flexibility to the Secretary, who will choose one of the plans or send both parties back into negotiations.

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<sup>11</sup> Regulation 103 7.6.2

While the support provided by the Turnaround Office throughout the process is intended to guide LEAs to appropriate strategies likely to receive The Delaware Secretary of Education's approval, the Secretary will reserve her right to reject strategies that are not credible. If this occurs, the Turnaround Office will continue to provide support as the LEA crafts a new approach.

3. *Assist with recruiting, selecting, and training school leaders, teachers, and other staff:* As soon as a school is selected for the Partnership Zone, LEAs should begin their search for a school leader (or a partner that will then provide a school leader). Ideally, the leader will be involved in the design of the reform model and implementation plan, and in the negotiation of staffing and operating flexibility. However, it may also be difficult to secure a leader until the LEA can assure that leader that he or she will have sufficient flexibility to manage the school (i.e., after negotiations with the union are complete).

Regardless of the timing, the Turnaround Office will support LEAs in recruiting, selecting, and training school leaders (and eventually other staff), by acting on behalf of the State to build a pool of potential leaders for all turnaround schools. This will include working with high-quality alternative certification and training programs (as described in section (D)(1)), leveraging the networks of Mass Insight, and assisting LEAs with recruiting local operating partners that have their own leader pipelines. In addition, the Turnaround Office will ensure that Partnership Zone schools take full advantage of the programs available statewide to support the placement of highly-effective teachers and leaders in high need schools (described in D3), including the Delaware Fellows Program and the retention bonus program.

School leaders for the first cohort of Partnership Zone schools should be in place no later than February 2011.

4. *Provide mentorship and access to expertise, resources, and best practice.* From January to September 2011, each Partnership Zone school's leadership team will work to prepare for the school's reopening in September 2011 under its new model. Once the school opens, the model will be refined and improved. Throughout this period, the Turnaround Office will provide a variety of supports, including mentors, access to expert advice, and examples of

best practice to ensure that LEAs adhere to all of the regulatory requirements of the chosen turnaround model,<sup>12</sup> and that schools are positioned for success.

The Turnaround Office will be a central repository for knowledge on a variety of topics that Partnership Zone schools will need to master, including extended learning time, professional development (e.g., summer training for all staff in new instructional methods), assistance for low performers in reading and mathematics, community and parental engagement, classroom technology, and performance cultures in which staffing and compensation are tied to student achievement. The office will also help schools focus on comprehensive student health, ensuring that behavioral and physical health resources are well-coordinated and fully utilized, including State, private, and nonprofit initiatives.

The delivery of this knowledge will be active and ongoing, delivered both through Turnaround Office staff, and through the work of a turnaround mentor, who will provide weekly consultation to school leaders.

5. *Provide supplemental funding:* The Turnaround Office will ensure that Partnership Zone schools receive the maximum funds from School Improvement Grants under section 1003(g) of the ESEA (approximately \$500,000 per school), and will provide additional funding of \$200,000 to each Partnership Zone school for its first three years of operations.

With this assistance, LEAs will be expected to recruit a proven operational partner (if desired), select highly-effective school leaders, assist school leaders in recruiting highly-effective teachers and staff, and provide central supports (e.g., procurement). They will also be expected to support school leaders, particularly during the planning period (after the school has been selected for entry into the Partnership Zone but before the school begins to operate under a reform model). LEAs may also provide additional supports, such as developing or expanding transition academies and summer schools as necessary to ensure students have continuous support throughout the year and between schools, and maintaining a network of community organizations and social services that can support students outside of the classroom,<sup>13</sup> including health services and the promotion of parental involvement.

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<sup>12</sup> Defined identically in Race to the Top application and state regulation 103 7.6.2

<sup>13</sup> Christina School District currently has working models of all of these support services, and would serve as a model for other LEAs embarking on turnaround initiatives.

Ultimately, the State expects this support structure to build capacity at the local level to intervene in failing schools, whether or not they are part of the Partnership Zone. By providing LEAs with access to the best turnaround knowledge the nation has to offer, and engaging directly in planning for and operations of turnaround schools, the State expects to build the local expertise necessary to support effective turnaround over the long term.

**Monitoring progress and holding LEAs accountable for results.** Perhaps the most critical aspect of State support to LEAs is enforcing accountability and performance management. State law requires each LEA to enter into a performance contract with the State for the oversight of all Partnership Zone schools within the LEA. The contract will specify the following supports and penalties:

- *Accountability:* Each Partnership Zone school will commit to making AYP within two years of launch. Schools that fail to make AYP after two years will be subject to a new MOU process to develop a new plan and gain appropriate flexibility, or will be required to choose a new turnaround model. When necessary, the State will use the following sanctions: (1) Reduction or removal of the School Improvement Grants under section 1003(g) of the ESEA; (2) Reduction or removal of supplemental Partnership Zone funding through the Turnaround Office; (3) Removal of flexible funding arrangements (see section F) if progress on the formative assessments and other academic indicators do not signal progress towards AYP at the end of two years.
- *Monitoring progress:* The Turnaround Office will frequently monitor progress and provide supports to ensure that each Partnership Zone school is on track to reach AYP within the two-year timeframe. For each formative and summative DCAS assessment, the State will set intermediate goals and review progress towards these goals within six weeks of the assessment's execution. In addition, Turnaround Office staff will have a broader quantitative and qualitative understanding of school progress, tracking interim indicators of student success based on the root causes as identified by the CSR (e.g., attendance) and visiting each school, at least monthly in its first semester of operations, and then at least quarterly thereafter. The Turnaround Office will provide periodic reports on its website about the performance of the Partnership Zone schools so that the public is informed of the progress during turnaround.



**Responsible parties:**

The State Turnaround Office will be responsible for identifying PLAs and Partnership Zone schools, for providing supports to LEAs, and for monitoring Partnership Zone performance and enforcing accountability. Its staff will include an experienced turnaround leader, an accountability officer, and an identification officer in charge of both quantitative and qualitative identification processes and administration of the CSR. In addition to this full time-staff, the office will secure contracted support as necessary.

LEAs will be responsible for planning for turnaround, securing operational flexibility, hiring school leaders and staff, and operating the schools. LEAs may also choose to transfer responsibility for operations to partner organizations.

**Providing comprehensive supports and monitoring for schools at risk of failure.**

In addition to defining schools as persistently lowest-achieving and selecting schools for the Partnership Zone, the State engages in other procedures to both identify schools at risk of poor performance, and to identify the root causes of problems for those schools that have demonstrated poor performance. The State monitors trends in student achievement across the full set of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) cells, including performance over time and absolute level of achievement, using an AYP Achievement Metric,<sup>14</sup> developed nationally through the CCSSO with local representation. This enables DDOE to identify early warning signs of poor student achievement.<sup>15</sup> Also, following a pilot in 2009, all schools that have missed AYP will now undergo the Comprehensive Success Review<sup>16</sup> (described earlier in this section) to identify root causes of problems. Finally, as a small state, Delaware has an additional source of insight to inform the supports offered to failing schools –the firsthand experience State leaders have working with the 47 schools in school improvement, corrective action, or restructuring.

**Historical performance on school turnaround, results, and lessons learned**

Over the last five years, the State has attempted to turn around 24 schools, primarily through the “Other major restructuring” option (20 schools), through closure (1), and through leadership change (3). The results have demonstrated that, while six schools have made AYP in

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<sup>14</sup> See appendix (E)(2)-1 for a full explanation of the AYP metric

<sup>15</sup> See Data section for Early Warning System designed to detect at-risk students. For schools that are at-risk, the AYP metric runs a standards-based risk analysis. Details are available in Appendix (E)(2)-1

<sup>16</sup> See appendix (E)(2)-1 for a full explanation of the CSR

a single year, none have exited restructuring or school improvement status through improved student performance. Eight schools have avoided further restructuring by changing their Title I status.

The current Administration has learned the following from this history:

- “Other major restructuring” provides insufficient guidance and requires too few changes to effect significant reforms
- Difficulty in securing carve outs from collective bargaining agreements to implement changes required by the charter, outside management, and staff replacement models caused most LEAs to choose “Other major restructuring”
- Changes in leaders must be accompanied by greater flexibility and autonomy specifically relating to staffing, spending, and changes to the school day in order to take advantage of leadership skills
- The State needs to provide greater support in planning to create rigorous, credible plans, provide better oversight of implementation of these plans, and hold schools accountable for following through

Therefore, in addition to the State-created regulations to support reform in the lowest-achieving schools, these insights can inform the supports the State offers to at-risk schools, and will allow the State to hold these schools to high standards. The State recently instituted revised requirements for School Improvement Grant (SIG) applications for 2009-10. Under these rules, applicants must: (1) Provide goals for each phase of improvement; (2) Plan formative and summative measures of progress for each objective; (3) Demonstrate clear links between the root causes of school performance and all strategies, activities and goals; and (4) Provide an LEA School Support Team.

The State is committed to distributing School Improvement Grants only to schools that have credible plans for improvement. In addition, the State tracks progress towards each school’s goals, and will, as necessary, reduce or remove funding for schools that fail to demonstrate progress towards goals.

To complement these stronger requirements, the State has put in place the following supports: (1) regional quarterly technical assistance sessions for LEA School Support Teams; (2) clarified roles and responsibilities for LEAs; (3) training and clear expectations on rigor and allowable strategies; (4) training on all SIG requirements and processes; and (5) development of

review committees and rubrics to review all corrective action and restructuring plans, and to ensure consistent review and compliance.

In addition, the State has committed to continuous review and modification of these supports in response to LEA experience, and expects its improved accountability and support measures to prevent at-risk schools from failure.

### **Conclusion**

Delaware has a rigorous process for identifying the lowest-performing schools, and a strong regulatory environment to guide effective implementation in failing schools. Over the next five years, the State will initiate interventions in at least 10 schools, and will expect rapid improvements in student achievement.

## Summary: Activities, Timelines, Responsibilities

### Strategy 1

Create partnership zone and state turnaround office, recruit partners, and turn around ten schools

Activities	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Responsible parties
▪ Create State Turn-around Office – Hire leadership	May-June 2010							DDOE
▪ Assemble local and national partnerships	January-August 2010							State turnaround office
▪ Identification of persistently lowest-achieving schools	▲ March 2010							State turnaround office
▪ Selection of 3 schools for entry into Partnership Zone	▲ July 2010							Secretary of education with assistance from turnaround office
▪ Education period	▲ July 2010							Office with partners
▪ MOU negotiations	August-December 2010							Sec. Ed, LEAs, Union
▪ New leadership in place	December 2010-February 2011							LEAs and partners
▪ Hiring of new teachers in turnaround environment	January-May 2011							School leadership and partners
▪ Schools open under new model	▲ September 2011							School leadership and turnaround office
▪ First round of schools make AYP				▲ June 2013				School leadership
▪ First round of schools exit Partnership Zone					▲ June 2014			Turnaround office and school leadership
▪ Second round of 7 schools selected	▲ July 2011							Turnaround office and Sec. Ed.
▪ Education, MOU, and hiring second round	September 2011-May 2012							Turnaround office, partners, school leadership
▪ Second round schools open under new model	September 2013-June 2016							School leadership

## Performance Metrics

Performance measures	Actual data: baseline				
	(current school year or most recent)	End of SY 2010-11	End of SY 2011-12	End of SY 2012-13	End of SY 2013-14
The number of schools for which one of the four school intervention models will be initiated each year	0	0	3	7	0
Turnaround schools making AYP	0	0	0	3	7

## Summary: Benefits and requirements for all LEAs and Participating LEAs as described in the MOU

For all LEAs/charters, the State will...	For participating LEAs/charters, the State will...	Participating LEAs/charters will...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Identify schools to turn around through the State Partnership Zone</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Identify “persistently lowest-achieving schools” using performance and trend in performance for all students</li> <li>– Use a rigorous qualitative assessment to sequence schools for turnaround</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ <b>Create MOU by which the State and district will collaboratively intervene in failing schools</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Schools in lowest-achieving category will enter into an agreement giving the State power to influence reform plans that lack a rigorous approach to reform</li> <li>– Establish the last best chance option:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▫ The district and union will enter into a collective bargaining period to secure necessary flexibility to implement one of the four school intervention models, as defined in State regulations<sup>1</sup></li> <li>▫ The State chooses an option in the event of a stalemate, or requests renegotiation if agreement is not strong enough to implement a rigorous reform plan</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ <b>Develop turnaround office to support Partnership Zone schools</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Maintain a turnaround office to support schools and districts in turnaround efforts (e.g., assisting with recruitment of local partners, providing expertise, identifying best practice) and to monitor progress</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Provide additional financial support</b> for Partnership Zone schools</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Follow the process for turning around schools selected for the Partnership Zone in accordance with State regulations<sup>1</sup></b> (All LEAs/charters)*                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Decide on a reform model, craft a plan, and negotiate for necessary flexibility with representatives of educator associations (All LEAs/charters)*</li> <li>– Implement one of four school intervention models: Turnaround, Restart, School Closure, or Transformation, as defined in RTTT guidelines<sup>1</sup> (All LEAs/charters)*</li> <li>– Carry out plan to achieve AYP within two years of operations as part of the Partnership Zone (All LEAs/charters)*</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ <b>Provide support</b> to schools in the Partnership Zone (All LEAs/charters)*</li> <li>▪ <b>Integrate learnings from Partnership Zone schools to build district capacity</b> to improve performance of low-achieving schools (All LEAs/charters)*</li> </ul>

\* All LEAs/charters will have to complete these activities, not just participating LEAs/charters

<sup>1</sup> State regulations will define Turnaround, Restart, School Closure, and Transformation in accordance with the RTTT guidelines

8

## Evidence

### Evidence for (E)(2)

- *The State’s historic performance on school turnaround: See table below and further discussion of the lessons learned in narrative (Historical performance on school turnaround)*

### Historical performance on school turnaround

Approach used	Number of schools since SY 2004-05	Results and lessons learned
Other major restructuring	20	Greater accountability required, more dramatic change required
Closure	1	Difficult to do even with LEA support, statewide school choice assists in student reallocation
Option 2 – major leadership change	3	Ability for leadership to be effective is limited by regulation and staffing inflexibility. Changes in flexibility required

**(F) General (55 total points)**

**(F)(1) Making education funding a priority (10 points)**

*The extent to which—*

*(i) The percentage of the total revenues available to the State (as defined in this notice) that were used to support elementary, secondary, and public higher education for FY 2009 was greater than or equal to the percentage of the total revenues available to the State (as defined in this notice) that were used to support elementary, secondary, and public higher education for FY 2008; and*

*(ii) The State's policies lead to equitable funding (a) between high-need LEAs (as defined in this notice) and other LEAs, and (b) within LEAs, between high-poverty schools (as defined in this notice) and other schools.*

*In the text box below, the State shall describe its current status in meeting the criterion. The narrative or attachments shall also include, at a minimum, the evidence listed below, and how each piece of evidence demonstrates the State's success in meeting the criterion. The narrative and attachments may also include any additional information the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers. For attachments included in the Appendix, note in the narrative the location where the attachments can be found.*

*Evidence for (F)(1)(i):*

- *Financial data to show whether and to what extent expenditures, as a percentage of the total revenues available to the State (as defined in this notice), increased, decreased, or remained the same.*

*Evidence for (F)(1)(ii):*

- *Any supporting evidence the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers.*

*Recommended maximum response length: Three pages*

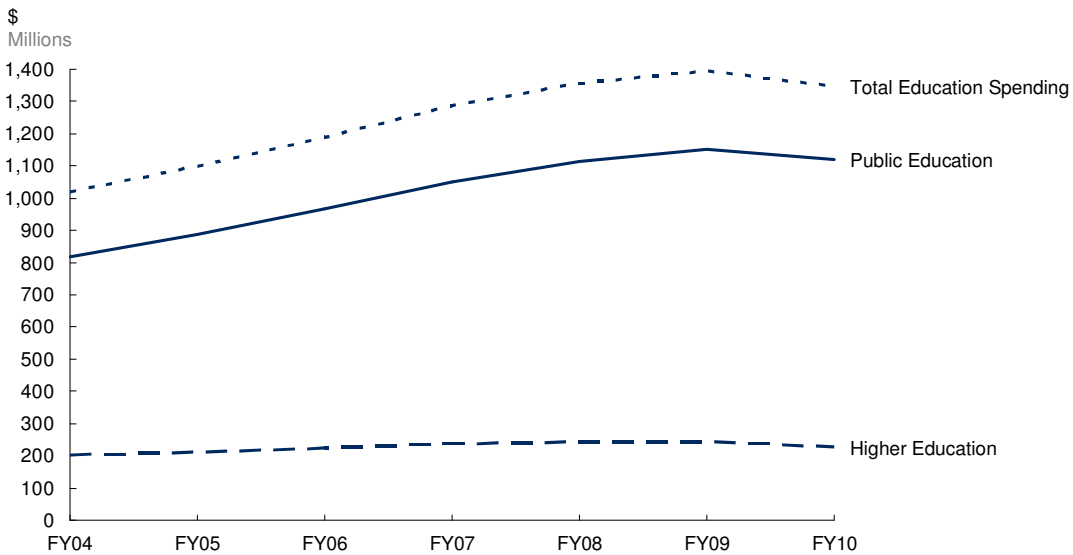
**(F)(1) Overview**

Delaware has shown a consistent commitment to increasing education funding over the past decade. It also has an equitable formula for allocating state funding across LEAs and an equalization mechanism that helps close the gap between LEAs with access to substantial local funding and those with fewer resources.

**(F)(1)(i) Percentage of total state revenues available to education funding**

The absolute level of public education funding in Delaware increased every year between 2004 and 2009. The result is a 41 percent increase in absolute funding (total dollars allocated) for elementary and secondary education; a 21 percent increase in absolute funding for public higher education; and a 37 percent increase in total public education funding over this period. The following graph shows the trend in absolute state education funding between 2004 and 2010.

**Absolute public education funding has increased in Delaware since 2004**

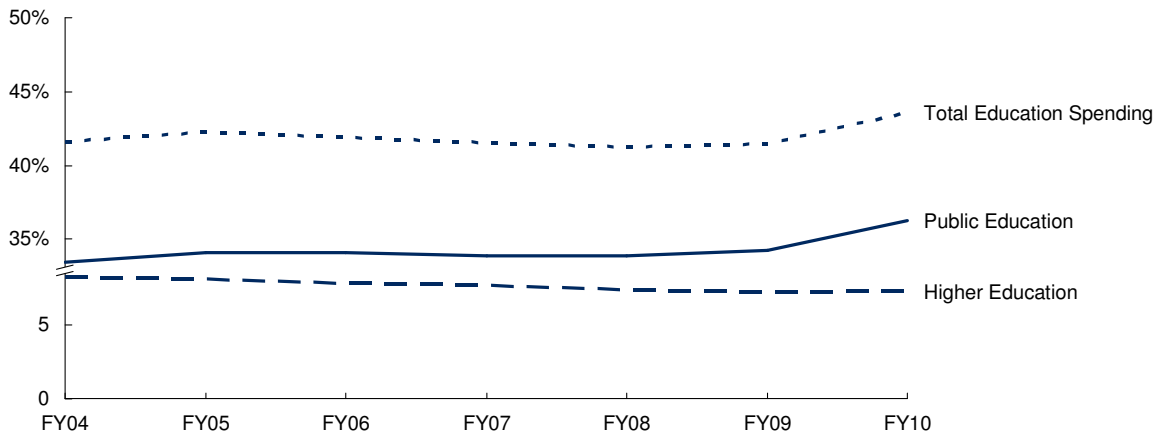


Source: DEDOE

Between Delaware’s FY08 and FY09, total state funding for public elementary, secondary and higher education increased from \$1.35 billion or 41.2 percent of total state revenues in FY08 to \$1.39 billion or 41.4 percent of total state revenues in FY09. Of this, \$1.11 billion, or 33.9 percent of total state revenues was for elementary and secondary education in FY08 and \$1.15 billion, or 34.2 percent of total state revenues, in FY09.

The following graph shows the trend in state education funding as a percent of total state revenues between 2004 and 2010.

**Public education funding as a percent of total state revenues has increased since 2004**



SOURCE: DEDOE

In the current budget for FY10, state education funding rose as a percentage of total state revenues, although it fell in absolute terms because of spending constraints resulting from lower total state revenues. Total state education funding rose from 41.4 percent to 43.5 percent of state revenues in FY10, and funding for elementary and secondary education rose from 34.2 percent to 36.3 percent of state revenues. State funding for higher education increased from 7.2 percent to 7.3 percent of state revenues.

**(F)(1)(ii) The State’s funding policies lead to equitable funding between and within LEAs**

State funding in Delaware is determined using the division funding method, which allocates state aid based on a unit count system: LEAs earn units based on the number of students that are counted each Sept. 30<sup>th</sup> (the unit count), with the number of students per unit determined based on the grade level and disability category of the students.

The majority of State funding is allocated through Division I and Division II funding based on each LEA’s unit count. Division I funding supports salaries of LEA employees including Teacher Formula Salaries, Cafeteria Funds and Other Employment Costs. Under this system, the number of positions provided is based on the number of students in a LEA. Every position allocated is funded using a statewide salary schedule – which covers approximately 70% of the total salary – in order to ensure that LEAs are not limited by local funding discrepancies. Division I funding guarantees that positions are allocated equitably and that salaries – the largest



school and LEA expense by a significant amount – are largely funded by the State. Every school and LEA is subject to the same unit formula and eligible for the same amount of funding per student from the State. Division II funding is primarily targeted for fixed costs associated with facilities and is split into two budget components: Energy and All Other costs. For Division II, LEAs receive a fixed allocation of funds (or unit value) for each unit earned through the unit count.

This formula is designed to encourage the State to distribute basic education support equitably across LEAs. However, the State recognizes that LEAs vary in their ability to raise local funding. To compensate for this, Delaware offers “equalization” funding to LEAs with low total local tax revenues (and therefore less total money available to be dedicated to education) under Division III of the state aid formula. Equalization funding is intended to supplement tax revenues dedicated to education in lower income LEAs so that they are able to provide a level of funding closer to that of LEAs that can rely on higher property taxes. Each year, state and LEA officials review the data to adjust the Division III formula (a fixed allocation of funds for each unit earned through the unit count) to reflect changes in relative wealth among LEAs. The parameters of the allocation are included in the annual state budget.

The State has taken additional efforts to improve the efficacy of its funding policies. In FY09, the State expanded its needs-based funding for children with disabilities to cover every LEA for the first time. Needs-based funding provides individualized funding based on demonstrated student need rather than general classification. Therefore, students with greater needs are eligible for greater funding. In 2009, Governor Markell’s first official act in office was to initiate the Governor’s Performance Review. The resulting review of the Department of Education led to a suggestion that the State provide funding flexibility to LEAs. Final legislation is still being developed; more details are available in section (F)(2)(v).

### **Conclusion**

Delaware’s consistent commitment to increasing education funding, its equitable formula for allocating state funding across LEAs, and its equalization mechanism help to close the gaps between LEAs, schools, and students.

### **(F)(1) Evidence**

#### **Evidence for (F)(1)(i)**

- *Financial data to show whether and to what extent expenditures, as a percentage of the total revenues available to the State (as defined in this notice), increased, decreased, or remained the same – See narrative for (F)(1)(i)*

**(F)(2) Ensuring successful conditions for high-performing charter schools and other innovative schools (40 points)**

*The extent to which—*

*(i) The State has a charter school law that does not prohibit or effectively inhibit increasing the number of high-performing charter schools (as defined in this notice) in the State, measured (as set forth in Appendix B) by the percentage of total schools in the State that are allowed to be charter schools or otherwise restrict student enrollment in charter schools;*

*(ii) The State has laws, statutes, regulations, or guidelines regarding how charter school authorizers approve, monitor, hold accountable, reauthorize, and close charter schools; in particular, whether authorizers require that student achievement (as defined in this notice) be one significant factor, among others, in authorization or renewal; encourage charter schools that serve student populations that are similar to local district student populations, especially relative to high-need students (as defined in this notice); and have closed or not renewed ineffective charter schools;*

*(iii) The State’s charter schools receive (as set forth in Appendix B) equitable funding compared to traditional public schools, and a commensurate share of local, State, and Federal revenues;*

*(iv) The State provides charter schools with funding for facilities (for leasing facilities, purchasing facilities, or making tenant improvements), assistance with facilities acquisition, access to public facilities, the ability to share in bonds and mill levies, or other supports; and the extent to which the State does not impose any facility-related requirements on charter schools that are stricter than those applied to traditional public schools; and*

*(v) The State enables LEAs to operate innovative, autonomous public schools (as defined in this notice) other than charter schools.*

*In the text box below, the State shall describe its current status in meeting the criterion. The narrative or attachments shall also include, at a minimum, the evidence listed below, and how each piece of evidence demonstrates the State’s success in meeting the criterion. The narrative and attachments may also include any additional information the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers. For attachments included in the Appendix, note in the narrative the location where the attachments can be found.*

*Evidence for (F)(2)(i):*

- A description of the State’s applicable laws, statutes, regulations, or other relevant legal documents.*
- The number of charter schools allowed under State law and the percentage this represents of the total number of schools in the State.*
- The number and types of charter schools currently operating in the State.*

*Evidence for (F)(2)(ii):*

- *A description of the State’s approach to charter school accountability and authorization, and a description of the State’s applicable laws, statutes, regulations, or other relevant legal documents.*
- *For each of the last five years:*
  - *The number of charter school applications made in the State.*
  - *The number of charter school applications approved.*
  - *The number of charter school applications denied and reasons for the denials (academic, financial, low enrollment, other).*
  - *The number of charter schools closed (including charter schools that were not reauthorized to operate).*

*Evidence for (F)(2)(iii):*

- *A description of the State’s applicable statutes, regulations, or other relevant legal documents.*
- *A description of the State’s approach to charter school funding, the amount of funding passed through to charter schools per student, and how those amounts compare with traditional public school per-student funding allocations.*

*Evidence for (F)(2)(iv):*

- *A description of the State’s applicable statutes, regulations, or other relevant legal documents.*
- *A description of the statewide facilities supports provided to charter schools, if any.*

*Evidence for (F)(2)(v):*

- *A description of how the State enables LEAs to operate innovative, autonomous public schools (as defined in this notice) other than charter schools.*

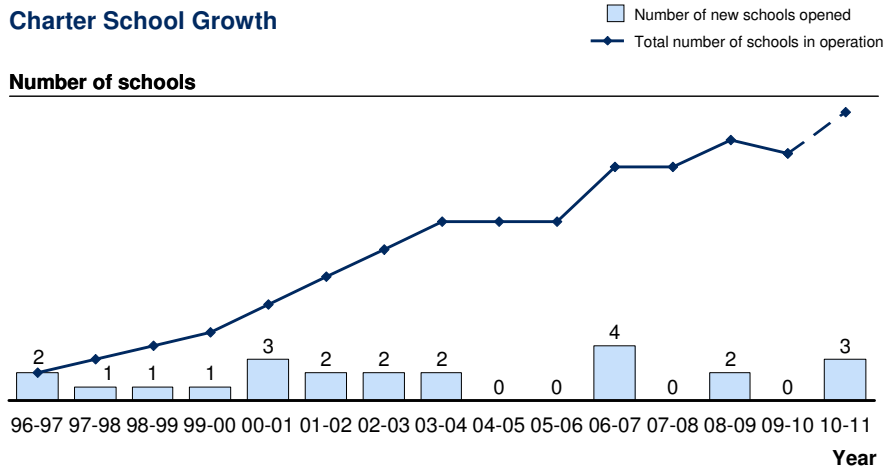
*Recommended maximum response length: Six pages*

**(F)(2)(i) The State has a charter school law that does not prohibit or effectively inhibit increasing the number of high-performing charter schools**

Delaware is among the most welcoming states for charter schools. In 1995, with leadership from then-governor and current US Senator Tom Carper, Delaware’s legislature authorized charter schools, as well as statewide school choice for all students. Unlike other states, Delaware has no cap on the total number of charter schools or the number of new charter schools eligible to be authorized each year. In addition, under statewide choice, students can choose any school, regardless of their home district, presuming reasonable travel accommodations can be provided.

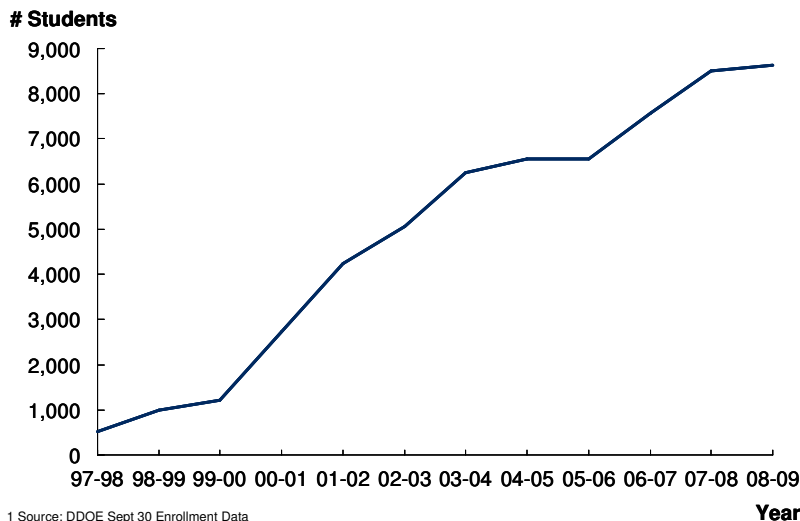
As a result, there has been steady growth in the number of charter schools and student enrollment in charters over the past 14 years:

**Charter School Growth**



1 There were two charter school closings during this period, one in 2000 and one in 2008  
 SOURCE: DDOE Charter Schools Update

**Total Charter School Enrollment (1997-2009)**



1 Source: DDOE Sept 30 Enrollment Data

Currently, charter schools account for 9 percent of public schools and educate 7 percent of the total student population.

Delaware gives its charter schools a high level of operational flexibility in return for accountability for achieving high levels of student performance. Delaware charter schools are free of most State and district rules and regulations governing public education. Instead, charters are subject to regular review and held to high standards of measurable student performance to maintain their charter, leading some to significantly outperform other schools that serve similar populations.

**(F)(2)(ii) The State has laws regarding how charter school authorizers approve, monitor, hold accountable, reauthorize, and close charter schools**

To obtain a charter, a school or operator must submit an application with a detailed plan of operation, including measurable standards for student achievement. The charter document describes the educational, administrative and financial plan that the school’s board of directors agrees to follow in operating the school. Under state law<sup>1</sup>, a charter application must meet 14 criteria including:

- Clear goals for student performance and a commitment to using satisfactory indicators to determine whether students meet or exceed such goals and the academic standards of the State.
- The academic program, including curriculum and instructional strategies, has the potential to improve student performance.
- Curriculum is aligned with Delaware Content Standards, state program requirements and state graduation requirements.
- An unbiased selection process for students that conforms to all state anti-discrimination laws.

To encourage charters to meet these high standards, the state routinely returns first time and renewal applications and requires that schools strengthen their plans. A full list of charter applicants and the results of their applications available in Appendix F(2) – 1.

In order for a public school to a change into a charter school, the board of the charter school must submit proof of public support. The charter applicant must receive approval from

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<sup>1</sup> 14 Del. C. §512

the local school board, more than 50 percent of the teachers and more than 50 percent of affected parents. These requirements are intended to ensure sufficient enrollment, public support and a successful conversion to charter management.

Unlike in many other states, multiple bodies can authorize charters in Delaware. School operators may apply to either the DDOE or the local public school board to gain a charter. By allowing multiple authorizers, the State provides increased flexibility for charter operators while maintaining high standards. In the past five years, 17 schools have applied for charters and seven have been approved.<sup>2</sup> Of the schools that were not approved, five were unable to complete sufficiently rigorous applications, two withdrew their applications after initial feedback, and three were denied for substantive reasons.

To ensure accountability, approved charter schools must submit annual progress reports and renew their applications after the fourth year of operation and every five years thereafter. The annual report: (1) informs the DDOE and the public about the school's accomplishments during the previous year; (2) specifies progress towards objectives set forth in the Charter School Performance Agreement; and (3) describes how the school has met evaluation requirements outlined in the School Improvement Evaluation Guidelines. When charter school performance problems arise, the DDOE can respond quickly because of its intimate knowledge of all of its charters and their operators. The State requires DDOE to submit an annual review of charter school effectiveness for the governor and the legislature.

The renewal process provides an opportunity for rigorous review. The renewal process was recently streamlined with a new web-based system for charter renewal. As part of the process, DDOE conducts an evaluation before the expiration of its charter. The evaluation reviews the 14 criteria for the initial charter application and holds charters accountable for being on track towards meeting goals. Measurable student performance is central to the review – charter schools are required to maintain student achievement levels that are at or above the state average in order to be renewed. High expectations combined with rigorous reviews are designed to ensure that every charter school in Delaware meets high standards of student performance.

Where results have been unsatisfactory, Delaware has closed charter schools for poor performance. In the spring of 2008, the DDOE denied the Marion T. Academy's application to

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<sup>2</sup> See table in Appendix (F)(2)(ii) for specific schools and details of applications, approvals, and denials.

reauthorize its charter for failing to meet student performance goals, failing to meet objectives in its performance agreement, an unsatisfactory plan to evaluate student performance and take corrective action, and an unsatisfactory curriculum. In January 2009, the Delaware Department of Education recommended non-renewal of Moyer Academy's charter after it failed to meet student performance goals. This record shows that the state is willing to close charter schools when they are not meeting standards.

The charter movement gets support from the Delaware Charter Schools Network (DCSN), a nonprofit organization created in 2001 to serve and advocate on behalf of public charter schools and their supporters. DCSN educates the public about charter schools, provides assistance to new and existing Delaware charter schools, and serves as a unified voice for the state's charter schools at the state and national level.

**(F)(2)(iii) The State's charter schools receive equitable funding compared to traditional public schools**

The State's school funding formula ensures that charter schools receive equitable funding and flexibility in how they use their funds. Charters are given 100 percent division funding using the same formulas as a traditional school district, but in most cases are not held to the same spending restrictions that apply to other public schools. Like traditional school districts, charter school funding is determined based on student enrollment using the unit system, but they have greater autonomy on how they spend money. Charter schools, are not covered by collective bargaining agreements and therefore have more flexibility to set their own salaries and staffing levels. Overall, traditional LEAs have restrictions on over 70 percent of the funds they receive from the State, while charters have restrictions on only 10 percent of their state funding. This flexibility allows charter schools to be innovative and adaptive in how they manage their schools and to maximize their resources to meet the needs of their students. For a chart detailing the amount of funding the State passes through per student to charters and LEAs see Appendix (F)(2) – 2.

**(F)(2)(iv) The State provides charter schools with funding for facilities and other supports**

To supplement funding under the unit system, the State provides additional funding for school services. Charters are eligible for State funding dedicated to professional development hours, driver education and/or disciplinary programs. Charters receive a percentage of the transportation allocation given to the vocational district in which they are based, rather than



being funded directly through the state transportation formula. Charters can solicit competitive bids for services or provide the services internally and keep any surplus funds for operations, while traditional school districts must return any dollars not spent on transportation. In addition, the State provides Charter School Tax Relief Funds to schools that have been in operation since 2000 to be spent at each school's discretion. Finally, the State provides minor capital funding to charter schools at the same rate and based on the same formula as traditional school districts. Minor capital funding is appropriated by the State and allocated to charters and traditional school districts based on respective September 30 enrollment. Charter schools automatically receive this funding while traditional public school districts are required to provide matching funding to receive the allocation. Delaware does not currently provide major capital funding for charter schools, but does not restrict use of any state funding for such purposes. The DDOE in consultation with the Office of Management and Budget regularly publishes a list of all vacant and unused buildings and portions of buildings owned by the state or school districts that may be suitable for new or existing charter schools. School districts must make such spaces available for charter schools and must bargain in good faith over the cost of rent, services and maintenance. Charter schools are given the right of first refusal to purchase any surplus property owned by school districts.

In addition to providing state funding, Delaware ensures that charter schools receive equitable portions of local tax revenues. The DDOE calculates the local revenue per pupil that a LEA must pass on to a charter school serving students from their district. The DDOE oversees the flow of funds to ensure that charters are compensated for their students by local LEAs.

As a result, in the 2008-09 school year Delaware charter schools received 4.8 percent of the state's K-12 education funding, 5.7 percent of federal funding and 4 percent of local funding.

**(F)(2)(v) The State enables LEAs to operate innovative, autonomous public schools (as defined in this notice) other than charter schools.**

Delaware has many reform-minded LEAs, and the State supports these LEAs in establishing autonomous public schools. For instance, the State has three independent-mission schools, and three Vocational Technical Districts, supporting six Vocational Technical high schools. These high schools can customize graduation requirements to match the requirements of national industry-based certifications.

In addition to these autonomous public schools, the State encourages LEAs to pursue greater autonomy and flexibility in other schools. This includes control of budget, extended school day, comprehensive support for high needs students, and staff selection. The State is strengthening support for LEAs that create autonomous, independent schools through two recent initiatives: 1) funding flexibility, and 2) the Partnership Zone.

1) *Funding Flexibility*. In order to give LEAs more control over budgets, a proposal is currently being considered to allow traditional school districts to participate in an optional flexible funding management plan. Participation in this plan would provide LEAs with the ability to better coordinate resource allocation decisions with strategic planning goals and student needs. In short, the optional flexible funding management plan would allow LEAs to continue to earn their state funding based on current formula, but choose how to spend it based on LEA needs, provided their decisions (1) do not exceed the total amount of funding an LEA is eligible to receive and (2) improve academic performance over time. These changes would allow LEAs to further the needs of independent and autonomous schools by enabling them to align their budget and staffing decisions with their independent missions.

2) *Partnership Zone*. The newly created Partnership Zone (see section (E)(1) for details) creates a process to allow select persistently lowest-achieving schools to achieve greater flexibility in selecting staff, and greater operational flexibility (e.g. including new structures for the school year such as extended learning time). The negotiation process outlined by the Partnership Zone must include, at a minimum, additional flexibility and autonomy for school management along the following dimensions:

- Hiring, reassigning and transferring employees into and out of the Partnership Zone school (e.g. removing seniority limitations)
- Determining which teachers will be transferred or reassigned
- Work rules relating to the educational calendar and scheduling of instructional time and non-instructional time
- Instructional reform
- Professional development requirements and other specialized training
- Retention and employment incentives, including financial incentives for effective teachers and principals

These initiatives will provide a strong foundation for more autonomous public schools.

### **Conclusion: Recognition and results for innovative public schools**

Delaware is a leader in the national charter school movement – providing an open environment and proven examples of success. Delaware’s charter school laws have earned national recognition for offering schools flexibility in exchange for accountability. The Center for Education Reform (CER) gave Delaware’s charter environment an ‘A’ in both 2002 and 2006, ranking the state 4<sup>th</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> in the nation in those years. In the most recent CER report, they classified Delaware’s charter laws among the 15 most favorable in the nation.

Delaware charter schools are nationally recognized for their success in improving student achievement. According to the CER, charter school students in grades six through eight scored as well as their peers in conventional public schools on the Delaware’s DSTP reading section, and outperformed the state average by five points in grade seven. On DSTP math, charter school sixth graders finished an average of eight points below their peers, but seventh and eighth graders finished an average of four points and six points higher, respectively.

To recognize these impressive results, the State actively commends and encourages its charter schools. In May 2009, the General Assembly passed Concurrent Resolution 13 “Commending the Efforts of Delaware Charter Schools in Educating Delaware Students.” This resolution recognized charter schools for increasing academic achievement, offering specialized instructional opportunities and increasing parent and student involvement in education. The full text can be found in Appendix (F)(2) – 3. Delaware recognizes the important and unique role of charter schools within the public education system.

### **(F)(2) Evidence**

#### **Evidence for (F)(2)(i)**

- *A description of the State’s applicable laws, statutes, regulations, or other relevant legal documents – See narrative for (F)(2)(i)*
- *The number of charter schools allowed under State law and the percentage this represents of the total number of schools in the State – See narrative for (F)(2)(i)*
- *The number and types of charter schools currently operating in the State – See narrative for (F)(2)(i)*

### **Evidence for (F)(2)(ii)**

- *A description of the State’s approach to charter school accountability and authorization, and a description of the State’s applicable laws, statutes, regulations, or other relevant legal documents – **See narrative for (F)(2)(ii)***
- *For each of the last five years:*
  - *The number of charter school applications made in the State – **See Appendix (F)(2) – 1***
  - *The number of charter school applications approved – **See Appendix (F)(2) – 1***
  - *The number of charter school applications denied and reasons for the denials (academic, financial, low enrollment, other) – **See Appendix (F)(2) – 1***
  - *The number of charter schools closed (including charter schools that were not reauthorized to operate) – **See narrative for (F)(2)(ii)***

### **Evidence for (F)(2)(iii)**

- *A description of the State’s applicable statutes, regulations, or other relevant legal documents – **See narrative for (F)(2)(iii)***
- *A description of the State’s approach to charter school funding, the amount of funding passed through to charter schools per student, and how those amounts compare with traditional public school per-student funding allocations – **See narrative for (F)(2)(ii) and Appendix (F)(2) – 2***

### **Evidence for (F)(2)(iv)**

- *A description of the State’s applicable statutes, regulations, or other relevant legal document – **See narrative for (F)(2)(iv)***
- *A description of the statewide facilities supports provided to charter schools, if any – **See narrative for (F)(2)(iv)***

### **Evidence for (F)(2)(v)**

- *A description of how the State enables LEAs to operate innovative, autonomous public schools (as defined in this notice) other than charter schools – **See narrative for (F)(2)(v)***

**(F)(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions (5 points)**

*The extent to which the State, in addition to information provided under other State Reform Conditions Criteria, has created, through law, regulation, or policy, other conditions favorable to education reform or innovation that have increased student achievement or graduation rates, narrowed achievement gaps, or resulted in other important outcomes.*

*In the text box below, the State shall describe its current status in meeting the criterion. The narrative or attachments shall also include, at a minimum, the evidence listed below, and how each piece of evidence demonstrates the State's success in meeting the criterion. The narrative and attachments may also include any additional information the State believes will be helpful to peer reviewers. For attachments included in the Appendix, note in the narrative the location where the attachments can be found.*

*Evidence for (F)(3):*

- *A description of the State's other applicable key education laws, statutes, regulations, or relevant legal documents.*

*Recommended maximum response length: Two pages*

### **F(3) Demonstrating other significant reform conditions**

Delaware is committed to forward-thinking reform that addresses the whole child. Through its Reaching Higher for Success Initiative, Delaware provides a wide range of services to students at an early age to prepare them for college and career. For example, Student Success Plans create a personalized plan for students to graduate college- and career-ready (including goals, performance metrics, required courses, and extra activities). The plans are accessible online, through a personalized web portal. In addition, the State's recently-purchased Early Warning System<sup>3</sup> identifies students who are falling off track for graduation. This helps direct students to colleges and careers that will interest them, while providing the supports necessary to help them achieve their goals.

Supports are not limited to secondary school, though – committed students are given continued support outside the classroom and through college. Delaware provides real-world experiences for high school students by sponsoring the Governor's School for Excellence at the University of Delaware and providing internships and shadowing opportunities for students at potential future employers. Upon graduation, the Student Excellence Equals Degree (SEED) scholarship program provides free tuition for an associates degree at the Delaware Technical and Community College or the University of Delaware's Associate of Arts degree program to eligible students who graduate from a Delaware high school with a grade point average of 2.5 or higher. This scholarship guarantees that any student with demonstrated academic achievement is able to attend college in Delaware regardless of their financial circumstances. In this way, Delaware schools prepare students for college and careers and offer them the real world experience and supports necessary to succeed.

As part of this holistic focus on success, Delaware is a national leader in the movement to provide universal access to school-based wellness centers for all students. The first wellness center opened in Delaware in 1985, and today centers operate in 28 of Delaware's 32 high schools. With \$6 million in yearly funding from the state general fund, the Delaware Department of Education partners with the Delaware Department of Health and Social Services to provide students with crucial medical services at high schools throughout the State. School-based wellness centers provide universal access to primary prevention and early intervention for

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<sup>3</sup> See section (B)(3) for more information on the Student Success Plans and the Early Warning system.

medical and mental health problems for Delaware public school students. In addition, these centers promote healthy decision-making and health education in order to reduce high-risk behaviors common among teens. By placing these centers in schools, the State is able to provide high need populations with easy access to critical medical services.

**(F)(3) Evidence**

**Evidence for (F)(3)**

- *A description of the State's other applicable key education laws, statutes, regulations, or relevant legal documents – See narrative for (F)(3)*

**Priority 2: Competitive Preference Priority -- Emphasis on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM). (15 points, all or nothing)**

*To meet this priority, the State's application must have a high-quality plan to address the need to*

*(i) offer a rigorous course of study in mathematics, the sciences, technology, and engineering;*

*(ii) cooperate with industry experts, museums, universities, research centers, or other STEM-capable community partners to prepare and assist teachers in integrating STEM content across grades and disciplines, in promoting effective and relevant instruction, and in offering applied learning opportunities for students; and (iii) prepare more students for advanced study and careers in the sciences, technology, engineering, and mathematics, including by addressing the needs of underrepresented groups and of women and girls in the areas of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.*

*The competitive preference priority will be evaluated in the context of the State's entire application. Therefore, a State that is responding to this priority should address it throughout the application, as appropriate, and provide a summary of its approach to addressing the priority in the text box below. The reviewers will assess the priority as part of their review of a State's application and determine whether it has been met.*

*Recommended maximum response length, if any: One page*



## **Overview**

Delaware is a leader in using technology to enhance instruction and in bringing the most effective STEM education to students. The State has a long history of collaborating with nonprofits, institutes of higher education (including the University of Delaware), and with businesses (including Dupont, a Delaware-based corporation that is one of the largest science and technology firms in the world), to enhance STEM coursework in the State.

Over the next four years, Delaware plans to increase rigor in STEM coursework, promote college-readiness in the core areas of science and mathematics, and to further integrate technology to engage students. In addition, Delaware will continue its strategy of promoting collaboration and innovation to increase access to, and quality of, STEM courses.

## **Goals**

- All schools offering a rigorous course of study in mathematics, the sciences, technology and engineering
- Formalize, continue, and expand collaboration with industry experts, institutes of higher education, universities, research centers, and other community partners to assist teachers in integrating STEM content across grades and disciplines
- Prepare more students for advanced study and careers in STEM disciplines, including underrepresented groups and women

## **Activities**

Delaware's STEM strategy has five main parts.

- *STEM Coordinating Council.* Create a STEM coordinating council which will manage the network of businesses, institutes of higher education, nonprofits, and LEAs that are innovating in the STEM. The coordinating council will promote the adoption of the high-quality STEM initiatives. The council will help ensure that all schools have rigorous and innovative courses of study in STEM fields, that STEM content is tightly integrated across grades and disciplines, and that underrepresented groups and women are prepared to enter STEM fields. The STEM coordinating council will have targets for adoption of the most high-impact programs for student achievement. Programs to be considered by the STEM council include:

- Engineering is Elementary (EiE): A Dupont-sponsored program for elementary schools that develops engineering and technological literacy among children. EiE provides a research-based, standards-driven, and classroom-tested curriculum that integrates engineering and technology concepts and skills with elementary science topics.
- Project Lead the Way (PLTW): Offered in conjunction with University of Delaware, PLTW targets high-need high schools, providing students with real-world learning and hands-on experience. The program places special emphasis on helping students prepare for college and career training in technology and engineering related fields.
- Gateway to Technology (GTT): Part of Project Lead the Way, GTT targets high-need middle schools, offering applied learning opportunities for students. GTT is taught in conjunction with a rigorous academic curriculum and is designed to challenge and engage the natural curiosity of middle school students through experiential projects.
- MIT BLOSSOMS (Blended Learning Open Source Science or Math Studies): Offered through the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the program helps teachers integrate STEM content across grades and disciplines, and encourages underrepresented groups and women to pursue careers in math and science. It provides a video-based system to enhance existing curricula with STEM principles, examples, and content. The open-source video content allows educators to deliver challenging STEM content using experts and high-quality examples.
- Promote continued collaboration with interested and qualified educators to bring innovative STEM programs into the State. Currently, a collaborative group of educators is in discussions with professors at MIT to pilot integrated STEM curricula in two-three LEAs in collaboration with corporate partners. Ongoing collaboration and expert recruitment will allow Delaware to stay on the forefront of dynamically evolving STEM fields.
- *Focused Interventions.* The STEM Coordinating Council and the Curriculum Workgroup at the DDOE will work with six-eight LEAs with the lowest performance on college-

readiness exams, Advanced Placement (AP) exams, and poor STEM rigor to target groups traditionally underrepresented in STEM careers and courses of study, and to encourage a higher percentage of women to pursue STEM pathways. Interventions will be similar to those in the Reaching Higher for Success and APIP programs<sup>1</sup>, and will focus on: 1) expanding high-quality AP offerings in schools through improved professional development and summer institutes in math, science, and engineering; and 2) providing student-focused support (e.g., tutoring, afterschool programs, counseling) to ensure that students understand and reach their potential to be successful in advanced STEM coursework. A key to this strategy will be early identification of high-potential students through assessments such as the PSAT.

- *Stem Residency*. The State will implement a STEM residency in 2010-11 school year, in partnership with University of Delaware. The program will be for non-traditional candidates who have achieved a passing score on an examination of content knowledge, such as Praxis II. Similar to ARTC<sup>2</sup> teachers, these candidates will work as an assistant teacher under a mentor, and will qualify for full certification during their first year of teaching. The Teacher Residency is specifically targeted to STEM subjects, and will prepare its graduates to teach in high-need schools (see D1 and D3 for more information).
- *Scholarships and loan forgiveness*. The Delaware Higher Education Commission administers three scholarship programs to encourage teachers to become certified in the critical needs areas such as STEM fields. First, Critical Need Scholarships are awarded to current teachers who hold emergency certifications in critical shortage areas and are pursuing full certification. The award includes reimbursement for up to three credits taken in the fall and spring terms.<sup>3</sup> Second, the State gives preference to applicants for the Christa McAuliffe Teacher Incentive Program award to students who pursue undergraduate teacher education degrees in subject areas with critical shortages (e.g., math and science). Awards are for \$5,000 per year for students in four-year programs,

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<sup>1</sup> See P5 for more information on these programs

<sup>2</sup> ARTC: Alternative Routes to Certification. Under the [Delaware ARTC program](#), individuals with college degrees in [selected secondary school subjects](#) may be [hired by a public or charter secondary school](#) and complete certification requirements during the first year of teaching -- through a 12- to 18-month, [state-approved program](#) of classes and seminars accompanied by intensive, [school-based mentoring and supervision](#)

<sup>3</sup> Delaware provides free summer tuition to all public school teachers at state institutions.

and \$2,500 annually for students in two-year programs. Third, Delaware Teacher Corps is open to undergraduate or graduate students who attend a Delaware public college and are enrolled in a teacher certification program in a critical need area such as science and math. The award covers tuition for up to four years and gives top preference to students who intend to teach middle or high school science and math. Teachers who participate in the Delaware Teacher Corps and Christa McAuliffe Teacher Incentive Program also qualify for one year of state loan forgiveness after completing their first year of teaching.

- *Continued technology innovation in distance learning.* Delaware hosts all of its curricular units online and has developed homegrown initiatives such as eMints and eLearning that have used technology to increase student performance. These programs allow students to recover credits and pursue added instruction through an online interface combining standards-aligned curricula and state-of-the-art technology. The State's new assessment system, Delaware Comprehensive Assessment System, will be both computer-adaptive and hosted online, leveraging innovations in technology

### **Conclusion**

Delaware is committed to implementing rigorous STEM curricula in all of its schools, to helping teachers integrate STEM components across grades and disciplines, and to focusing extra attention to encourage traditionally underrepresented groups and women to pursue degrees in STEM fields. Delaware is pursuing these goals through a collaborative approach, working with the LEAs and the vast network of in-state and out-of-state experts across fields, to bring the best and most innovative STEM materials into classrooms.

**Priority 3: Invitational Priority – Innovations for Improving Early Learning Outcomes**  
(not scored)

*The Secretary is particularly interested in applications that include practices, strategies, or programs to improve educational outcomes for high-need students who are young children (prekindergarten through third grade) by enhancing the quality of preschool programs. Of particular interest are proposals that support practices that (i) improve school readiness (including social, emotional, and cognitive); and (ii) improve the transition between preschool and kindergarten.*

*The State is invited to provide a discussion of this priority in the text box below, but such description is optional. Any supporting evidence the State believes will be helpful must be described and, where relevant, included in the Appendix. For attachments included in the Appendix, note in the narrative the location where the attachments can be found.*

*Recommended maximum response length, if any: Two pages*

## Overview

Delaware's efforts to improve early learning outcomes are marked by extensive interagency cooperation, guidelines for early childhood education that are aligned with K-12 standards, and the use of longitudinal studies, quality ratings, and professional development to continuously improve services.

These efforts have demonstrated impact. For over a decade the State has ensured that 100% of Head Start-eligible students receive at least one year of preschool. In addition, a study of the achievement of preschool students in grades K-5 showed that at-risk students who attended preschool outperformed at-risk students who did not attend preschool (by 21% in reading and math) and nearly matched the performance of students who were not at risk (leaving only a 5% gap in reading and a 6% gap in math). At-risk preschool attendees also demonstrated better grades and fewer behavioral incidents.

## Activities

In 2006, Delaware developed *Early Success* the State's plan to help families, communities, and schools to provide the early care and early childhood education necessary to prepare children for kindergarten. Highlights include:

- **Early Learning Foundations:** Delaware's Early Learning Foundations are the State's learning guidelines for infants, toddlers and preschoolers, which provide a strengths-based curriculum framework for early educational instructional planning<sup>4</sup>. The Foundations align directly with the Delaware K-12 Grade Level Expectations and statewide content standards ensuring that children who participate in the State's early childhood programs are prepared to meet content standards in kindergarten.
- **Quality control and continuous improvement.** The DDOE oversees and helps unify the efforts of early care providers in two ways: (1) quality rating systems to ensure quality control; and (2) professional development partnerships to ensure continuous improvement.

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<sup>4</sup> The Foundations contain the National Education Goals Panel recommended developmental domains -- Language/Literacy, Social/Emotional, Mathematics, Science, Physical Health, Approaches to Learning -- as well as the Delaware added Mathematics, Science, Creative Arts and soon to be released social studies related domain entitled My Family My Community. The Infant/Toddler Foundations contain the developmental domains of Language, Social/Emotional, Physical Health, and Discovery.

- *Quality Rating Systems.* In 2006, a collaborative statewide effort launched Delaware Stars, the State’s quality rating improvement rating system for early care and education. Quality rating is a critical way for the State to ensure that children have access to excellent facilities and that parents have clear information about program quality. Delaware Stars’ ratings evaluate programs along five dimensions: qualifications and professional development of staff; learning environment and curriculum; family and community partnerships; management and administration. Currently, more than 158 programs are enrolled, representing more than one-third of all programs and covering 10,600 children). Since the system was implemented, 28% of programs have increased one star level, representing improvements in quality of child-care often in response to the rating system. Much of this has been through improved professional development of the practitioners, a priority of the program.
- *Professional development partnerships.* The DDOE manages the professional development activities provided to all early childhood care and education practitioners. Through the University of Delaware, the DDOE funds the Institute for Excellence in Early Education, charged with assessing the training needs of early educational practitioners using surveys and data. With this information, the Institute develops and delivers research and evidenced-based professional development experiences to help practitioners support early learning. In addition, all professional development and credentialing of practitioners is aligned with the Early Learning Foundations learning guidelines.
- **Services for high-need children.** The DDOE manages several critical early learning programs for high-need children, including:
  - Parents As Teachers (PAT): PAT provides home visiting services, with an emphasis on at-risk children from birth to age three. The program uses the nationally-recognized<sup>5</sup> PAT curriculum. The PAT program also reaches at-risk children up to age five through a community-based preschool-to-kindergarten transition initiative.

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<sup>5</sup> The Parents as Teachers program has won numerous awards, including the “Innovation in the State and Local Government Award” by the Ford Foundation and Harvard University, and “Best in America” certification by Independent Charities of America.

- Early Childhood Assistance Program (ECAP): ECAP is a state-funded prekindergarten program targeting children living in low-income families. The goal is to ensure that every four-year-old that is Head Start-eligible has at least one year of preschool prior to entering kindergarten. The State has met this goal for the last ten years.
- **Community coordination.** Delaware's system of early education reflects an integrated approach to services. The Delaware Departments of Education, Health, and Children/Families work cooperatively to support the growth and development of young children. This effort is guided by the Interagency Resource Management Committee (IRMC), a legislated group made up of the three Department Secretaries, the Director of Office and Management and State Controller General. The focus of the Committee is to promote interagency collaboration and coordination for young children while promoting cost effective use of state resources.
- **Transition to kindergarten:** The State is working with the Mid-Atlantic Early Childhood Network (MECEN) to promote effective transitions to kindergarten. The goal of MECEN is to build stronger bridges between parents, early childcare providers, and kindergarten educators. While the Early Learning Foundations should create a seamless curriculum transition, the MECEN is necessary so that all providers are communicating and aware of developmental stages at the point of transition. It consists of a framework, specific guidance on best practices, and a forum for parents, childcare professionals, and teachers to interact.
- **Systematic Evaluation:** The Department's current data system can follow children, and the services they receive, as early as birth. The Department has completed one longitudinal analysis tracking children from pre-school through fifth grade to assess the long-term impact of early education programs on future later learning. The data showed at-risk children who attended preschool scored at or near their peers who were not at risk on the DSTP exam, while at-risk students who did not attend preschool lagged other students. Children who attended preschool also showed better grades, lower rates of grade repetition, and fewer behavioral incidents. A second longitudinal study is currently underway. This kind of analysis helps the State to identify effective practices to expand.

### **Conclusion**

Delaware is committed to starting education at an early age, and understands that early childhood care involves parents, the community, childcare providers, and teachers working



together. Delaware is able to provide comprehensive supports to high-need students, and to evaluate those efforts to ensure success. Efforts to extend content standards to cover infants through third grade mean that students enter the assessment system well prepared for success, and all adults involved in a child's education have clear guidance about best practices. As with other areas, Delaware has taken a collaborative approach, understanding that clear information, accountability, and communication are the best ways to achieve positive results in early childhood education.

**Priority 4: Invitational Priority – Expansion and Adaptation of the Statewide Longitudinal Data System** *(not scored)*

*The Secretary is particularly interested in applications in which the State plans to expand statewide longitudinal data systems to include or integrate data from special education programs, English language learner programs, early childhood programs, at-risk and dropout prevention programs, and school climate and culture programs, as well as information on student mobility, human resources (i.e., information on teachers, principals, and other staff), school finance, student health, postsecondary education, and other relevant areas, with the purpose of connecting and coordinating all parts of the system to allow important questions related to policy, practice, or overall effectiveness to be asked, answered, and incorporated into effective continuous improvement practices.*

*The Secretary is also particularly interested in applications in which States propose working together to adapt one State’s statewide longitudinal data system so that it may be used, in whole or in part, by one or more other States, rather than having each State build or continue building such systems independently.*

*The State is invited to provide a discussion of this priority in the text box below, but such description is optional. Any supporting evidence the State believes will be helpful must be described and, where relevant, included in the Appendix. For attachments included in the Appendix, note in the narrative the location where the attachments can be found.*

*Recommended maximum response length, if any: Two pages*

## **Overview**

Delaware's plans to expand its longitudinal data system are detailed in its federal longitudinal data system grant application. The grant summary for this application is included in Appendix (C)(2)-1.

In addition, the State's data system already links students from pre-K to college, and shares data with most institutes of higher education and other state agencies.

For example:

- Delaware's P-20 Council commissioned development of the "P-20 Data Cube," in order to better understand factors that impact student success in college. The P-20 Data Cube provides information regarding the extent to which students transition successfully from secondary school to postsecondary education, by linking students' course- and test-taking histories in high school with their enrollment, course registrations, and matriculation histories at Delaware's public and private colleges. This includes information on whether students enroll in remedial coursework and indicators of Federal Pell Grant eligibility, all linked to students' enrollment and demographic records in DELSIS. Data for three cohorts of Delaware public school graduates has been collected and stored in the P-20 Data Cube, including the high school classes of 2006-07, 2007-08, and 2008-09.
- The DDOE provides other information necessary to address alignment and adequate preparation for success in postsecondary education, through data-sharing with Delaware's higher education institutions and relevant agencies. The DDOE already shares data with the Delaware Division of Health and Social Services (DHSS) the Delaware Department of Services for Children, Youth and Families (DSCYF), and higher education institutions, and is working to develop MOUs for data-sharing with the Department of Labor, and increased data-sharing with higher education institutions.

**Priority 5: Invitational Priority -- P-20 Coordination, Vertical and Horizontal Alignment**  
(not scored)

*The Secretary is particularly interested in applications in which the State plans to address how early childhood programs, K-12 schools, postsecondary institutions, workforce development organizations, and other State agencies and community partners (e.g., child welfare, juvenile justice, and criminal justice agencies) will coordinate to improve all parts of the education system and create a more seamless preschool-through-graduate school (P-20) route for students. Vertical alignment across P-20 is particularly critical at each point where a transition occurs (e.g., between early childhood and K-12, or between K-12 and postsecondary/careers) to ensure that students exiting one level are prepared for success, without remediation, in the next. Horizontal alignment, that is, coordination of services across schools, State agencies, and community partners, is also important in ensuring that high-need students (as defined in this notice) have access to the broad array of opportunities and services they need and that are beyond the capacity of a school itself to provide.*

*The State is invited to provide a discussion of this priority in the text box below, but such description is optional. Any supporting evidence the State believes will be helpful must be described and, where relevant, included in the Appendix. For attachments included in the Appendix, note in the narrative the location where the attachments can be found.*

*Recommended maximum response length, if any: Two pages*

## Overview

Delaware is committed to tightly integrating education and student supports across grades and between agencies. In particular, the DDOE has focused on:

- *The transition to kindergarten* by extending content standards to early childhood programs and by ensuring high-need students attend preschool
- *The postsecondary transition.* by matching high school graduation requirements to entry requirements for the State's colleges and universities, and by matching career and technical education program requirements to nationally-recognized certificates (e.g., industry-based certifications)
- *Horizontal alignment* among state agencies, by coordinating supports to high-need students through an integrated information system that links student data across agencies and an LEA-led effort to coordinate agencies in turnaround schools

## Activities

*Early childhood transition:* As outlined in section (P)(3), the State has vertically aligned its early childhood efforts with its K-12 system. The State has extended content standards to early childhood education, and provides materials to parents that can be used to prepare their children for entry into school. For at-risk students, the State has met its goal of 100% of Head Start-eligible children receiving at least one year of preschool. The State can measure the impact of these efforts -- students can be entered into Delaware's longitudinal data system prior to entering school, and performance can be tracked from early childhood through college. The DDOE has begun tracking cohorts of students, and linking early childhood programs to student achievement on test scores in third grade. This will allow for continuous improvement of integration at this transition point.

*High school postsecondary transition:* Delaware has addressed the transition to college and career readiness through the Reaching Higher for Student Success program<sup>6</sup>. This program includes the following components:

- **Aligning graduation requirements with college entrance requirements:** In 2006, the State Board of Education has revamped its high school requirements to align with the

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<sup>6</sup> This program, started in 2006 is driven by the results of research conducted in Delaware with educators, students, parents, business leaders and college professors. It focuses on reducing dropout rates and increasing acceptance to college.

entrance requirements at the state's two public universities. For students graduating in 2011 and beyond, the English Language Arts curriculum will have an increased emphasis on a comprehensive program of study including reading, literature, writing, presentation and communication skills, reasoning, logic and technical writing. Students will also be required to complete four mathematics courses, including one in the senior year. In addition, a world language requirement will be added for those graduating in 2015 and beyond.

- **Expanded Advanced Placement Offerings:** Delaware public high schools have increased offerings of Advanced Placement (AP) courses in core content areas of English, science, mathematics, social studies and world languages, funded through a federal grant from 2006 to 2009. The expanded AP program enabled students to maximize their high school learning and accrue college credits without paying college tuition. This program affected 18 middle schools and 13 high schools, and included extensive teacher training, summer institutes for students and teachers, and support for expanded course offerings. The State plans to continue to expand this effort through the Race to the Top program (see (B)(3) for details)
- **Improved Career and Technical Education:** Delaware high schools are adjusting career and technical pathways to align with industry-recognized certifications. This effort began in 2006 and is ongoing. Delaware has created 3 vocational and technical districts, one for each county. These districts have between one and four vocational and technical high schools. The high schools have the flexibility to adjust their graduation requirements to reflect the requirements of national vocational and technical certificate programs. In addition, since 1979 the State has had the Jobs for Delaware's Graduates Program, a non-profit organization that works closely with the DDOE to provide jobs support and training to at-risk high school students to transition from school to work. This program provides embedded supports for at-risk students in all secondary school grades.
- **Free College Tuition:** Through the SEED (Student Excellence Equals Degree) scholarship program, established in 2006, the State provides free tuition for an associate's degree at Delaware Technical and Community College or the University of Delaware's

Associate of Arts degree program to eligible<sup>7</sup> students who graduate from a Delaware high school with a grade point average of 2.5 or higher.

- **Real-World Experiences for Students:** DDOE will continue to pursue wide-ranging opportunities for high school students to gain real-world experiences. Examples include sponsorship of the Governor’s School for Excellence at the University of Delaware, which is now offering a 7-week course in China. DOE also partners with Delaware businesses to provide internship and shadowing opportunities where students can learn what is expected from their future employers.

*Horizontal alignment for high-need students:* The DDOE coordinates efforts for high-need students in a number of ways. In early childhood, as listed in section (P)(3), the State supports interagency cooperation through a interdepartmental council. For schools in the Partnership Zone, as specified in (E)(2), the LEA and Turnaround office will coordinate comprehensive supports between agencies, nonprofits, health, and parent organizations. As described in section (C)(2), the DDOE’s data system coordinates information from multiple state agencies, and is able to lead to a high level of integration, coordination, and response.

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<sup>7</sup> Students must graduate from a Delaware high school after 2006, meet in-state tuition requirements for the school they are attending, must be accepted to the college they wish to attend, must graduate with a 2.5 GPA, and must not be convicted of a felony.

**Priority 6: Invitational Priority -- School-Level Conditions for Reform, Innovation, and Learning** *(not scored)*

*The Secretary is particularly interested in applications in which the State's participating LEAs (as defined in this notice) seek to create the conditions for reform and innovation as well as the conditions for learning by providing schools with flexibility and autonomy in such areas as—*

- (i) Selecting staff;*
- (ii) Implementing new structures and formats for the school day or year that result in increased learning time (as defined in this notice);*
- (iii) Controlling the school's budget;*
- (iv) Awarding credit to students based on student performance instead of instructional time;*
- (v) Providing comprehensive services to high-need students (as defined in this notice) (e.g., by mentors and other caring adults; through local partnerships with community-based organizations, nonprofit organizations, and other providers);*
- (vi) Creating school climates and cultures that remove obstacles to, and actively support, student engagement and achievement; and*
- (vii) Implementing strategies to effectively engage families and communities in supporting the academic success of their students.*

*The State is invited to provide a discussion of this priority in the text box below, but such description is optional. Any supporting evidence the State believes will be helpful must be described and, where relevant, included in the Appendix. For attachments included in the Appendix, note in the narrative the location where the attachments can be found.*

*Recommended maximum response length, if any: Two pages*



## **Overview**

Delaware has many reform-minded LEAs, and the State endeavors to support these LEAs in pursuing innovation and reform through a variety of means. For instance, the State has three independent-mission schools, and three Vocational Technical Districts, supporting six Vocational Technical high schools. These high schools can customize graduation requirements to match the requirements of national certifications. In addition to the autonomous public schools already established by LEAs, the State encourages LEAs to pursue greater autonomy and flexibility in their schools, including things such as control of budget, extended school day, comprehensive support for high needs students, and staff selection. There are three initiatives currently underway that will result in participating LEAs increasing the flexibility and autonomy of their schools: (1) funding flexibility; 2) the Partnership Zone; and (3) requirements for participation under Race to the Top.

## **Activities**

The State is strengthening support for LEAs that create autonomous, independent schools through three initiatives:

- *Funding Flexibility.* In order to give LEAs more control over budgets, a proposal is currently being considered to allow school districts to participate in an optional flexible funding management plan. Participation in this plan would provide LEAs with the ability to better coordinate resource allocation decisions with strategic planning goals and student needs. In short, the optional flexible funding management plan would allow LEAs to continue to earn their state funding based on current formula, but choose how to spend it based on LEA needs, provided their decisions: (1) do not exceed the total amount of funding an LEA is eligible to receive; and (2) improve academic performance over time. These changes will allow LEAs to further the needs of independent and autonomous schools by allowing them to focus their budget and staffing needs to align with their independent missions.
- *Partnership Zone.* The newly created Partnership Zone (see section E1 for details) creates a process to allow select low-performing schools to achieve greater flexibility in selecting staff, and greater operational flexibility, including new structures for the school year such as extended learning time, and to create a culture based around student achievement. The negotiation process outlined by the Partnership Zone must include, at

a minimum, additional flexibility and autonomy for school management along the following dimensions:

- Hiring, reassigning and transferring covered employees into and out of the Partnership Zone school (e.g. removing seniority limitations)
  - The methodology for determining which teachers will be transferred or reassigned
  - Work rules relating to the educational calendar and scheduling of instructional time and non-instructional time
  - Instructional reform;
  - Professional development requirements and other specialized training
  - Retention and employment incentives, including performance incentives for effective teachers and principals
- *Requirements for participating LEAs in Race to the Top.* As a requirement of participating in the Race to the Top grant, the State is asking LEAs to pursue a series of reforms that will result in greater school-level innovation and conditions for reform.

These include:

- *Building a culture of college- and career- readiness.* As part of participating in Race to the Top, LEAs will commit to removing obstacles to, and actively supporting, student engagement and achievement in their schools, by providing rigorous advanced coursework (e.g., AP courses, STEM courses that incorporate project-, inquiry-, or design-based contextual learning opportunities) and flexible grouping. Schools within participating LEAs will also provide comprehensive supports for high-need and low-achieving students by targeting these students for enrollment in advanced coursework, and proactively supporting them in advanced coursework, including such strategies as extended learning time and summer institutes
- *Defining and creating career ladders.* LEAs will reinforce a culture based around student achievement and may create new career ladders that link evaluation to professional development, promotion, advancement, and compensation. LEAs may include differentiated compensation for effective or highly-effective teachers in critical subject areas or hard-to-staff classes (e.g., remedial vs. AP)

- *Implementing strategies to engage families and communities.* Schools within participating LEAs will promote family and community involvement in education (e.g., by creating community-oriented schools that meet students' social, emotional, and health needs)

### **Conclusion**

Delaware's participating LEAs are committed to promoting independent, autonomous schools that have the flexibility to engage in initiatives that promote teaching excellence. The State is seeking greater budgetary control for all LEAs, in order to further this effort. Schools in Delaware are free to choose independent missions and a select subset of schools focus on vocational and technical education. New regulation for low-achieving schools, the Partnership Zone, will put in place a negotiating mechanism where the school and LEA leaders can create conditions for innovation, including extended learning time and staffing flexibility. All participating LEAs will reinforce a culture of student success and family engagement.