

DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

2017–2018 CGA ESSA REQUIREMENTS Q & A



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Program Contacts for Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

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Questions From LEAs and DDOE Responses

Following is a list of questions by topic from local education agencies (LEAs) regarding ESSA and the CGA and compiled responses from the CGA program managers at the Delaware Department of Education (DDOE).

Engaged and Informed Families, Schools, Districts, Communities, and Other Agencies

1. **ESSA Requirement:** What specific strategy(s) will be used to implement effective parental and family involvement? [Section 1112(b)(D)(7)]
 - Q** *LEA Comment/Question:* How is “effective” being defined and measured—especially at the high school level?
 - A** *DDOE Response:* The word “effective” is not specifically defined under ESSA as it relates to parent and family engagement. LEAs should focus on engaging parents and family in the learning of their child. LEAs should also continue to evaluate their programs at the district and school levels to find ways to improve them. LEAs have flexibility to determine how they will measure effectiveness. DDOE will not set specific criteria for what is effective for the 2017-2018 CGA. However, we will be compiling a list of resources for parent and family engagement at all grade levels over the next year. If further regulation or guidance comes from the US Department of Education (US ED) for future years, DDOE will share it with LEAs.
 - Q** *LEA Comment/Question:* What data supports this?
 - A** *DDOE Response:* LEAs should be evaluating the effectiveness of their parent and family engagement programs. However, LEAs can determine their own measures.
 - Q** *LEA Comment/Question:* What outcomes are required?
 - A** *DDOE Response:* There are no required outcomes.

Q *LEA Comment/Question:* Does DDOE have suggested trainings around best strategies, and are the strategies evidence-based?

A *DDOE Response:* There are a number of resources around parent and family engagement on the US ED's [Family and Community Engagement](#) web page. There are numerous support tools on the Schools and Educators tab under the heading Tools and Supports. The document entitled *Toolkit of Resources for Engaging Parents and Community as Partners in Education* refers to what is presented as promising practices. Promising practices are acceptable under the ESSA definition of evidence-based strategies. As mentioned above, we will be compiling a list of resources for parent and family engagement at all grade levels over the next year.

Q *LEA Comment/Question:* What are the expectations of using only “evidence-based” strategies?

A *DDOE Response:* The term “evidence-based” under ESSA classifies strategies into evidence basis tiers. The lowest of those tiers includes locally developed promising practices. With that in mind, LEAs have a good deal of flexibility in selecting strategies. As mentioned previously, LEAs should be evaluating the strategies and making adjustments as necessary based on the evaluation.

Q *LEA Comment/Question:* Does DDOE have suggestions for how to improve engagement of parents and family for high school students?

A *DDOE Response:* DDOE does not have specific recommendations or suggestions regarding strategies at this time. However, we will be compiling a list of resources for parental and family engagement at all grade levels over the next year.

2. **ESSA Requirement:** How will the LEA promote parental and family engagement in the education of English learners (ELs)? [Section 3116(b)(3)]

Q *LEA Comment/Question:* Will DDOE be providing additional technical assistance around using braided and blended funding to support engagement activities?

A *DDOE Response:* The Title III Allowable Use of Funds document provided by DDOE outlines areas in which Title I and Title III program requirements overlap as well as which funding source may be used to support activities.

Title I now requires that each LEA that receives a Title I subgrant implement an effective means of outreach to parents of ELs. The outreach must include sponsoring, and sending notice of opportunities for, regular meetings in order to gather and respond to recommendations from parents. [ESEA Section 1112(e)(3)(C)]

LEAs that receive a Title III formula grant must conduct parent, family, and community engagement, in addition to the required use of funds for supplementing language instruction education programs (LIEPs) for ELs and providing professional development to teachers and school leaders. [ESEA Section 3115 (c)(3)]

Also, LEAs that receive a Title III formula grant may use its subgrant to provide community participation programs, family literacy services, and parent and family outreach and training activities, which may include English as a Second Language (ESL) courses for parents and families of ELs. This will facilitate parents and families to improve their children's academic achievement, and it will help parents and families to become active participants in the education of their children. [ESEA Section 3115 (d)(6)]

An LEA receiving Title III immigrant subgrant funds under ESEA Section 3114 (d)(1) may use those funds for family literacy, parent and family outreach, and training activities designed to assist parents and families to become active participants in the education of their children, and to provide activities, in coordination with community-based organizations, institutions of higher education (IHEs), private sector entities, or other entities with expertise in working with immigrants, to assist parents and families of immigrant children and youth by offering comprehensive community services. [ESEA Section 3115 (e)(1)(A), (G)]

For all of these activities, an LEA may not use Title III funds to meet its obligations under Title VI and the Equal Education Opportunity Act (EEOA). Title III funds may be used to supplement an LEA's activities if the LEA is already meeting its obligation to ensure meaningful communication with EL parents in a language they can understand.

3. **ESSA Requirement:** How will the LEA promote community engagement in the education of ELs? [Section 3116(b)(3)]

Q *LEA Comment/Question:* Does DDOE have best strategies to share?

A *DDOE Response:* The Title III program office will provide support to district/charter ESL Coordinators and staff on effective community engagement for ELs. In addition, the following resources may be referenced:

- <http://www.colorincolorado.org/guide/guide-engaging-ell-families-twenty-strategies-school-leaders>
- <http://www.colorincolorado.org/article/building-strong-parent-educator-partnerships>
- <http://www.colorincolorado.org/guide/aft-toolkit-teachers-reaching-out-hispanic-parents-english-language-learners>
- <http://www.colorincolorado.org/article/bilingual-family-night-ell-families>

Q *LEA Comment/Question:* Can Title I funds be used to support this?

A *DDOE Response:* See the Title III Allowable Use of Funds document and the previous response to question 2.

4. **ESSA Requirement:** What services will the LEA provide homeless children and youths to support the enrollment, attendance, and success of homeless children and youths, in coordination with the services provided under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act? [Section 1112(b)(6)]

Q *LEA Comment/Question:* How is "effective" being defined and measured?

A *DDOE Response:* The word "effective" is not specifically defined under ESSA as it relates to parent and family engagement. LEAs should focus on engaging parents and family in the learning their child. LEAs should also continue to evaluate their programs at the district and school levels to find ways to improve them. LEAs have flexibility to determine how they will measure effectiveness. The DDOE will not set specific criteria for what is effective for the 2017-2018 CGA. However, we will be compiling a list of resources for parent and family engagement at all grade levels over the next year. If further regulation or guidance comes from US ED for future years, DDOE will share it with LEAs.

Q *LEA Comment/Question:* How is "success" being defined and measured?

A *DDOE Response:* The stated purpose of the Title I, Part A program is to help ensure that all children meet challenging state academic standards. Therefore, this is the ultimate goal of all services provided using Title I funds. LEA strategies for engaging parents and families should include a focus on helping students meet standards. LEAs have the flexibility to determine how they will measure success.

Safe and Healthy Environments, Conducive to Learning

1. **ESSA Requirement:** How will the LEA support efforts to reduce the overuse of discipline practices that remove students from the classroom, which may include identifying and supporting schools with high rates of discipline, disaggregated by each of the subgroups of students. [Section 1112(b)(D)(11)]

Q *LEA Comment/Question:* Does DDOE have a definition for "overuse"?

A *DDOE Response:* No, DDOE does not have a definition, nor does the federal government. We suggest applying the principle exceeds the state average for suspensions. Also, removing

students for objective types of behavior, such as defiance of school authority and inappropriate behavior, could be considered overuse.

Q *LEA Comment/Question:* What is considered “remove students from the classroom”? It is state law that a teacher may remove a student.

A *DDOE Response:* A removal from the student’s Regular School Program, as defined in DDOE Regulation 616, for a period of one day or more.

Q *LEA Comment/Question:* What is considered “high rates of discipline”?

A *DDOE Response:* Exceeding the state average of suspensions and expulsions.

Q *LEA Comment/Question:* Will DDOE be defining what “subgroups” are expected in the response?

A *DDOE Response:* Subgroups would include sex, race, special education status, and EL status. LEAs may also include foster care, homeless, and low socioeconomic status (SES). Of course, SES is complicated by the fact that LEAs do not know the specific students.

Q *LEA Comment/Question:* Does DDOE have best practices/recommended strategies?

A *DDOE Response:* Best practices include:

- Positive Behavior Supports (PBS) and tiered interventions
- Restorative practices
- Trauma-Informed/Compassionate Schools Model
- Peer Courts

2. **ESSA Requirement:** How will the LEA implement strategies to facilitate effective transitions for students from middle grades to high school and from high school to postsecondary education including, if applicable:

- Through coordination with IHEs, employers, and other local partners. [Section 1112)(b)(D)(10)(A)]

Q *LEA Comment/Question:* How is “effective” being defined and measured?

A *DDOE Response:* The word “effective” is not specifically defined under ESSA as it relates to transitions. LEAs should focus on engaging parents and family in the learning their child. LEAs should also continue to evaluate their programs at the district and school levels to find ways to improve them. LEAs have flexibility to determine how they will measure effectiveness. The DDOE will not set specific criteria for what is effective for the 2017-2018 CGA. If further regulation or guidance comes from the US ED for future years, DDOE will share it with LEAs.

Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs of study (POS) link coursework at the secondary and postsecondary levels so that students attain an industry-recognized credential, certificate, or license that holds value at the professional or postsecondary level. CTE POS establish agreements that depict a learning progression beyond high school and provide opportunities for students to transition between education levels and seek employment. Further, CTE POS define a course sequence that progresses through the attainment of an associate or baccalaureate degree.

3. **ESSA Requirement:** How will the LEA implement strategies to facilitate effective transitions for students from middle grades to high school and from high school to postsecondary education including, if applicable:

- Through increased student access to early college high school or dual or concurrent enrollment opportunities, or career counseling to identify student interests and skills. [Section 1112)(b)(D)(10)(B)]

Q *LEA Comment/Question:* Not applicable.

A *DOE Clarification:* As a reminder to use funds at the high school level, the school must be designated a Title I school. Since DDOE already has ongoing initiatives in these areas, LEAs can describe the work they are already doing. Below are two suggestions for how to meet this requirement.

Example 1: CTE POS provide options for students to earn early college credit through advanced placement, dual enrollment, transcribed and/or articulated credit, and pre-apprenticeship programs. CTE POS also identify opportunities for students to pursue two- and four-year degrees and certification programs. A model of support for academic and career counseling should be in place for all CTE POS students. CTE POS experiences should be a reflection of students' career aspirations and supported by both the instructional staff and school counseling office. Additional career counseling support may also be provided by the community and program advisory committee.

Example 2: DDOE provides funding to LEAs to help offset the cost of dual enrollment courses for low-income students. Delaware Technical and Community College and Wilmington University offer flat rates for courses to help increase college access and affordability. LEAs are encouraged to use a needs assessment to determine the likelihood of students entering 12th grade ready for dual enrollment courses. PSAT and SAT proficiency are early indicators to determine readiness. AP Potential data from the PSAT also identifies students who are ready in 10th grade for advanced coursework.

Equitable Access to Excellent Educators

1. **ESSA Requirement:** How will the LEA identify and address any disparities that result in low-income students and minority students being taught at higher rates than other students by ineffective, inexperienced, or out-of-field teachers? [Section 1112(b)(2)]

Q *LEA Comment/Question:* This puts LEAs at odds with some contracts—does DDOE have any guidance with Delaware State Education Association (DSEA) contract language?

A *DDOE Response:* LEAs will want to have conversations with the local union representation looking specifically at the Excellent Educator Dashboards provided by DDOE. As one of the stakeholders in this process, union representatives can help generate ideas about how to solve for this problem. This should be part of the LEA's stakeholder engagement when local ESSA plans, specifically the educator equity section, are developed and written. The DDOE Teacher Leader Effectiveness Branch (TLEB) can help answer additional questions and provide technical assistance.

Q *LEA Comment/Question:* How is DDOE defining "disparities"?

A *DDOE Response:* Disparities are based on the gaps in the percent of:

- Low-income students at Title I schools and non-low-income students at non-Title I schools taught by ineffective, inexperienced, or out-of-field teachers.
- Low-income students at high-needs schools and non-low-income students at non-high-needs schools taught by ineffective, inexperienced, or out-of-field teachers.
- Minority students at Title I schools and white students at non-Title I schools taught by ineffective, inexperienced, or out-of-field teachers.
- Minority students at high-needs schools and white students at non-high-needs schools taught by ineffective, inexperienced, or out-of-field teachers.

Q *LEA Comment/Question:* By what measure should LEAs use to determine teachers as “ineffective”, “inexperienced” or “out-of-field”?

A *DDOE Response:*

- Ineffective – Educator Evaluation Summative Ratings: An ineffective educator has earned an overall unsatisfactory summative rating (either "Ineffective" or "Needs improvement") on his/her most recent overall summative evaluation. The overall summative rating reflects educator performance in five equally weighted components using Delaware's Performance Appraisal System II (DPAS-II) or an equivalent, alternative evaluation system and is aligned with the requirements contained within Delaware statute.
- Inexperienced – Rates of First-Year Teachers: Most teachers improve considerably during their first year of practice. The prevalence of first-year teachers is one indicator of equity. For the purpose of this metric, “Inexperienced Teachers” have less than a year of experience. Rates of Novice Teachers: In Delaware, an “Experienced Educator” is defined as an educator who holds a Continuing or Advanced License. In order to earn a continuing license, an educator must have completed four or more years of successful teaching experience. For the purpose of this metric, “Inexperienced Teachers” have less than four years of experience
- Out-of-Field – Teachers who do not hold full certification required for a particular class in which they are the teacher of record and have not demonstrated subject-matter competence for the content of the class as outlined in Delaware statute (reference <http://delcode.delaware.gov/title14/c012/sc02/index.shtml>).

2. **ESSA Requirement:** Describe the system of professional growth and improvement, such as induction for teachers, principals, or other school leaders. [Section 2102(b)(2)(B)]

High-quality teaching and learning requires a diverse cohort of educators—including teachers, principals, and other school leaders—to be prepared and supported to meet the many challenging demands they and their students face. The continuum of the educator profession and associated opportunities to support educators may be viewed broadly as five interrelated steps that build upon one another. There are many opportunities to develop new ways to support educators at various points in this continuum, illustrated below, as well as augment and strengthen existing efforts to improve individual parts and the overall system of supports.



Once needs have been identified¹, LEAs (along with stakeholders through consultation) should determine the professional growth and improvement approaches most likely to be effective. LEAs should focus on supports related to **Induction and Mentorship**. Programs and activities should be evidence-based².

Additional resources on educator mentorship and induction include:

- REL: Central Region’s How Do School Districts Mentor New Teachers?
- GTL: The Excellent Educators for All Initiative: Connecting State Priorities with Practical Induction and Mentoring Strategies

¹ LEAs may use the LEA Planning Tool, located at <http://bit.ly/2mFRUzJ> to identify needs.

² A list of evidence-based strategies and DDOE supports can be found in the Educator Equity LEA Planning Toolkit.

3. Describe the system for building the capacity of teachers and opportunities to develop meaningful teacher leadership. [Section 2102(b)(2)(B)]

High-quality teaching and learning requires a diverse cohort of educators—including teachers, principals, and other school leaders—to be prepared and supported to meet the many challenging demands they and their students face. The continuum of the educator profession and associated opportunities to support educators may be viewed broadly as five interrelated steps that build upon one another. There are many opportunities to develop new ways to support educators at various points in this continuum, illustrated below, as well as augment and strengthen existing efforts to improve individual parts and the overall system of supports.



Once needs have been identified³, LEAs (along with stakeholders through consultation) should determine the professional growth and improvement approaches most likely to be effective. Focus on supports related to **Strong Teacher Leadership**. Programs and activities should be evidence-based⁴.

With the identified possible strategies below, and all other permissible activities, Title II, Part A funds may be used to support “time banks” or flexible time for collaborative planning, curriculum writing, peer observations, and leading trainings, which may involve using substitute teachers to cover classes during the school day. Furthermore, funds may be used to compensate teachers for their increased leadership roles and responsibilities.

Possible strategies:

- Career opportunities and advancement initiatives for effective teachers that promote professional growth and emphasize multiple career paths. This includes creating hybrid roles that allow instructional coaching of colleagues while remaining in the classroom as well as assuming other responsibilities, such as collaborating with administrators to develop and implement distributive leadership models and leading decision-making.
- Supporting peer-led, evidence-based professional development in LEAs and schools.
- Recruiting and retaining talented and effective educators, including mentoring new educators.
- Participating in community of learning opportunities and other professional development opportunities with diverse stakeholder groups such as parents, civil rights groups, and administrators, to positively impact student outcomes—for example, through a forum to discuss the implication of a policy or practice on a school community, or organizing a community-wide service learning project where teachers afterwards work together to imbed conclusions of these activities into their teaching.

Rigorous Standards, Instruction, and Assessments

1. **ESSA Requirement:** Describe the activities the LEA will engage in to ensure students are meeting the challenging state academic standards. [Section 2102(b)(2)(A)]

Q *LEA Comment/Question:* How do you measure the effectiveness of activities?

A *DDOE Response:* It is at the discretion of the LEAs to determine.

2. **ESSA Requirement:** How will the LEA monitor students’ progress in meeting challenging state academic standards by:

- Developing and implementing a well-rounded program of instruction to meet the academic needs of all students? [Section 1112(b)(1)(A)]

³ LEAs may use the LEA Planning Tool, located at <http://bit.ly/2mFRUzJ> to identify needs.

⁴ A list of evidence-based strategies and DDOE supports can be found in the Educator Equity LEA Planning Toolkit.

- Q** *LEA Comment/Question:* How is “well-rounded” defined?
- A** *DDOE Response:* A well-rounded education is defined in ESSA under Title IV as courses, activities, and programming in subjects such as English, reading or language arts, writing, science, technology, engineering, mathematics, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history, geography, computer science, music, career and technical education, health, physical education, and any other subject, as determined by the state or LEA, with the purpose of providing all students access to an enriched curriculum and educational experience.
3. **ESSA Requirement:** How will the LEA monitor students’ progress in meeting challenging state academic standards by:
- Identifying students who may be at risk for academic failure? [Section 1112(b)(1)(B)]
- Q** *LEA Comment/Question:* What metric will be used?
- A** *DDOE Response:* LEAs may develop their own criteria for determining students at risk of academic failure. Typically, it is good practice to use multiple, educationally related objective criteria. These can include achievement tests, classroom assessments, classroom grades, and teacher referrals for academic reasons.
4. **ESSA Requirement:** How will the LEA monitor students’ progress in meeting challenging state academic standards by:
- Providing additional educational assistance to individual students the LEA has determined need help in meeting the challenging state academic standards? [Section 1112(b)(1)(C)]
- DDOE Clarification:* This is not a new requirement under ESSA. LEAs should generally describe the additional educational assistance that is being provided to students who need help in meeting the challenging state academic standards.
5. **ESSA Requirement:** How will the LEA monitor students’ progress in meeting challenging state academic standards by:
- Identifying and implementing instructional and other strategies intended to strengthen academic programs and improve school conditions for student learning? [Section 1112(b)(1)(D)]
- Q** *LEA Comment/Question:* How is “school conditions” being defined? Does this refer to climate, culture, physical buildings, etc.?
- A** *DDOE Response:* “School conditions” could include climate, culture, and physical buildings. However, they also could be instructional classroom practices, such as the quality of Tier I, II, and III instruction.
6. **ESSA Requirement:** Describe the effective programs and activities, including language instruction educational programs, proposed to be developed, implemented, and administered under Title III that will help ELs increase their English language proficiency (ELP) and meet the challenging state academic standards. [Section 3116(b)(1)]
- Q** *LEA Comment/Question:* Not applicable.
7. **ESSA Requirement:** How will your LEA ensure that elementary schools and secondary schools assist ELs in meeting the challenging state academic standards (SBAC/DCAS/SAT)? [Section 3116(b)(2)(B)]
- Q** *LEA Comment/Question:* Not applicable.
8. **ESSA Requirement:** How will your LEA ensure that elementary schools and secondary schools assist ELs in achieving English proficiency based on the state’s ELP assessment (ACCESS)? [Section 3116(b)(2)(A)]
- Q** *LEA Comment/Question:* Not applicable.

9. **ESSA Requirement:** How will the LEA support programs that coordinate and integrate:
- Academic and CTE content through coordinated instructional strategies that may incorporate experiential learning opportunities and promote skills attainment important to in-demand occupations or industries in the state? [Section 1112(b)(D)(12)(A)]
- Q** *LEA Comment/Question:* How does DDOE define “in-demand occupations” as it changes from county to county?
- A** *DDOE Response:* CTE POS meet the demands of the state and regional economies. CTE POS deliver both academic and technical content and are implemented through a sequence of courses that build upon pre-existing knowledge from one grade level to the next, transitioning from middle to high school, to postsecondary education, and the workforce. CTE POS curriculum is based on the most relevant academic, technical, and employability standards available and encourages innovative teaching and learning methods that include the use of technology, inquiry, and problem-based approaches, higher-order thinking skills, and competency-based learning.
- Q** *LEA Comment/Question:* How will LEAs be held accountable?
- A** *DDOE Response:* The DDOE CTE workgroup will provide technical assistance as needed. They will incorporate it as part of technical assistance they are already providing, and it will be consistent the current expectations for CTE POS.
10. **ESSA Requirement:** How will the LEA support programs that coordinate and integrate:
- Work-based learning opportunities that provide students in-depth interaction with industry professionals and, if appropriate, academic credit? [Section 1112(b)(D)(12)(B)]
- Q** *LEA Comment/Question:* What types of opportunities is DDOE looking for in the response?
- A** *DDOE Response:* CTE POS include opportunities for students to participate in quality work-based learning experiences designed to enrich and advance school-based instruction. Career awareness, exploration, and immersion activities provide students with the opportunity to demonstrate career readiness, prepare for postsecondary education, and earn transcribed credit. Work-based learning experiences help students explore career options to make informed decisions about goals and connect what they are learning in the classroom to the education and skills required for success. These experiences motivate students to pursue postsecondary education while encouraging them to interact with and learn directly from employers, gain an understanding of workplace requirements, and gain valuable work experience that can launch their careers.
11. **ESSA Requirement:** How will LEAs identify and serve gifted and talented students? [Section 1112(b)(D)(13)(A)]
- Q** *LEA Comment/Question:* Are there new federal requirements for serving gifted and talented students?
- A** *DDOE Response:* The new law requires that LEAs receiving Title I funds specify how they will identify and serve gifted and talented students. There are no additional requirements.
- Q** *LEA Comment/Question:* How is “gifted and talented students” being defined?
- A** *DDOE Response:* Gifted and Talented – The term “gifted and talented,” when used with respect to students, children, or youth, means students, children, or youth who give evidence of high-achievement capability in areas such as intellectual, creative, artistic, or leadership capacity, or in specific academic fields, and who need services or activities not ordinarily provided by the school in order to fully develop those capabilities.

- Q** *LEA Comment/Question:* We just gave DDOE our plan for serving gifted and talented students. Will this question replace the requirement for a separate gifted and talented plan that is submitted to Deb Hansen?
- A** *DDOE Response:* No, this question does not replace the plan sent to Deb Hansen. LEAs can briefly summarize their plan in this question and reference that more details are available in their full plan.

12. **ESSA Requirement:** How will the LEA assist schools in developing effective library programs to provide students an opportunity to develop digital literacy skills and improve academic achievement? [Section 1112(b)(D)(13)(A)]

- Q** *LEA Comment/Question:* How is DOE defining “effective”?
- A** *DDOE Response:* The word “effective” is not specifically defined under ESSA as it relates to library programs. LEAs should focus on library programs that increase digital literacy. LEAs should also continue to evaluate their programs at the district and school levels to find ways to improve them. The DDOE will not set specific criteria for what is effective for the 2017-2018 CGA. If further regulation or guidance comes from the US ED for future years, DDOE will share it with LEAs.
- Q** *LEA Comment/Question:* How will effective library programs be measured?
- A** *DOE Response:* The stated purpose of the Title I, Part A program is to help ensure that all children meet challenging state academic standards. Therefore, this is the ultimate goal of all services provide using Title I funds. LEAs have flexibility as to how they measure the impact of library programs on digital literacy.
- Q** *LEA Comment/Question:* How can LEAs provide effective library programs given that funding for media specialists has been cut? Can DOE recommend strategies for developing effective library programs that does not require full-time employees (FTEs)?
- A** *DDOE Response:* Title I funds can be used to support this initiative; however, it is not required that LEAs use Title I funds for this purpose.

High-Quality Early Learning Opportunities

1. **ESSA Requirement:** How will the LEA support, coordinate, and integrate services with early childhood education programs, including plans for the transition of participants in such programs to local elementary school programs? [Section 1112(b)(D)(8)]

DDOE Clarification: A transition plan is not required to be submitted in responding to this question. However, if assistance is needed when the transition plan is developed, the DDOE Office of Early Learning (OEL) is available to provide support. The OEL can be contacted at 735-4295 or at early.learning@doe.k12.de.us.

- Q** *LEA Comment/Question:* Currently there is no Title I set-aside for this, which creates funding issues, especially for the requirements for Stars.
- A** *DDOE Response:* Although there is no required set-aside of Title I funds for pre-k programs, LEAs may choose to use Title I funds to support this initiative. ESSA outlines requirements for all schools that use Title I funds, and additional requirements for schools that choose to use Title I funds for early childhood education. See [Federal Non-Regulatory Guidance Early Learning: Appendix A Early Learning Requirements and Opportunities](#) in the ESEA and Related Programs.
- Q** *LEA Comment/Question:* How is “early childhood” being defined? Is it just pre-K?
- A** *DDOE Response:* “Early childhood education programs” referenced in this application question refers to all public or private early learning programs, regardless of funding stream or governance, serving children birth to age five. “Plans for the transition of participants in such programs to local elementary school programs” specifically refers to plans for pre-k children, or

children who are entering kindergarten in the following academic year. Kindergarten entry in Delaware is mandatory at age five.

Q *LEA Comment/Question:* How does this impact the equitable services requirement?

A *DDOE Response:* LEAs are not required to provide equitable services to pre-k children in participating private schools.

Q *LEA Comment/Question:* Does support/coordination/integration include Child Development Watch and Child Find?

A *DDOE Response:* LEAs may include support/coordination/integration of Child Development Watch and Child Find, but it is not a requirement.

Q *LEA Comment/Question:* There is limited certification opportunities.

A *DDOE Response:* DDOE appreciates the feedback and will share this comment with other state agencies to address the need to expand certification opportunities.