

**SUMMARY AND SCOPE OF THE WORK  
OF  
DELAWARE'S P-20 COUNCIL**

**JANUARY 2009**

## **SUMMARY AND SCOPE OF THE WORK OF DELAWARE'S P-20 COUNCIL**

The Delaware P-20 Council was established in 2003 by Governor Ruth Ann Minner's Executive Order 47 and made permanent through statute in 2005. As in many other states, it has proved to be a valuable structure for addressing critical education issues. Part of its value lies in the ability to direct the attention of educators from throughout the system on the linkages between their own area of responsibility and the other parts of the system. The unique contribution of the Council is its inclusive organization which makes it possible to align Delaware's education efforts from early childhood to post-secondary education, thereby reducing the gaps that often exist at key transition points. With cooperation from state leaders, higher education, school administrators, the business community, and parents, the P-20 Council helps to open more doors for Delaware's children and prepare them to become self-sufficient, contributing members of society who will continue to learn throughout their lives.

It is critical to have the right members at the table to ensure coherency and continuity of efforts. (ECS Policy Brief P16, November 1008). Delaware's P-20 Council membership is defined in code and includes representatives from across the P-20 continuum as well as members from the Legislature and the business community. This diversity contributes to the Council's success by increasing understanding of issues and barriers for all stakeholders, by maintaining communication across agencies and organizations, by reducing the potential for duplication of efforts, and by gaining the support of elected leaders who influence policy and authorize funding. The members of the Council are:

- Governor of the State of Delaware
- President, State Board of Education, Co-chair
- Secretary of Public Education, Co-chair
- President, Delaware State University
- President, Delaware Technical and Community College
- President, University of Delaware
- President, Wesley College
- President, Goldey-Beacom College
- President, Wilmington University
- President, Delaware State Chamber of Commerce
- Chair, Business Roundtable Education Committee
- Chair, Delaware Early Care and Education Council
- Chair, House Education Committee
- Chair, Senate Education Committee

Members of the Delaware P-20 Council may assign designees to attend in their stead.

The agenda of Delaware's P-20 Council was established from its inception. The vision clearly states the reason for the establishment of the P-20 Council and the mission

articulates what the Council aspires to accomplish. Both are defined in Delaware Code Title 14, Chapter 1, Subchapter 1 § 107:

**P-20 Council.**

(a) There shall be formed a P-20 Council to coordinate educational efforts of publicly-funded programs from early care through higher education and to foster partnerships among groups concerned with public education. The P-20 Council shall make recommendations designed to ensure a more integrated, seamless education system that enables children to enter school ready to learn, receive challenging instruction throughout their school careers, graduate from high school ready for college or work, and continue their education in a way that makes them productive and successful citizens.

(b) The P-20 Council shall be co-chaired by the Secretary of Education and the President of the State Board of Education. The Council members shall include the presidents (or their designees) of the public institutions of higher education in Delaware, along with the presidents of the institutions of higher education offering degree programs in education (or their designees). Additional members shall include the Chair of the Delaware Early Care and Education Council, the Chairs of the House and Senate Education Committees, a representative of the Governor's Office, the Chair of the Business Roundtable Education Committee, and the Executive Director of the Delaware State Chamber of Commerce, or their designees.

(c) The Co-Chairs may also establish such subcommittees as needed and determine the subcommittee memberships. (75 Del. Laws, c. 62, § 1.)

**Goals**

The Delaware P-20 Council focuses its efforts on the transition between three levels of public education:

- Pre-school to Middle School
- Middle School to High School
- High School to College or a Working Environment

Smooth transitions between these levels will make the schools more efficient and effective while raising the level of student achievement. In support of the latter goal, the P-20 Council has worked toward closing the achievement gap between majority and minority students.

The keys to achieving the goals of the P-20 Council include:

- A challenging curriculum taking into account expectations at the next level.
- Increased teacher recruitment, education, and professional development, especially in critical needs areas.
- An advisement or support system to help identify student problems early and prepare them for success across all levels of education.

By Laws of the P-20 Council as adopted on January 6, 2004 can be found in Appendix A.

### **Current P-20 Committees**

The majority of the work of the Council is accomplished through subcommittees charged to address specific areas of concern. The subcommittee membership reaches beyond the P-20 Council as ad-hoc members with specific expertise are invited to participate in committee meetings and to work on the “homework assignments” given by the P-20 Council. See membership list in Appendix A.

### **P-20 Data Cube**

The Education Commission of the States (ECS) recommends that P-16/P-20 Councils should, “make it a priority to assist in the development of longitudinal data systems that provide data to track K-12 students’ progression into and success in postsecondary education.” (Policy Brief P16, November 2008). The Data Committee is a standing committee of the P-20 Council and is chaired by Alan Phillips from the Delaware Higher Education Commission (DHEC). The committee membership is comprised of the institutional research staff from public and private institutions of higher education (IHE), a designee from the Department of Education’s Technology Management and Design workgroup, Audrey Noble or her designee from the University of Delaware Education Research and Development Center, and Judi Coffield, Policy Analyst for the State Board of Education and staff to the P-20 Council.

The purpose of the committee is to serve as a resource on data issues for the P-20 Council and its subcommittees, to serve as a mechanism for on-going communication among IHE institutional research staff and DHEC regarding data collection and reporting for both the K-12/IHE linkages for the P-20 system and for the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) Data Exchange, IPEDS, and other higher education data issues.

### **DECAN**

The primary mission of DECAN is to strengthen the preparation of public school students in Delaware to ensure their college readiness and ability to succeed in work readiness programs, as well as degree attainment from two- and four-year college degree programs.

#### **DECAN Objectives:**

1. Develop and Strengthen Public Support for Increasing Academic Rigor.
2. Support Student Access to a State-wide Network of College Preparatory Activities.
3. Develop a Community-wide Academic Support Infrastructure.
4. Use data to measure student access and success in higher education.
5. Develop a financial plan to support DE-CAN.

Consistent with these objectives, DE-CAN’s membership includes representatives from a wide range of stakeholders. (See appendix B)

### Higher Education Transfer of Credit Matrix

This committee is an outgrowth of the earlier Dual Credit/Dual Enrollment Committee of the P-20 Council. The charge of the committee is to develop a matrix that clearly articulates to stakeholders courses that transfer between institutions of higher education. Initially the matrix will be developed for freshman level courses and then expand to include additional courses over time. The matrix, when completed, will be an interactive, web-based tool available to the public.

In addition to the matrix itself, it became evident that a more effective and efficient process was needed by which the institutions of higher education could review and approve courses from other institutions. The Department of Education is currently working through this committee to develop a web-based course approval tool and process that will automatically populate the matrix.

### Meeting of Higher Education Provosts

The provosts of all public and private higher education institutions have begun to meet regularly with the co-chairs of the P-20 Council. Such meetings had not occurred prior to the convening of the P-20 Council. It has been recommended by the provosts that this group become a standing committee of the P-20 Council.

The meetings of the provosts have been valuable by increasing the communication among the higher education institutions and providing a venue for discussion of common issues. Their insights were critical to the discussions and the final decisions made by the State Board of Education regarding the changes in the requirements for high school graduation, thus ensuring that students who successfully meet those requirements will be eligible to attend any Delaware college or university. Additionally, the provosts have paved the way for the development of dual enrollment policies and the design of a common transfer of credit matrix system.

### Delaware's Promise Dropout Prevention

This committee was recently established by the co-chairs of the P-20 Council to sustain the work begun with Delaware's America's Promise Dropout Prevention Grant. The goal is to improve high school completion rates. This committee's charge is to implement the Action Plan developed through the America's Promise grant activities. The plan includes actions to increase awareness, encourage and facilitate collaboration and facilitate action across agencies, within districts and in communities to improve graduation rates.

### Early Childhood

Under the joint leadership of the P-20 Council and the Delaware Early Childhood Council, a task force that included representatives from the public and private sectors developed a new model for early childhood professional development. This model established alignment between the K-12 and early childhood professional development

systems. The product of this effort was the report *Integrated Professional Development: Early Childhood and K12* that was released in July of 2008. The report identifies three goals and maps out specific objectives that lead to the attainment of the goals.

The first goal is to develop a system that offers professional development experiences that are aligned with the Early Learning Foundations and that meet the needs of all early childhood practitioners. The following objectives were established to meet goal one:

- Establish a funding mechanism for adult education to support remediation of educators with literacy challenges
- Restructure Early Childhood Apprenticeship to increase consistency with other trades
- Establish an Advisory Board for the Early Childhood Professional Development system as a standing sub-committee of the Early Childhood Council
- Develop a tool for on-going mapping of professional development offerings and identification of gaps
- Increase Tech Prep utilization by high school early childhood career tracks and adult education programs

The second goal is to develop a framework for delivery that creates a continuum of articulated professional development and includes addressing low literacy and other remediation needs. The following objectives were established to meet goal two:

- Issue a RFP for professional development aligned to the task force recommendations
- Develop standards to assure the quality of both content and delivery
- Develop a curriculum evaluation rubric
- Develop a template for a Memorandum of Understanding between DOE and agencies sponsoring professional development

The third goal is to develop a web-based system of data collection for qualifications of early childhood educators and their on-going professional development that links to Delaware Educator Data System (DEEDS) and the Office of Child Care Licensing including management reports that can be used for system wide improvement. The following objectives were established to meet goal three:

- Modify DEEDS to meet the needs of early childhood educators
- Begin using the online Professional Development Management System (PDMS)

## **Past P-20 Committees**

### Postsecondary Success

P-20 co-chairs, Mrs. Woodruff and Dr. Pika, established and charged the Subcommittee on Postsecondary Success to:

- Examine the current requirements for high school graduation compared to the requirements of post secondary programs. Such programs will include both two and four-year institutions of higher education, technical preparation programs, trade and apprenticeship programs

- Examine the course taking patterns of students moving from middle school to high school relative to their success on PSAT, SAT, AP, DSTP and college placement examinations
- Review the various programs and projects that engage middle and high school students and their families in understanding the importance of taking challenging courses in high school (e.g. American Diploma Project, SREB initiatives, Gear Up and others)
- Examine these programs and others relating to opportunities for financial support for postsecondary education and ways to communicate such opportunities to students and their families
- Convene discussions among middle and high school teachers, higher education faculty, and trade and apprentice instructors regarding the knowledge required for success in post secondary settings
- Other issues that relate to postsecondary success may be added by the subcommittee.

The subcommittee membership consisted of appointments from the P-20 Council members with additional individuals representing school districts and the Metropolitan Wilmington Urban League.

#### Achievement Gap Action Group

In 2001, even before the adoption of No Child Left Behind (NCLB), the Delaware State Board of Education assembled a group of key educational leaders to address the achievement gap between majority students and members of other demographic groups including African-American, Hispanic and exceptional students. A charge of the Achievement Gap Task Force was to examine and understand the achievement gap in Delaware. A primary objective was to create a measure that would minimize the fluctuations in the gap that resulted when looking at different groups of students each year. The group developed a working definition of the achievement gap and used DSTP data derived from the state's school accountability reporting system. The purpose of the report was to provide school personnel and the Delaware public with a means of looking at the achievement gap in all schools. In 2002, the Task Force and the University of Delaware Education Research and Development Center released "Awareness to Action: Recognizing and Addressing the Achievement Gaps in Delaware Schools." This report was continued for a number of years and was then institutionalized by the Department of Education.

In the fall of 2004, the original Task Force was reconfigured and renamed the Achievement Gap Action Group. Initially, it was thought that the state's NCLB reporting system would serve the purpose of the Awareness to Action report. However, after considering the complexity and inaccessibility of the NCLB reports, the group decided to recreate a reporting mechanism to track and illustrate the achievement gap in all Delaware schools in ways that would be meaningful to Delaware educators and citizens. The resulting guidelines produce reports that are longitudinal and disaggregated by district, school, and grade in both reading and mathematics. In addition, the reports are

based on the percentage of students who ‘Meet or Exceed the Standard’ in reading and mathematics on the Delaware Student Testing Program (DSTP).

### High School Graduation Requirements

In 2004, the State Board of Education and the Department of Education asked Achieve, Inc. to conduct an analysis of the state’s graduation requirements and develop recommendations for improvement. The resulting report issued in January 2005, “Taking Stock: An Analysis of Delaware’s High School Standards and Course Requirements”, measured Delaware’s English Language Arts and Mathematics requirements against those of benchmark states throughout the nation. As a final analysis, the report compared Delaware’s high school graduation requirements to the admission requirements of both the University of Delaware and Delaware State University. Delaware’s high school requirement of 22 credits was similar to many other states’ minimum diploma requirements. In addition, the credits Delaware specified for the core content areas of English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies were consistent with most requirements set by other states.

In response to Achieve’s findings and in conjunction with the National Governors’ Association Honor States Grant, the High School Graduation Requirements Committee was formed to update Delaware’s high school graduation requirements and ensure that all students could successfully meet the demands of college and work. The committee was formed in September 2005 and included representatives from the Department of Education, the State Board, district superintendents, high school principals, teacher representatives, school board members, community and business groups, and higher education. Its recommendations became the basis for new graduation requirements adopted by the state in 2007.

### Dual Enrollment

The Dual Enrollment Subcommittee was part of the P-20 Council and was created, to develop state policy for dual enrollment as a part of the National Governor’s Association grant to redesign Delaware high schools. The subcommittee was also a natural outgrowth of the Subcommittee on High School Graduation Requirements which recommended increased course rigor and additional credits in mathematics. Providing a framework for dual enrollment will expand the learning opportunities for high school students and encourage students to challenge themselves, earn college credit while still in high school and form tighter linkages between high school and postsecondary institutions.

### **Reports Issued by Delaware’s P-20 Council:**

- Awareness to Action: Achievement Gaps in Delaware Schools (2004 & 2005)
- High School Graduation Committee Report (2006)
- Dual Enrollment/Dual Credit Final Report (2007)
- Delaware College Access Network (DE-CAN) Higher Education Subcommittee Report-Recommendations for Actions (November, 2008)



**All reports are available on the P-20 website at:**

**<http://www.doe.k12.de.us/infosuites/ddoe/P20council/default.shtml>**

**Presentations made to the Delaware P-20 Council:**

- Background information on P-16 & P-20 Councils, Joan Lord, Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), April 2004
- Joan Lord, SREB, also presented data of Delaware student performance on the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) and reviewed Delaware students' status in two SREB publications: Delaware Featured Facts on Higher Education and Student Readiness for College, April 2004
- Dr. Audrey Noble, Director of the University of Delaware Research and Development Center, presented information on what she called the frayed connections between the K-12 public education system and the higher education institutions, April 2004
- American Diploma Project (ADP) presentation by Mike Cohen, President of Achieve, Inc., October 2004
- Tour of the state-of-the art early learning facility at the University of Delaware, October 2004
- Overview of the National Governor's Association Grant's goals and two-year work plan, Secretary Woodruff, November 2005
- Achieve Report: *Taking Stock: An Analysis of Delaware's High School Standards and Course Requirements* presented by Mike Cohen, Achieve, Inc., May 2005
- Delaware's higher education community made a presentation regarding the requirements that will be needed for high school students aspiring for college, June 2006
- Update on the need for well-qualified childcare workers and progress made to increase the quality of early child care in Delaware presented by Ann Wick, Chair of the Delaware Early Care and Education Council, June 2006
- Awareness to Action 2005: Tracking the Achievement Gap in Delaware Schools, Second Annual Report, June 2006
- Status of Correlates of Achievement work being done by the University of Delaware Research and Development Center, June 2006
- DSTP Performance Level 1 Longitudinal Study, Audrey Nobel, Director of the University of Delaware Research and Development Center, November 2006
- Correlates of Achievement, a project supported by the State Board of Education as part of the work of the Achievement Gap Action Group, was presented by Kelley Sheretz of the University of Delaware Research and Development Center, November 2006
- Student Success Plans, Dr. Judi Coffield, DOE, May 2007
- NGA Communication Plan, Reaching Higher for Student Success and the Yes You Can website designed to encourage students to prepare for college and the work place, Janet Hughes, Janet Hughes and Associates, May 2007

- Early Childhood Professional Development Needs, Janet Carter, Education Associate, DOE, along with Verna Thompson and Kathy Wilson and Ann Wick, Chair of the Delaware Early Care and Education Council, November 2007
- Delaware College Access Network Proposal, Ann Case, Policy Analyst for the State Board and Melva Ware, UD, November 2007
- Integrated Professional Development: Early Childhood and K-12 Plan, Janet Carter, DOE and Dr. Amelia Hodges, DOE, May 2008
- World Language Task Force, Dr. Gregory Fulkerson, DOE, May 2008
- Statewide Assessment Task Force, Dr. Judi Coffield, State Board of Education, Policy Analysis, May 2008
- Update on the status of Mathematics initiatives, Diana Roscoe, November 2008
- Update on the status of Science initiatives, Kelli Martin, November 2008

### **Questions for consideration**

#### Transition

- How can we ensure continuity and forward momentum during the transition period?
  - What work should be maintained?
  - What new work should be added to the agenda?

#### Coordination

- How can we link VISION 2015 into the work of the Council to ensure effective collaboration?

#### Finances

- Are there financial structures that incentivize P-12 and postsecondary collaboration?
- What support is required to maintain a vibrant P-20 Council?

#### Accountability Structures

- Should the Council adopt a discipline that requires creation of explicit measures and deadlines for achieving its goals?
- Should we consider a tier of membership at each institution with the authority and responsibility to implement the recommendations approved by the Council, or are the subcommittee structures sufficient?

**Appendix A: By Laws of the P-20 Council as adopted on January 6, 2004.**

**By Laws of the P-20 Council**

Article I: Membership

The membership of the P-20 Council consists of the standing members or their designees as provided in Executive Order Number Forty-Seven. The President of the State Board of Education and the Secretary of Education shall be the co-chairs of the Council.

Article II: Subcommittees

The Council may establish subcommittees to assist in its work. The subcommittees shall be representative of the groups with critical interests in the outcomes of the Council's work. Subcommittee members will be appointed by the co-chairs in consultation with the Council.

Article III: Meetings

The co-chairs shall determine the dates, times and locations of meetings of the Council. Notices of all meetings shall be posted in accordance with the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act.

Article IV: Quorum

The Council members or the designees present shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. A majority vote of those in attendance shall constitute approvals of action.

Article V: Minutes

Each Council meeting and each subcommittee meeting shall produce minutes of the actions taken. The minutes shall be distributed to the members of the Council and the subcommittees in a timely manner.

Article VI: Reports

The Council shall report semi-annually to the Governor of the State of Delaware on the status of its work.

## Appendix B: Current Membership of the P-20 Council and Committees

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