

NFLC & K-12 ASSESSMENT: STATE OF DELAWARE PROJECT

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THE PROJECT

- ▶ Source of Funds: “Race to the Top” grant
- ▶ Objectives: Increase teacher accountability; improve student outcomes (part of DPAS-II)
- ▶ Mechanisms: provide WL teacher training in assessment; design new proficiency-based WL assessments for students in middle & high school

What are Race To The Top funds?

In July of 2009, President Barack Obama and Secretary of Education Arne Duncan announced \$4.35 billion in competitive funds known as the Race To The Top Fund geared towards reforming America's public schools and increasing student learning. Through Race to the Top, states must advance reforms around four specific areas:

- Adopting standards and assessments that prepare students to succeed in college and the workplace and to compete in the global economy;
- Building data systems that measure student growth and success, and inform teachers and principals about how they can improve instruction;
- Recruiting, developing, rewarding, and retaining effective teachers and principals, especially where they are needed most;
- Turning around our lowest-achieving schools.

Awards in Race to the Top will go to states that are leading the way with ambitious yet achievable plans for implementing coherent, compelling, and comprehensive education reform. Race to the Top winners will help trail-blaze effective reforms and provide examples for States and local school districts throughout the country to follow as they too are hard at work on reforms that can transform our schools for decades to come.

What was the process?

In the summer of 2009, Delaware engaged more than 100 educators, education experts and parents, as well as leaders of teachers' unions, non profits, corporations and civic groups to create the State's strategic plan for Delaware. The strategic plan provided the foundation for the application. The application was endorsed unanimously by every school district and charter school, local school board, teachers' union and the business community, was then submitted to the US Department of Education (USDOE) in January of 2010. In mid-March, Governor Jack Markell; Secretary of Education Dr. Lillian Lowery; Diane Donahue, President of the Delaware State Education Association; Marvin "Skip" Schoenhals, former WSFS Financial Corporation CEO and Vision 2015 Chairman; and Merv Daugherty, Superintendent of the Red Clay School District testified to the US DOE regarding Delaware's application. Just two weeks, later, the USDOE announced that Delaware was one of only two states to receive Phase 1 funding for Race To The Top. Of the forty states and the District of Columbia, Delaware's application and testimony received the highest scores of any state.

What are Delaware's Race To The Top goals?

The goal of Delaware's reform is to become the best state public education system in the country. Beyond this, Delaware's goals include: more than half of Delaware's students will be proficient or advanced on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP); the achievement gap will decrease by 50% no later than the 2014-2015 school year; all students will meet state standards; graduation rates will rise; and more students will enter and be successful in college. Race to the Top funding will also be used to strengthen standards and assessment and quality educators; enhance robust data systems for measuring student performance; improving low performing schools. Delaware will also provide fellowships for highly effective educators and retention bonuses for highly effective teachers in certain high needs schools.

Delaware Performance Appraisal System

Building greater skills and knowledge for educators

DPAS II Guide for Teachers

Revised, July 2011



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II. DPAS II and the Delaware Framework for Teachers

Component Five: Student Improvement

Teachers understand that improvement of student learning is their primary responsibility. Further, they recognize that students come to them at different places along the continuum of learning. They understand that in a standards-based environment, the ultimate goal is to move all students toward the standard. In addition, they recognize that student improvement rates will vary during the year. However, it is reasonable to expect that all students will move further toward the standards during the school year. Through careful planning and evaluation of data, teachers modify their instruction for both the class and individual students.

The following structure is the basis upon which the performance of a teacher shall be evaluated.

2011-12 Interim Structure

Five important points are made in outlining this proposal that warrant critical emphasis:

- 1) This policy proposal is an INTERIM step to allow DDOE to collect data and make projections needed to inform further discussion before any high stakes consequences related to Component 5 proceed.
- 2) DDOE is proposing that the 2011-12 school year hold NO CONSEQUENCES for educators related solely to DPAS II Component 5. Until the system can be more fully developed and vetted, no consequences related to Component 5 for educators will take place. It is to be noted that the consequences (i.e., improvement plans) related to Components I-IV are still applicable.
- 3) At this time, rewards for “Highly Effective” teachers, based upon Components I-V in total, will be put in place for 2011-12. Specifically, rewards will be associated with “Highly Effective” teachers in high needs schools, in high needs subjects, and for the teacher-leader cadre.
- 4) Regulatory language is being proposed to define highly effective, effective, and ineffective educators based on student growth, but NOT based on a “year’s worth” or “more than a year’s worth” of student growth that existed in the regulatory language until this point.
- 5) The Part I, II, III calculations in this proposal will yield a combined 100-point scale for Component 5 ONLY. On the Component 5 scale, 80-100 points will be awarded a rating of “Exceeds.” A teacher must be rated as “Exceeds” in Component 5 to be considered for an overall “Highly Effective” rating. A score of 50-79 points will be rated as “Satisfactory” on this component, and a score below 50 will be rated as “Unsatisfactory.”

TEACHER TRAINING

- ▶ Who: Delaware world-language teachers
- ▶ What: Two-day workshop on assessment
- ▶ When: Summer 2012
- ▶ Where: Four locations around the state
- ▶ Why: To help teachers learn how to both teach and test for proficiency

TRAINING TOPICS

- ▶ Achievement vs. Performance vs. Proficiency
- ▶ Purpose (diagnostic, mastery, placement, selection, etc.)
- ▶ Formative vs. Summative
- ▶ Item types (multiple choice, multi-select, constructed response, etc.)
- ▶ Scoring (reliability, validity, norm vs. criterion-reference)
- ▶ ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines

TRAINING CHALLENGES

- ▶ Limited reach
- ▶ Little previous training
- ▶ Limited time

ASSESSMENT DESIGN

- ▶ 7 languages; 6 levels; 2 forms
- ▶ Interpretive mode
- ▶ Authentic source texts at upper levels
- ▶ Ten 4-option multiple-choice items per test

German

ASL

ASSESSMENT DESIGN CHALLENGES

- ▶ Achievement-proficiency mismatch
- ▶ Fragmented test development
- ▶ Test security
- ▶ Teacher buy-in
- ▶ Resources (design & scoring)

DOUBLE-EDGED SWORDS IN K-12 ASSESSMENT

- ▶ Using standardized tests as the basis for determining student success
- ▶ Evaluating teacher/school performance based on student outcomes
- ▶ Teaching for communicative proficiency

Atlanta

April 13, 2013

Helping Teachers Learn

By BRENT STAPLES

The school cheating scandal in Atlanta that led to criminal indictments against dozens of teachers, principals and administrators last month contains at least three lessons for states that are developing teacher evaluation systems.

The first is that overemphasizing scores is a mistake. The second is that teacher evaluation systems — now under development in most states — will be of little use unless they include mechanisms for showing teachers who receive average ratings how to become great, or at least good, at what they do. And finally, the country will not build a first-rate teacher corps solely by threatening to fire people who are less than perfect early in their careers.

The Atlanta public school system was once lauded for doing the difficult work of improving instruction. But it's now clear that under Dr. Beverly Hall, the district superintendent who retired in 2011 and was recently indicted, the system instilled fear in teachers and principals, who were told to meet unreasonable test-score targets or surrender their jobs. Dr. Hall replaced 90 percent of the principals during her decade in office, according to a recent [report in The Times](#). The scores went up dramatically — and implausibly — in some schools after teachers and administrators falsified test results.

It would be easy to dismiss this as an aberrant case. But Ross Wiener, executive director of the Aspen Institute's Education and Society Program, said recently that this dynamic — an obsessive focus on holding teachers accountable for test scores without an equal emphasis on actually improving classroom teaching — could fatally undermine the effort to create meaningful evaluation systems.

The balancing of those two aims is the central challenge of the evaluation systems being developed across the nation. Only a few rigorous systems have been up and running for even three years. But some reformers are recommending the model used by Aspire Public Schools, a K-12 charter school group that serves more than 12,500 mainly low-income students in California. Aspire says that 100 percent of its high school graduates are admitted to four-year colleges. Forty percent of a teacher's evaluation relies on test scores — 30 percent from the teacher's own students and 10 percent from the overall school results. But 60 percent is taken from classroom observations, peer feedback and student and parent surveys.

THANK YOU

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Aspire emphasizes teacher training, offering frequent programs in many different forms. Teachers work closely with the principals and lead teachers. Perhaps most crucially, every new teacher gets an instructional coach who provides one-on-one help, often for as long as two years. Teachers are given “effectiveness bonuses” as they improve. Those who perform poorly can, of course, eventually be dismissed. But the evaluation system is focused on learning, for teachers as well as students. Administrators say it takes about 10,000 hours of practice — or about seven years — for a teacher to become an expert. The point is not to push people out the door but to teach newcomers what they need to know to do the job well.

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