

DELAWARE EDUCATION NEWS

October 2006

Copyright © 2006 Queue, Inc.

IN THIS ISSUE:

[Education News](#)

[Caridad Alonso Named Delaware Teacher of the Year for 2007](#)

[2006 School Ratings](#)

[2006 Statewide Delaware Student Testing Program \(DSTP\) Test Results Released in Grades 2-10](#)

[Report on High School Graduation Requirements Released](#)

[Claibourne Smith, Delaware State Board Member, Receives National Honor](#)

[MICHAEL FERGUSON ACHIEVEMENT AWARD RECIPIENTS](#)

[Legislative Essay Scholarship](#)

FREE STUDENT WORKBOOKS AVAILABLE FOR PREVIEW (Advertisement)

Queue, Inc.'s latest Test Preparation Catalogue features many new titles. We would be delighted to send catalogues and/or free review copies of any of the student versions of these books at no cost to you. Call, fax, or email your request.

In addition, we're offering a wide array of curriculum-based materials in our New Curriculum Catalogue. We welcome you to request free review copies of these books as well as a copy of the curriculum catalogue.

We think you will find Queue's test preparation materials to be great tools to prepare your students for state assessment tests. In addition, we encourage you to sample our curriculum workbooks to help engage and challenge your students.

For further information on Queue, Inc. and our product line, visit

<http://www.qworkbooks.com>.

To order free previews, please visit:

<http://www.qworkbooks.com/samplerrequest.html>

or call: 800-232-2224

or fax: 800-775-2729

or e-mail: jdk@queueinc.com

or write: Queue, Inc., 1 Controls Dr., Shelton, CT 06484

Education News

For back issues of this newsletter, as well as current and back issues of our other newsletters, *U.S. Education News* and *Education Research Report*, please go to: <http://www.queuenews.com/>

For a downloadable PDF or for the HTML version of this e-newsletter, please visit this link: <http://www.queuenews.com/DENews.html>

For the latest education research news, please go to: http://www.queuenews.typepad.com/education_research_report/

Caridad Alonso Named Delaware Teacher of the Year for 2007

Caridad “Charity” Alonso, a Spanish Reading Specialist in grades 1-5 at William C. Lewis Dual Language Elementary School in Wilmington has been chosen as Delaware’s Teacher of the Year for 2007. Her selection marks the first time a Dual Language teacher has been chosen for Delaware’s top educator honor and becomes the forty-third Teacher of the Year since Delaware’s recognition program began in 1965.

As Lieutenant Governor John C. Carney Jr. announced Alonso as Delaware’s “top teacher,” more than 400 invited guests at the Sheraton Inn and Conference

Center in Dover, including educators, administrators, legislators, former State Teachers of the Year and business leaders, provided a standing ovation for Delaware's newest Teacher of the Year who has eleven years of teaching experience including the last eight in the Red Clay Consolidated School District and at Lewis Elementary.

In an earlier letter to the Teacher of the Year Selection Committee, Nancy A. Weaver, Principal at Lewis Elementary, strongly supported Alonso as her choice for Teacher of the Year. "Mrs. Alonso demonstrates the highest level of professional commitment and competency in her work with students and colleagues. To carry out her professional responsibilities, she gives generously of her valuable time, and her work often extends beyond the school day." Added Weaver, "She exemplifies the highest standards and is a model of bilingualism for children and adults alike."

In 1991, Alonso received a Bachelor of Arts and Science degree in Anthropology and Foreign Languages and Literature from the University of Delaware in Newark. Just five years later, in 1996, Alonso received a Master of Education, Instruction and Exceptional Children and Youth, also from the University of Delaware. During her Masters studies, Alonso became a kindergarten special education teacher with the Christina School District. In 1998, she left the Jennie E. Smith Elementary School in Newark and began her career at Lewis Elementary. At Lewis, she has served as a Foreign Language Elementary teacher, a Spanish HOSTS coordinator, and currently as a Spanish reading specialist.

Alonso has been extremely active in improving the quality of education in Delaware. She has successfully authored numerous education grants for her school programs totaling nearly \$43,000. Alonso also developed an immersion foreign language program in Spanish for pre-K and first grade English native speakers. She has trained a cadre of teachers to implement this curriculum using effective instructional strategies. She also serves as an English Language Learner Elementary Support Specialist and provides district-wide monthly professional development workshops.

The newly-selected Teacher of the Year is also an active member of the

community. Alonso helped to found *El Jardin Espanol/The Spanish Garden*, a not-for-profit language immersion preschool in the Wilmington community. Its goal was to provide native English speakers between the ages of two through five a rich second language learning experience for native English speakers, as well as foster a positive attitude towards cultural differences. This program also allowed Alonso to work within Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) guidelines to sponsor degreed teachers from Central and South America. As a result of her work, parents created a separate not-for-profit entity called *The Friends of the Spanish Garden* to help raise funds for *El Jardin Espanol/The Spanish Garden*. Alonso is also spearheading an after school tutoring program for former kindergarten and first grade students to help them continue their Spanish literacy skills.

When asked about her philosophy on teaching, Alonso stated, "Teaching is not just a 'job' for me. It is my passion. In fact, I know I was born to do this. Each school year, I am dedicated to providing a positive instructional climate where my students feel encouraged, safe and excited to learn." Added Alonso, "As an educator, I accept the responsibility of becoming a lifelong learner as new ideas, new technology and new ways to approach teaching become available. I thrive on opportunities to learn more, reflect upon these and put them into practice. I also have the challenge as our world becomes more diverse to find ways to meet the educational needs of each student and to make an effort to understand each individual's experiences."

The process of selecting Delaware's Teacher of the Year is very demanding and is designed to find that teacher who is most representative of the entire teaching profession. Through in-class observations, portfolio reviews and consideration of finalists by a representative panel, the process finds that one person who will become this year's Teacher of the Year for Delaware.

Alonso now inherits an enormous task from outgoing Teacher of the Year Garrett Lydic by representing all teachers in Delaware. She will address community groups, business leaders, legislators, and educational organizations in an effort to inform the public about the status of Delaware schools. She will also become Delaware's entrant in the national program presented by ING Foundation which is a project of the Council of Chief State School Officers and sponsored by

Scholastic, Inc.

By action of the General Assembly, Alonso will receive a \$5000 grant to use for the educational benefit of her students, as well two personal grants totaling an additional \$5000. The remaining 18 school district candidates will each receive a personal grant of \$2000.

Alonso will also receive an educational technology package valued at approximately \$17,000 from the SMARTer Kids Foundation. The package includes a SMART Board(tm) interactive whiteboard, floor stand and software; an NEC VT465 portable projector from NEC Solutions America; creative- learning software from Immersive Education; and a 32-pad Classroom Performance System from eInstruction Corporation.

The new Teacher of the Year will also receive a Dell laptop computer; an interactive "Whiteboard" from Peripheral Vision, LLC., a \$1,000 grant for educational/classroom use from Harcourt Assessment, Inc.; grants from the Delaware State Education Association, the Delaware State Chamber of Commerce and Delaware Professional Standards Board; a State of Delaware Teacher of the Year license plate from the Division of Motor Vehicles; free graduate-level courses from Delaware's higher education institutions; a gold watch from the Delaware State Teachers of the Year Association and lunch in the Senate Dining room in Washington D.C. with Senator Thomas R. Carper.

2006 School Ratings

The Delaware Department of Education (DOE) has released the 2006 school accountability ratings for 178 public and charter schools statewide.

One hundred three (63 Title 1 and 40 non-Title 1) schools have been rated "Superior;" 22 (11 Title 1 and 11 non-Title 1) schools have been rated "Commendable;" 18 (13 Title 1 and 5 non-Title 1) schools have been rated "Academic Review;" 27 (4 Title 1 and 23 non-Title 1) schools have been rated "Academic Progress – Under Improvement;" 8 (3 Title 1 and 5 non-Title 1)

schools have been rated “Academic Watch – Under Improvement.”

As a result of the *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) Act of 2001, all states are required to conduct an annual assessment of all students in grades 3-8 and one high school grade. In Delaware, the Delaware Student Testing Program (DSTP) is used to assess student knowledge in reading, writing, mathematics, science and social studies. Student results of each year’s DSTP assessment is then used as the primary means to determine school accountability ratings.

A school’s accountability rating is determined by two components—Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) and State Progress Determination (SPD). AYP is designed to measure academic performance of not only all students in a particular school but of subgroups within the student population. The nine subgroups are: All Students, American Indian, Asian American, African American, Hispanic, White, Economically Disadvantaged, Students with Disabilities and Limited English Proficient. By the 2013-2014 school year, every student in every subgroup must be proficient in English/Language Arts (Reading and Writing) and mathematics.

The federal formula for determining AYP is based upon an established annual target requiring students to meet proficiency. For the 2005-2006 school year, Delaware’s target for English/Language Arts remained at 62% and in mathematics the target remained at 41%. (Next year, the English/Language Arts target will increase to 68% and the mathematics target will increase to 50%). Additionally, a fixed target of 95% of all students in each subgroup must participate in the Delaware Student Testing Program (DSTP) each spring in English/Language Arts and math in each school or AYP will not have been attained. This year, 135 schools did make AYP including nine schools that were Under School Improvement. Forty-three schools did not make AYP.

Additionally, 15 schools were designated as new schools for accountability purposes and therefore, did not receive a rating. Eight of these schools met the criteria in state regulation where less than 60% of the students attending the new school would have been enrolled in the same school together without the creation of the particular new school. Seven of the schools were new because of a change in regulation where it became a district option to assign tuition-based

students to the school providing instruction.

The school Accountability rating also includes a component called the “State Progress Determination” (SPD) which is calculated by formula and represents improvement in student performance levels in reading, math, science and social studies. A composite score is calculated for the previous and current year. The previous year is subtracted from the current year and this determines the points of growth. The overall school rating is then determined by the calculation of Adequate Yearly Progress and the State Progress Determination plus the school’s Accountability history.

Under this accountability system, schools are classified in one of five categories:

- **Superior** means that the school has met AYP, is not under improvement and has met additional state criteria.
- **Commendable** indicates that AYP has been met while the school is not “Under Improvement.”
- **Academic Review** means AYP is not met for one year and SPD is met or; AYP is not met for one year and SPD is not met or; AYP is met and SPD is not met (second year).
- **Academic Progress** means AYP is not met (different subject) two or more years and SPD is met.
- **Academic Watch** means AYP is not met for two or more years (different subjects) and SPD is not met.
- **Academic Progress – Under Improvement** means AYP is not met (same subject) two or more years and SPD is met.
- **Academic Watch – Under Improvement** means AYP is not met two or more years (same subject) and SPD is not met.

Consequences for schools **Under Improvement** differ depending on whether the school is a Title 1 (receives federal funding for low income students) or a non-Title 1 school and the number of years a school has been rated **Under Improvement**.

Title 1 School:

- **1 year** = School implements choice options.*

- **2 years** = School offers choice options and provides supplemental services.*
- **3 years** = Same as year 2 plus school is subject to corrective action.
- **4 years** = Same as year 3 plus school develops a plan for restructuring.
- **5 years** = Same as year 2 plus school implements the restructuring plan – select one or more NCLB restructuring options.

* Delaware is participating in a federal pilot program where some of these Title 1 schools will be able to offer supplemental services in year 1. For those schools in the pilot program, the sanction for year 2 would be to offer supplemental services and choice.

Non-Title 1 School:

- **1 year** = Review and modify School Improvement Plan.
- **2 years** = Same as year 1; provide additional prioritized extra time services for subgroups that did not meet target.
- **3 years** = Same as year 2; school subject to corrective action.
- **4 years** = Same as year 3 plus school develops plan for restructuring.
- **5 years** = Same as year 2 plus school implements restructuring plan.

Online school profiles are now available for viewing on DOE's website. The profiles will identify each school's accountability rating as well as show what targets were and were not met. Parents can also look at school profiles to view student achievement data, staff information and a school's demographics. The profiles will also provide a reader with school climate information, staff data and program information. It is a powerful tool that parents can use to get a better understanding of their children's academic environment.

To view a school or school district profile, go to: www.doe.k12.de.us/schools/profiles

2006 Statewide Delaware Student Testing Program (DSTP) Test Results Released in Grades 2-10

Delaware students are continuing to show steady gains in reading and mathematics, according to results of the March 2006 Delaware Student Testing Program (DSTP). Writing scores on this year's test showed a slight increase for eighth grade students and a slight decrease for students in grades 3, 5 and 10. This is the first year statewide testing data is available for grades 2 through 10 in the content areas of reading and math and grades 3 through 10 in writing. The 2006 results are as follows:

MATHEMATICS: At grades 2-5, students meeting or exceeding the standard ranges from 88% in grade 2 to 77% in grade 5. In grades 6-8, middle school student scores range from 72% in grade 6 to 62% in grade 8. At the high school level, grade 9 students scored at 51% while grade 10 students scored at 59%. Comparing test scores to last year's adjusted results, 78% of children tested in the third grade met the standard—a one-percentage point decrease from the scores of last year's third graders. In the fifth grade, 77% of students tested met the standard, an increase of two percentage points from the scores of last year's fifth graders. The proportion of this year's eighth grade students meeting or exceeding the standard is at 62%, three percentage points higher than last year's eighth graders. Of this year's tenth graders, 59% performed at or above standard, five percentage points higher than the tenth graders of 2005.

READING: In grades 2-5, the trend is that between 82%-85% of students statewide are meeting the standard in reading. At the middle school grades, students are scoring between 82 and 84%. At the high school grades scores drop from 75% in grade 9 to 71% in grade 10.

Comparing this year's test score results to the adjusted results of 2005, 84% of third grade students who took the DSTP met or exceeded the standard, a one-percentage point increase from 2005. Fifth grade reading performance leveled off at 85%, the same as in 2005. Eighty-four percent of eighth grade students tested met or exceeded the reading standard, a one-percentage point increase from last year. In the tenth grade, the proportion of students meeting or exceeding the standard dipped to 71%, a two-percentage point decrease from 2005.

WRITING: In grades 3-5, writing scores of students who met or exceeded the standard fluctuate between 61% in grade 3 to 71% in grade 4 and 51% in grade 5.

5. At the middle school grades, grade 6 results are currently unavailable due to a grade-level review. At grade 7, students scored at 58% while grade 8 students scored at 78%. At the high school level, grade 9 scored at 79% while grade 10 students scored at 76%.

Comparing this year's results to 2005, third grade student scores decreased to 61% meeting the standard—an eight-point decrease from last year's third graders. Fifty-one percent of fifth grade students met the standard, which is five percentage points lower than last year's adjusted performance. In the eighth grade, 78% of students tested in writing met the standard, a two-percentage point increase from last year's eighth graders. In the tenth grade, scores dipped to 76% of students meeting the standard, a three-percentage point decrease compared to last year.

Delaware students in grades 2-10 once again participated in the nationally-normed Stanford Achievement Test, 10th Edition (SAT 10). Comprising nearly 1/3 of the questions on the DSTP exams in reading and math, the SAT 10 allows Delaware to compare test results against students in the same grade across the country who took the test and shows the percentage of Delaware students who scored as well as or better than other students throughout the nation.

In math at grades 2-5, rankings ranged from 62% to 73%; in grades 6-8, rankings ranged from 63% to 67%; and in grades 9 and 10, rankings ranged from 76% to 72% respectively. In reading, rankings ranged from 67% to 76%; in grades 6-8, rankings ranged from 65% to 70%; and in grades 9 and 10, students leveled off at 72%.

In the summer of 2005, a study was undertaken to revisit and review the performance standards (cut scores) for reading, writing and math. Nearly 140 participants, representing all school districts, charter schools, colleges and universities and educational/community organizations gathered to review and adjust, if necessary, cut points for reading, writing and math in grades 3, 5, 8 and 10. Also, cut points were established and approved by the State Board of Education for the first time in grades 2, 4, 6, 7, and 9 in the same content areas. Since some cut points were changed to be in effect for the March 2006 assessment, the 2005 state level state results were recalculated so that a

comparison could be made between this year's test results and last year's in grades 3, 5, 8 and 10. There is no comparable data for grades 2, 4, 6, 7 and 9. Therefore, 2006 will be the benchmark for future assessments.

For more information, please go to:

<http://www.doe.k12.de.us/aab>

Report on High School Graduation Requirements Released

The Committee on High School Graduation Requirements has completed its work and has released its report and recommendations. The Committee has recommended increasing graduation requirements and rigor for the classes graduating in 2011 and beyond as follows:

- 4 credits in English Language Arts (with an emphasis on reading, literature, writing, presentation and communication skills, reasoning, logic, and technical writing)
- 4 credits of Mathematics (including skills equivalent to Algebra I, Algebra II and Geometry). One math credit must be taken in the student's senior year.
- 3 credits of Laboratory Science (including skills equivalent to Physical/Earth Science, Chemistry, and Biology)
- 3 credits of Social Studies (including skills encompassing the core areas of history, geography, civics, and economics)
- 2 credits of World Language (Effective: August 1, 2009 for graduates in 2013)
- 1 credit of Physical Education; ½ credit of Health Education
- 3 credits in a Career Pathway
- 3½ Elective credits

Mrs. Jean Allen, Chair of the Committee and President of the State Board of Education, noted that the effect of the recommendations is an increase in the

course rigor and expectations for high school students. In addition all students will be required to take four credits of math, one of which must be taken in their senior year. The committee is recommending that the computer literacy credit which is now required for graduation become a requirement to be met by the end of middle school. Furthermore, beginning with the classes to graduate in 2013 and beyond, there will be a world language requirement, the details of which are still to be determined. The committee is recommending that a statewide taskforce be established to make recommendations for the implementation of the world language requirement and other issues related to world language instruction in Delaware's schools.

The Committee is also recommending that seniors be required to enroll in more than half of the class time available under the school's scheduling system. While the Committee has deferred to the districts to determine the exact method for enrolling seniors, the requirement is that all students must be completing credits in additional core courses, Advanced Placement or college classes, a senior project, a formal work/study program, community service, or another academic pursuit.

It is the recommendation of the Committee that student progress be monitored each marking period to ensure that they are successfully completing the English language arts, mathematics, science and social studies courses. If a student is not progressing satisfactorily, the committee recommends that supports be put in place immediately to allow the student to successfully complete the course. If the situation does not improve, additional measures will be taken, including revisions to the student's Individual Learning Plan (ILP), parental conferences, summer school, and the option of a 5th year of high school.

The Committee was formed in September 2005 and includes 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. Restoring the value of the high school diploma is one of the goals of Delaware's Honor Grant awarded by the National Governor's Association.

A complete copy of the report is available online

at: www.doe.k12.de.us/info/gradreqs

Claibourne Smith, Delaware State Board Member, Receives National Honor

Claibourne Smith, a member of the Delaware State Board of Education, is being awarded the Distinguished Service Award by the National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE). The national award is given annually to a state board of education member in recognition of outstanding service to public education.

“Claibourne Smith is a tireless, passionate, and enormously effective advocate on behalf of Delaware’s schoolchildren. His work on the state board of education has helped improve Delaware’s public schools and his involvement and influence on national education issues has benefited the state education system. Clay exemplifies personal and professional dedication to improving public education. We honor him for the positive difference he has made to the lives of thousands of young people,” said Brenda Welburn, NASBE Executive Director.

Dr. Claibourne Smith was appointed to the Delaware State Board of Education in 1993, and reappointed in 1999. He has been a long-time advocate for policies to close the achievement gap among all students and a driving force for the establishment of teacher accountability in Delaware, which is now piloting an instrument to evaluate educators using student and school achievement data.

Smith was chairman of the 2002 NASBE task force that formulated state policy recommendations to address the changing demographics of America’s student population. He also participated in a national year-long study of ways in which state boards could better establish accountability and alignment of teacher preparation programs. Smith is currently completing a second two-year term on NASBE’s board of directors.

Dr. Smith is a member of the Delaware State Commission on Higher Education, on the board of directors of the Wilmington Urban League, and is Chairman of

Delaware State University's Board of Trustees. Claibourne Smith is a retired vice-president of the DuPont Company and holds a Ph.D. in Organic Chemistry from the University of Oregon.

NASBE, www.nasbe.org, represents America's state and territorial boards of education. Our principal objectives are to strengthen state leadership in education policymaking; advocate equality of access to educational opportunity; promote excellence in the education of all students; and assure responsible lay governance of education.

MICHAEL FERGUSON ACHIEVEMENT AWARD RECIPIENTS

Delaware's Department of Education (DOE) and the Delaware Higher Education Commission (DHEC) have announced the awarding of 565 scholarships for \$1,000 each to 464 students statewide who have attained high scores in reading, mathematics and writing on the March 2006 Delaware Student Testing Program (DSTP) in grades eight and ten.

The scholarship program, named in memory of Michael C. Ferguson, former Deputy Superintendent and Acting Superintendent of the Department of Public Instruction and former state Budget Director, was included in the Educational Accountability Act of 1998 and is funded by Delaware's General Assembly. The program authorizes a maximum of 600 scholarships annually (\$1,000 each) to be awarded to eighth and tenth graders who attained the highest raw scores on the DSTP in the content areas of reading, writing and mathematics.

In the eighth grade, six students earned three scholarships; 32 students earned two scholarships; and 232 earned one scholarship. In the tenth grade, six students earned three scholarships; 45 earned two scholarships; and 244 earned one scholarship.

The law states that up to 300 of the Ferguson scholarships will be awarded to students who participate in the free and reduced lunch (FRL) program. Of the maximum 300 scholarships awarded in both the FRL program and the 300 not in

FRL, up to 150 scholarships will be awarded to eighth graders and 150 awarded to tenth graders. Furthermore, the law specifies that the number of awards in each content area shall be as close to fifty as possible, and that any unassigned awards shall be allocated in the priority of reading, mathematics and writing.

Students can use their scholarship once they begin their postsecondary education; however, they must enroll in an institution within five calendar years of high school graduation or the scholarship will be forfeited. The award can only be used at regionally or nationally accredited postsecondary institutions or at Delaware or other state-approved private business and trade schools in the United States. The award cannot exceed direct educational costs.

DHEC will contact each recipient with instructions for setting up an online account where they can keep track of their scholarship funds, update contact information as needed and identify what college they plan to attend. Recipients can use the same account to access other DHEC-administered financial aid programs online.

A complete list of this year's Michael C. Ferguson Achievement Award recipients can be found on the Higher Education Commission's website at www.doe.k12.de.us/high-ed.

Legislative Essay Scholarship

High school seniors in Delaware are highly encouraged to apply for the annual Legislative Essay Scholarship contest. For the 2007–2008 school year, students must submit an essay between 500 and 2,000 words on the topic: **The Declaration of Independence states that “all men are created equal.” How true was this concept then and is it true today?** The deadline to submit an essay is November 30, 2006.

Up to 62 scholarships of \$1,000 will be awarded. District winners will also compete for three statewide awards of \$10,000, \$7,500, and \$5,000.

A new topic is selected each year and focuses on events, people, philosophies, technologies, governments, or ideals in American history from approximately 1770 to 1860. Previous contest topics have been George Washington, Frederick Douglass, James Madison, Abigail Adams, the Lewis and Clark Expedition, Alexander Hamilton, and Benjamin Franklin. To apply, students must meet the contest rules and submit an original essay of between 500 to 2,000 words with their application to the Higher Education Commission by November 30.

Contest rules and applications are available from high school guidance counselors or can be provided by contacting the Delaware Higher Education Commission (DHEC) at (302) 577-3240 or 1-800-292-7935 (toll-free outside New Castle County). Interested students can also go online at www.doe.k12.de.us/high-ed/essay.htm for this year's rules and applications.