

Delaware Education News
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Delaware Gets Low Marks For Teacher Policies In NEW Report— Labeled 'In Need Of Significant Improvement'

The National Council on Teacher Quality has released a 50-state encyclopedia on states' teacher policies, which concludes that many of Delaware's teacher policies

are counterproductive to the nation's teacher quality goals.

While Delaware's relative ranking was in the upper half of states, its overall performance was poor. In the six areas of teacher policy assessed, the state earned three Cs and three Ds.

- Delaware neglects the preparation of special education teachers, failing to ensure that these teachers are prepared to teach students with disabilities.
- The state has lax oversight of its education schools; doing little to ensure the quality of students going in and teachers coming out.
- The state pays insufficient attention to the content preparation of elementary teachers, with flawed guidelines that are likely producing teachers with gaps in essential core subject areas such as American history.

Despite the bleak overall findings, there are a few bright spots. Delaware does a good job ensuring that its secondary education teachers are prepared in their subject area. The state is also developing a "student growth model" reporting student achievement gains over time.

To see Delaware report:

http://www.nctq.org/stpy/reports/stpy_delaware.pdf

2007 Statewide DSTP Test Results Released

IN GRADES 2-10

(Dover, De.) Test scores of nearly 86,000 Delaware students in grades 2-10 continue to level off in reading and mathematics, according to results of the March 2007 Delaware Student Testing Program (DSTP) released today by Secretary of Education Valerie A. Woodruff. Scores on this year's two-item writing test increased or decreased at the elementary, middle and high school levels in almost all grades.

"Many of our schools have a high percentage of students meeting or exceeding standards while some schools are struggling to meet the learning needs of all students," said Secretary of Education Valerie A. Woodruff. "Our collective mission

must be to continuously seek out the best curriculum and instructional practices and to provide professional development to our teachers,” added Woodruff. “I am confident that we will see greater improvement as we move forward.”

“One specific area of great concern remains in mathematics at middle school and high school,” said Woodruff. “A math coalition comprised of most school districts, the Department of Education, the University of Delaware and the Delaware Foundation for Science and Math Education has been formed to accelerate our performance in that content area.”

This is the second 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 2007 results are as follows:

MATHEMATICS: At grades 2-5, students meeting or exceeding the standard ranges from 86% in grade 2 to 76% in grade 5. In grades 6-8, middle school student scores range from 74% in grade 6 to 61% in grade 8. At the high school level, grade 9 students remained constant at 51% while grade 10 students scored at 57%.

Comparing test scores to last year’s results, 77% 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, 76% of students tested met the standard, a one percentage point difference from last year. The proportion of this year’s eighth grade students meeting or exceeding the standard is at 61%, one percentage point less than last year’s eighth graders, while in the tenth grade, 57% performed at or above standard, two percentage points higher than the tenth graders of 2006.

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 at 82%. At the high school grades, the range of scores is between 72-74%.

Comparing this year’s test score results to the results of 2006, 81% of third grade students who took the DSTP met or exceeded the standard, a three percentage point decrease from 2006. Fifth grade reading performance leveled off at 85%, the same as in 2006. Eighty-two percent of eighth grade students tested met or exceeded the reading standard, a two percentage point decrease from last year. In the tenth grade, the proportion of students meeting or exceeding the standard rose slightly to 72%, a one-percentage point increase from 2006.

WRITING: In grades 3-5, writing scores of students who met or exceeded the

standard fluctuate between 67% in grade 3 to 71% in grade 4 and 62% in grade 5. At the middle school grades, grade 6 students scored at 68%, grade 7 students scored at 59% while grade 8 students scored at 78%. At the high school level, grade 9 scored at 74% while grade 10 students scored at 66%.

Comparing this year's results to 2006, third grade student scores rose to 67% meeting the standard, a six point increase from last year's third graders. Sixty-two percent of fifth grade students met the standard, which is eleven percentage points higher than last year's performance. In the eighth grade, 78% of students tested in writing met the standard which was the same as last year's scores. In the tenth grade, scores decreased to 66% of students meeting the standard, a ten 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 74%; in grades 6-8, rankings ranged from 65% to 68%; and in grades 9 and 10, rankings ranged from 76% to 72% respectively. In reading, rankings ranged from 67% to 77%; in grades 6-8, rankings ranged from 65% to 70%; and in grades 9 and 10, students leveled off at 76% and 72% respectively.

School personnel, parents, policy makers, and the media are encouraged to visit DOE's web site at <http://www.doe.k12.de.us/aab>

ACT High School Profile Report The Graduating Class of 2007 -

The ACT High School Profile Report for each state provides information about the performance of 2007 graduating seniors who took the ACT as sophomores, juniors, or seniors. The reports focus on performance, access, course selection, course rigor,

college readiness, awareness, and articulation.

To see Delaware report:

<http://www.act.org/news/data/07/pdf/states/Delaware.pdf>

New College Enrollment Data

The College Board, in partnership with National Student Clearinghouse, is now able to track college-enrollment patterns of SAT takers at the state and national level.

Available for the first time this year is the percentage of 2006 college-bound seniors from public schools enrolled in college and the percentage that chose to enroll in-state or out-of-state. Information on enrollment by race/ethnicity and type of institution attended (two year, four year, public, private) is also available. The College Board will be able to follow each class of SAT takers so that in future years, additional information, including the percentage of students successfully completing each year of college, as well as graduation rates, will be available.

To see Delaware report:

http://www.collegeboard.com/prod_downloads/about/news_info/cbsenior/yr2007/attendance/DE.pdf

2007 SAT Results Remain Stable

The average mathematics and critical reading scores of Delaware's public and non-public college-bound seniors who took the SAT Reasoning Test remained stable in comparison to last year's test scores.

On the **critical reading** portion of the SAT Reasoning Test, Delaware's students, both public and non-public, scored an average of 497, a two point increase from last year. Nationally, students averaged a 502 on the critical reading portion of the SAT,

showing a one point decrease from last year.

The College Board reported that the average **mathematics** score of Delaware's college-bound seniors attending the state's public and nonpublic schools was 496, a four point decrease from 2006. This year's national average math score is 515, a decrease of three points from 2006.

For the second year, results were released for the **writing** portion of the SAT. For Delaware's public and non-public high school seniors, the mean score for writing was 486, a two point increase from 2006. Nationally, the average writing score was 494, a three point decrease from last year's results.

Delaware's SAT Reasoning Test participation rate of 72% decreased one percentage point from 2006 but is still well above the nation's participation rate of 48%. As a result, Delaware's participation rate is ranked tenth in the nation.

Public school scores in Delaware also remained stable from last year's results. On the critical reading portion of the SAT Reasoning Test, 4,394 Delaware students (a decrease of 3.0%) averaged 480, a one point increase from last year's results. Nationally, public school students averaged 498 on the critical reading exam, a two point decrease from last year. On the math portion of the SAT, Delaware's public school students averaged 483, resulting in a four point decrease from last year. Nationally, public school students averaged 509, a five point loss from last year. On the writing portion of the SAT, Delaware public school students averaged 468, a one point decrease while nationally, students scored 488, a four point decrease.

In Delaware's public schools, nearly 56% of SAT Reasoning Test takers were female compared to 44% males. However, male test takers outscored their female counterparts on two portions of the SAT. Male students scored an average of 484 on the critical reading portion of the exam while female students averaged 478. In math, male students, on average, scored 502 while female students scored 469. In writing, female students scored an average of 473 while male students averaged 463.

To see Delaware report:

http://www.collegeboard.com/prod_downloads/about/news_info/cbsenior/yr2007/DE_07.pdf

A New Report From The Century Foundation: Socioeconomic Integration Plans Steer Clear Of Supreme Court's Objections On Race and Meet Goals Of Achievement and Racial Diversity – Includes Brandwine

Communities that are committed to fostering diversity in public schools were dealt a serious blow today when, in an historic ruling, the U.S. Supreme Court restricted the ability of school districts to use race as a factor in school assignment plans. Districts should not give up on integration, however, says Richard D. Kahlenberg, senior fellow at The Century Foundation. “A growing number of school districts across the country have begun to use students’ socioeconomic status as a factor in school integration plans,” he says, “and preliminary evidence suggests such plans can raise academic achievement and produce racially diverse schools in a manner that is legally bullet-proof.”

He examines twelve such school systems and finds that when socioeconomic school integration plans are well implemented, they can boost academic achievement and also provide students with a racially integrated schooling environment. *Rescuing Brown v. Board of Education: Profiles of Twelve School Districts Pursuing Socioeconomic School Integration* features detailed studies of three leading districts with the longest standing and most comprehensive socioeconomic integration policies—Wake County (Raleigh), North Carolina; La Crosse, Wisconsin; and Cambridge, Massachusetts. It also includes profiles of nine additional communities that are using socioeconomic status as a factor in assignment—Berkeley, California; Brandywine, Delaware; Charlotte- Mecklenburg, North Carolina, Manatee County, Florida; McKinney, Texas; Minneapolis, Minnesota; Omaha, Nebraska; Rochester, New York; and San Francisco, California. In addition, the report looks at school districts that may move toward socioeconomic integration. These include districts already discussing that possibility (including Burlington, Vermont; and Pasadena, California) as well as districts now employing race as a criterion which may shift toward socioeconomic status (including Louisville, Kentucky; Seattle, Washington; Lynn, Massachusetts; and others).

“*Brown v. Board of Education* stood for racial integration of schools and equal educational opportunity,” says Kahlenberg. “School districts that are promoting socioeconomic integration are vigorously pursuing both goals. Given the Supreme Court’s decision, socioeconomic integration moves to the cutting edge of equitable school reform.” The report notes that today, most districts seek to achieve socioeconomic integration through public school choice and magnet schools rather

than compulsory busing.

Rescuing Brown v. Board of Education: Profiles of Twelve School Districts Pursuing Socioeconomic School Integration :

<http://www.tcf.org/publications/education/districtprofiles.pdf>

Improving ACT and SAT Scores

How Are Southern (SREB) States Doing?

Virginia was the only SREB state with an average score in 2006 that topped the national average for its dominant test.

Six ACT states — **Arkansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Tennessee** and **West Virginia**, and four SAT states — **Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina** and **Virginia**—kept pace or gained ground on the national average for their dominant test.

Two ACT states — **Alabama** and **Mississippi**—and one SAT state — **Florida**—increased the percentage of high school seniors tested by at least 10 percentage points.

When compared with national average ACT and SAT scores, the improvement in SREB states also is significant. In 1997, none of the SREB states surpassed the national average score for its dominant test. In 2006, one SREB state, Virginia, surpassed the national average, and eight other SREB states — Arkansas, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee and West Virginia — narrowed their gaps with the nation.

In all but three SREB states, the percentages of graduating seniors taking the dominant test increased. Most remarkably, scores improved at the same time that the percentages of students taking the tests increased in eight SREB states — Arkansas, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia and West Virginia.

To see full report, with state by state figures::

http://www.sreb.org/main/Goals/Publications/07E02_ACT_and_SAT_Test_Scor

es.pdf

Southern States Lead the Nation in Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate Programs

Participation in Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) programs is growing in Southern (SREB) states. SREB's *Challenge to Lead* Goals for Education recognize AP courses and the IB curriculum as specific ways that states can engage high school students in more advanced course work. This report addresses the continued momentum of SREB states in access to and achievement in these programs, especially for traditionally underserved student groups. It also offers suggestions for states interested in strengthening their programs.

To see the full report:

http://www.sreb.org/main/Goals/Publications/07E05_Adv_placement.pdf

Charter School of Wilmington, Delaware Team Takes 3rd Place at 2007 Canon Envirothon

A five-member team of high school students from Housatonic Valley High School in Falls Village, Connecticut, are the winners of the 2007 Canon Envirothon. The winning team was announced on Friday, August 3rd, during closing ceremonies of the weeklong North American environmental education competition held at Hobart & William Smith College in Geneva, N.Y., and sponsored by Canon U.S.A., Inc.

More than 260 teenagers from more than 40 U.S. states and nine Canadian provinces studied environmental issues and resource conservation, while competing for a share of more than \$100,000 in scholarships and prizes.

The first place Connecticut team received a total of \$25,000 in Canon scholarships along with Canon photographic equipment for their advisor and sponsoring

agency/organizations to use in science education. Northern York High School from Dillsburg, Pennsylvania (\$20,000 and Canon equipment), and the Charter School of Wilmington, Delaware (\$15,000 and Canon equipment), placed second and third, respectively. The fourth place team, Parkway North High School from St. Louis, Missouri, received \$10,000 and Canon equipment. The fifth place team, High Tech High School from North Bergen, New Jersey, received \$7,500 and Canon equipment. The list of schools/organizations finishing in the top 10 appears at the end of this announcement.

The National Association of Conservation Districts in the U.S., the United States Department of Agriculture (U.S.D.A) Forest Service and the U.S.D.A Natural Resource Conservation Service, are Canon Envirothon partners, along with provincial Forestry Associations in Canada.

The Canon Envirothon tests teams on their knowledge of soils and land use, aquatic ecology, forestry, wildlife and an additional current environmental issue. The theme of this year's competition was *Alternative/Renewable Energy*, an issue that has attracted worldwide attention. The competing teams focused on the efficient use of energy generated from traditional sources and the development of renewable energy resources.

"Canon would like to congratulate all of the teams competing in this year's competition," said William Reed, senior vice president and general manager, Corporate Communications, Canon U.S.A. "It has been truly inspiring to witness the commitment demonstrated by the teams, who are so dedicated to helping preserve North America's most valuable resources for future generations."

The Canon Envirothon is the culmination of a series of competitions that began during the past school year and involved more than 500,000 teenagers throughout North America. In written tests and oral presentations, starting on the local level, winning five-member teams from schools and organizations competed for the distinction of representing their state or province at the Canon Envirothon.

Each team's knowledge is tested under the supervision of foresters, soil scientists, wildlife specialists and other natural resource professionals. Teamwork, problem solving and presentation skills are evaluated as each team offers a panel of judges an oral presentation containing recommendations for solving the specific challenge that is presented during the competition.

The 2008 competition will be held at Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff, Arizona, July 28th through August 3rd, 2008.

Two Delaware Youth Honored for Volunteerism at National Award Ceremony in Washington, D.C.

Super Bowl MVP Peyton Manning Pays Tribute to Young Heroes as part of Four-Day Recognition Events

Two Delaware students, Stephanie Seitz, 18, of Wilmington and Taylor Richey, 11, of Bridgeville were honored in the nation's capital for their outstanding volunteer work during the presentation of The 2007 Prudential Spirit of Community Awards. The two young people – along with 100 other top youth volunteers from across the country – received \$1,000 awards as well as personal congratulations from Indianapolis Colts quarterback and Super Bowl MVP Peyton Manning at the 12th annual award ceremony and gala dinner reception, held at the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History.

Stephanie and Taylor were named the top high school and middle level youth volunteers in Delaware last February. In addition to their cash awards, they received engraved silver medallions and an all-expense-paid trip with their parents to Washington, D.C.

Stephanie, a senior at Ursuline Academy, provides a wide range of volunteer services to a small Catholic middle school attended by boys of all faiths from low-income families. When she read in an article that Nativity Preparatory School needed volunteers, she decided to investigate. "From the moment I became involved, I knew this was a special place," she said.

Stephanie began by tutoring the fifth- to eighth-graders in the evening and just doing "whatever was asked of me," she said. When she became aware of the school's desperate need for stationery supplies, she recruited fellow students to help her organize a stationery collection drive at her school, and then coordinated two "jean days" that raised more than \$600 to buy workbooks for Nativity Prep. Stephanie also painted classrooms, catalogued books, organized office files, and helped coach the school's baseball team. "Being at Nativity, I realize that some of the things I take for granted are viewed as a luxury by the boys," she said. "Working with the students

has made me appreciate my family and all the opportunities I have even more.”

Taylor, a member of Girl Scouts of The Chesapeake Bay Council in Newark and a fifth-grader at Phyllis Wheatley Middle School in Bridgeville, raised funds to purchase toys, games and other play equipment for children undergoing treatment for cancer at A.I. Dupont Hospital in Wilmington. “I was hospitalized there all summer and I was bored,” said Taylor, who suffers from a rare skin and muscle disease. The hospital didn’t have much to entertain young patients, she said, and when a water leak destroyed the few toys, books, video games and movies that were there, Taylor decided to help. “I wanted to do something to make other kids happy,” she said.

Taylor made plans to conduct a raffle at a local festival for one of two bicycles she had won in summer reading programs. After her friend and school nurse offered to shave her own head if Taylor raised more than \$3,000, Taylor received donations of over \$5,000 from friends and community members. Taylor then purchased so many books, puzzles, movies, art supplies and play stations that it took several trips to deliver everything. Taylor also has raised money to send supplies to troops overseas, and to buy books for her school library.