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Additional Detail: School Choice

November 2015



Supporting World Class Schools for Delaware

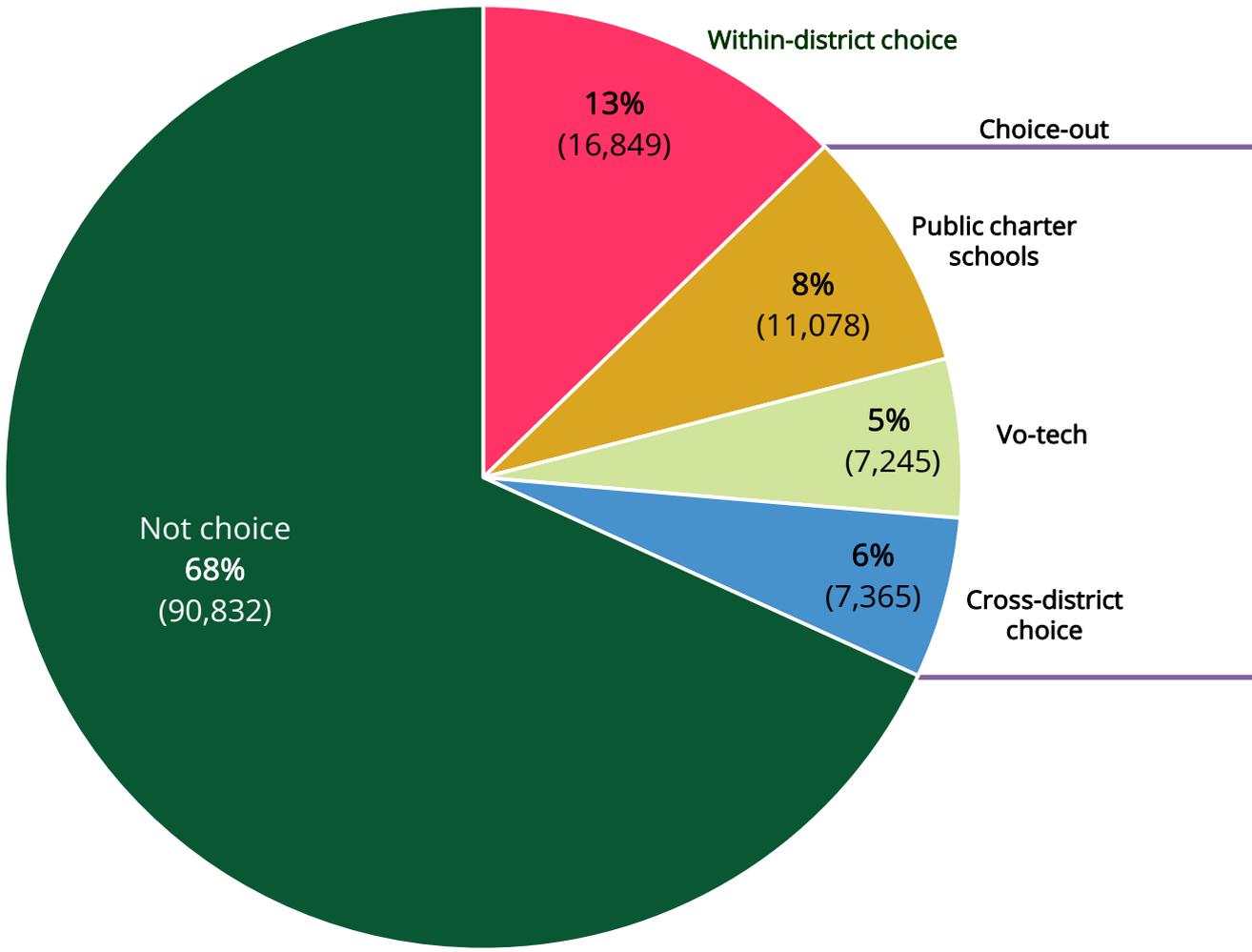
There are five different types of public school choice in Delaware.

- Delaware’s school choice program is the vehicle by which parents can enroll their children in any public school in Delaware, provided the school has capacity and parents follow the school choice application process.
- Families may choose from the following school choice options:

Type of choice	Definition	Application Process
Within-district choice	Students apply to attend a school or program within their same district, but different from their feeder pattern school.	Parents and students complete the application form available online. The application is due by the second Wednesday in January of each year.
Cross-district choice	Students may apply to attend a school or program in a public school district outside of their district of residence.	Same as in-district choice process.
Magnet schools	Students from any district may apply for admission to any magnet school in the state. Magnets are public schools that accept students based on demonstration of skills aligned with the school’s area(s) of focus (academics, the arts, etc.).	Each magnet school’s application process is different. Specific processes are outlined on the individual schools’ websites.
Vocational technical (vo-tech) schools	Students may apply to schools in the county in which they reside. Vo-tech schools are public schools governed by independent district boards. Curriculum combines academic instruction, career training, and structured work experiences.	Applications are available from the schools and online. Requirements for each vo-tech program vary slightly and are posted on each school’s website.
Public charter schools	Charter schools are public schools governed by independent boards. They do not have “feeder patterns” like neighborhood schools.	Parents complete the online application form and submit it by the second Wednesday in January.

Approximately one in three Delaware public school students exercises school choice, as shown in the chart below.

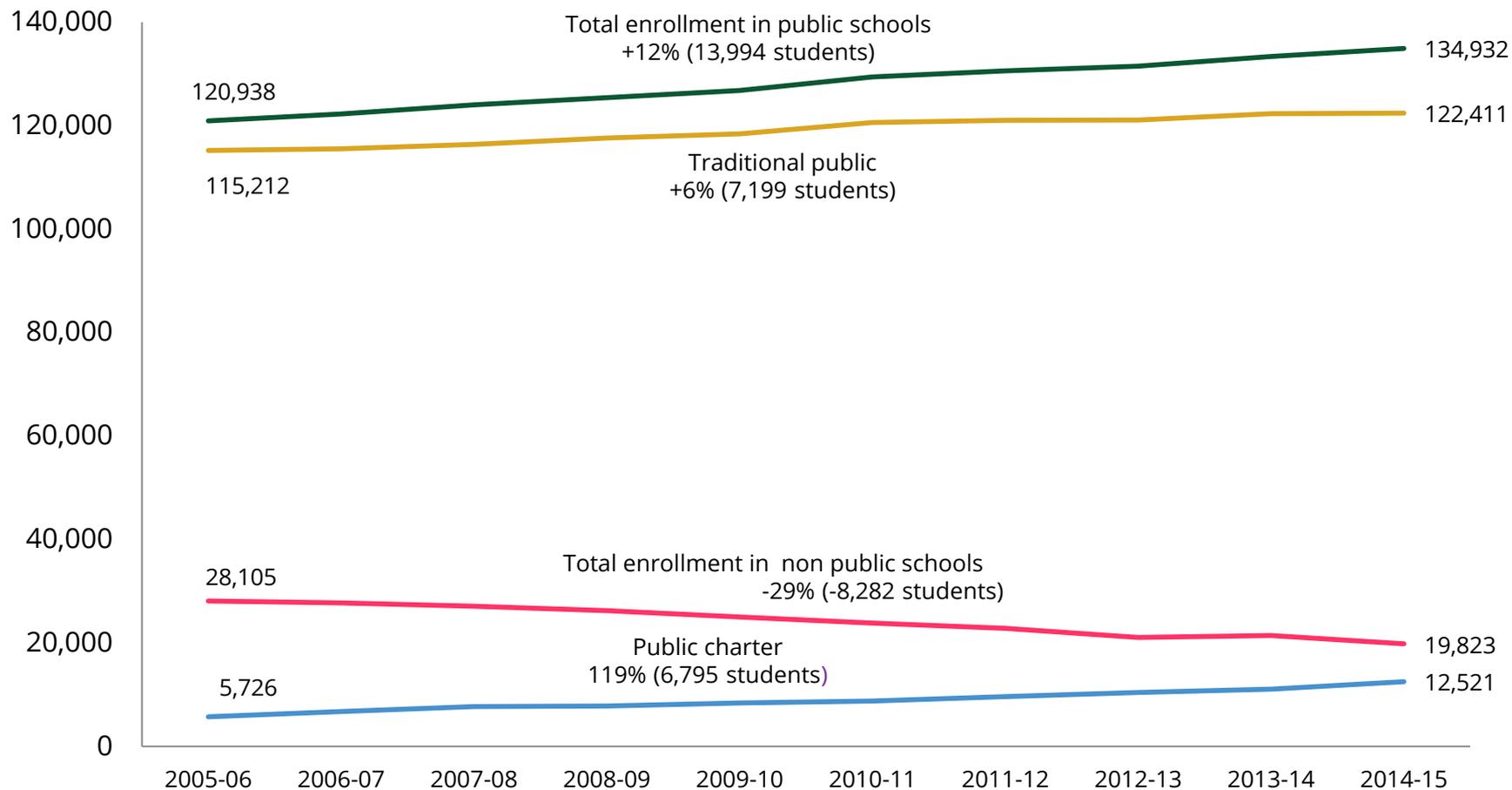
Percentages and Numbers of Delaware Students Participating in School Choice, 2013-14



Note: "Not Choice" refers to students attending their feeder pattern school. Choice to magnet schools is included as either within-district choice or cross-district choice. Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding. Source: Delaware Department of Education. (2015). 2014 Home District Summary

In the last 10 years, enrollment in Delaware’s public schools has risen, while enrollment in private schools has decreased.

Student Enrollment Trends by School Type



Note: Public charter schools authorized by the Red Clay Consolidated School District are counted under the “Public charter” total only. Total enrollment in non public schools is inclusive of private school and home school enrollment.

Source: Delaware Department of Education. (2015). Online School and District Profiles: State Enrollment History for Public Schools; Delaware Department of Education. (2012). Detailed Enrollment and Specialty Enrollment Reports (2008-2011).

Delaware has a variety of school options throughout the state, with significant school choice options located in New Castle County.

New Castle County

Magnet Schools

(All located in Red Clay School District)
 Cab Calloway School of the Arts
 Conrad Schools of Science
 Lewis Dual Language Elementary*

District-Approved Charters

(All located in Red Clay School District)
 Charter School of Wilmington
 Delaware College Preparatory Academy
 Delaware Military Academy

State-Approved Charters

Las Americas ASPIRA Academy
 Delaware Academy of Public Safety
 EastSide Charter
 Family Foundations
 Gateway Charter
 Kuumba Academy
 MOT Charter
 Newark Charter
 Odyssey Charter
 Prestige Academy
 Thomas Edison Charter
 La Academia Antonia Alonso
 First State Montessori Charter
 Design Lab Charter
 Delaware STEM Academy**
 Delaware MET
 Freire Charter
 Great Oaks Charter

New Castle County, Continued

Vocational Technology

Delcastle High
 Hodgson High
 Howard High
 St. Georges High

Kent County

Magnet Schools

N/A

District-Approved Charters

N/A

State-Approved Charters

Providence Creek
 Academy of Dover
 Campus Community
 Positive Outcomes
 Early College High School
 First State Military Academy

Vocational Technology

POLYTECH High School

Sussex County

Magnet Schools

Southern Delaware School of the Arts

District-Approved Charters

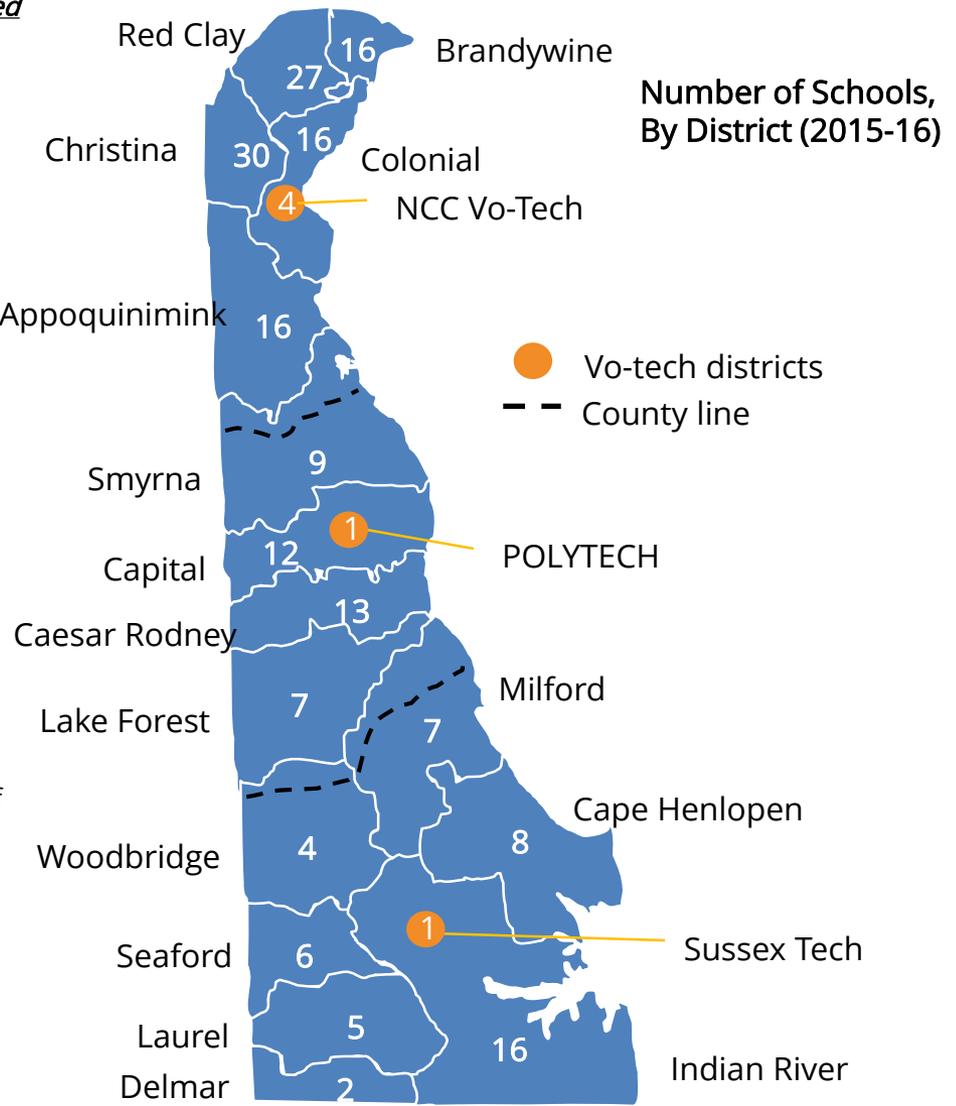
N/A

State-Approved Charters

Sussex Academy

Vocational Technology

Sussex Tech

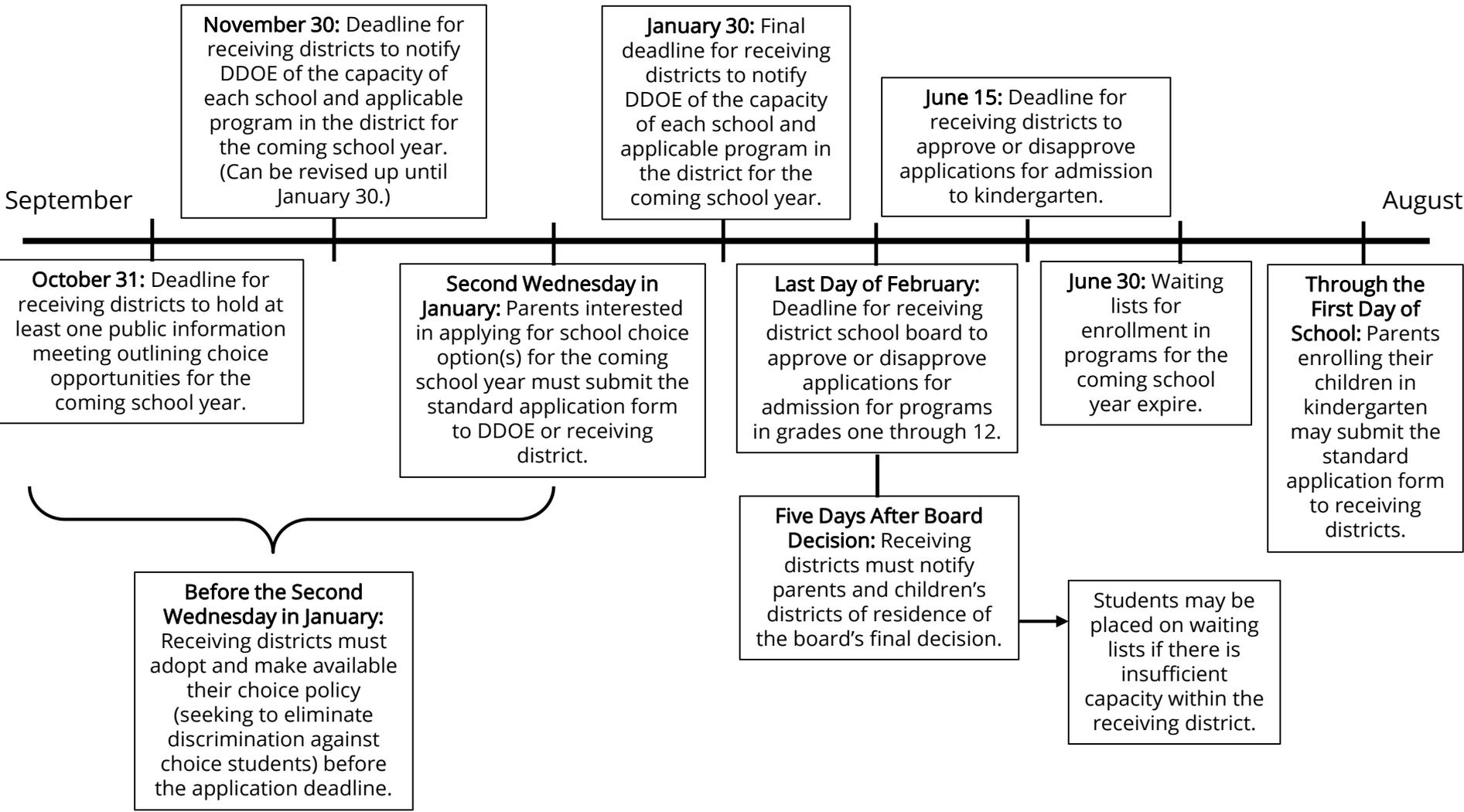


*Unlike the other magnet schools in the state, Lewis has a natural feeder pattern.

**Slated to open in 2016-2017.

Source: Delaware Department of Education. (2015). Online School and District Profiles. profiles.doe.k12.de.us.

A universal enrollment system could help to streamline the current school choice process for students and families.



In March 2015, Governor Jack Markell announced the creation of a needs assessment and strategic planning process for all Delaware public schools, the Statewide Review of Educational Opportunities (SREO).

- The SREO, managed by the State Board of Education, will review current opportunities and trends related to school choice patterns in an effort to quantify areas of unmet need for Delaware families
- Specifically, the SREO will examine the “specialized educational opportunities” in schools across the state, the number of students participating, as well as any waiting lists.
 - “Specialized educational opportunity” includes, but is not limited to, arts programs, science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) programs, gifted/talented programs, world language immersion, IB, AP, career technical education, dual enrollment, or programs for English learners.
 - The report will include analysis of district schools, vocational-technical schools, magnet schools, charter schools, schools with special need students, and private/parochial schools.
- The SREO will be completed in winter 2015 and will be used to develop a statewide strategic plan to address the projected future educational needs of Delawareans.

Sources:

State of Delaware. (2015). Governor Initiates Statewide Plan for Future Education Offerings. <http://news.delaware.gov/2015/03/19/governor-initiates-statewide-plan-for-future-education-offerings/>.

Delaware State Board of Education. (2015). Statewide Review of Educational Options RFP.

Delaware’s charter school population has significant variations when compared to the national demographics of charter school students.

Delaware Charter Data (2013-14) ¹		National Charter Data (2012-13) ²
Student Enrollment		
Total Charter Students	11,078 (8%)	2.3 million (4.6%)
Charter School Student Demographics		
White	44%	35%
African-American	40%	28%
Hispanic	8%	29%
Low-income	33%	N/A
English learner	3%	N/A
Special education	8%	N/A

Delaware’s charter school population is:

- A higher percentage of total public school students than the national average
- A higher percentage of white students than the national average

¹ Source: Delaware Department of Education

² Source: National Center for Education Statistics (most recent data available)

Note: Data on low-income, English learners, and special education students is available by state for all public schools from NCES, but it is not disaggregated to the school level to allow for charter school designation.

Opportunities to Transform the System

Delaware should consider the following action steps related to school choice in terms of parental and student access and school quality.

Category	Potential Action Steps	Progress Underway	Supporters
<p>Increase equity across the choice system</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider efforts to improve information on public school quality and services, and continue to simplify equal access to all schools through a common application process. Provide improved funding equity for charter schools, particularly for costs associated with facilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enrollment Preferences Task Force SchoolChoiceDE.org Charter School Performance Fund 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delaware Charter Schools Network Delaware PTA
<p>Increase excellence across the system</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide parents and the public with better information about school performance via school performance reports. Develop a common framework for school performance across all educational options. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delaware Charter School Performance Framework GreatSchools.org 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delaware Charter Schools Network Delaware Department of Education (DDOE) Delaware PTA Vision Coalition of Delaware
<p>Be strategic about the growth of all new school options</p>	<p>Utilize the statewide strategic plan, based on the SREO, to take action to address the stated needs with regard to supply and demand of educational opportunities in the state.</p>	<p>Statewide Review of Educational Opportunities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delaware Charter Schools Network DDOE State Board of Education