Additional Detail: College and Career Preparation

November 2015
Delaware has put many programs and initiatives in place to support students as they prepare for college and careers—but high youth unemployment rates and remediation rates indicate that there is still room for improvement.

There are many opportunities that can positively impact a student’s ability to succeed after high school, including:

- Preparation in high school (Advanced Placement courses, dual enrollment, career technical education)
- Enrolling in postsecondary education (such as a postsecondary certificate, A.A., B.A.)
- Taking courses or gaining a work-based learning experience in a high-demand field

Our state must continue to support students as they move through high school, graduate, and pursue higher education and careers.
One way to prepare students for postsecondary success is through the introduction of college-level coursework while still in high school. The number of students in Delaware public schools taking and passing AP courses has increased over the last five years.

Career and technical education courses are meant to foster challenging academic standards and promote the development of activities that integrate academic and career and technical instruction. In 2014, about 70 percent of Delaware’s high school students were enrolled in a CTE program.

In 2015-16 the state will begin implementing state-developed CTE programs which have aligned curriculum and assessments, opportunities to earn industry credentials and early-college credit, and opportunities to participate in work-based learning activities. Additional CTE programs aligned to labor market demands will be launched in the 2016-17 school year.

**Number of Schools Implementing State-Model CTE Programs of Study in 2015-16**

- Biomedical Sciences: 3
- Computer Science: 6
- Culinary & Hospitality Management: 7
- Engineering: 8
- Manufacturing Logistics & Production: 9

**Benefit to Students:**

- Aligned curriculum and assessments to industry and higher education
- Opportunity to earn industry credentials and early-college credit
- Opportunity to participate in work-based learning activities

In addition to receiving an education to support students as they prepare to enter college and the workforce, work experience is also important. Delaware’s unemployment rate for 16-24 year-olds has increased over the last decade, making it harder for students to acquire professional experience early on.

Delaware Teen and Youth Annual Unemployment Rate, 2003-2014

Overall Unemployment Rate

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Note: Unemployment rate is defined as the number of individuals in the labor force actively seeking paid work
There are many programs in place to help prepare students with the knowledge and skills they will need after high school. Delaware has made significant improvements in preparing our students to graduate; however, gaps still persist.

Note: Beginning in 2010-11, Delaware and other states began using the ESEA adjusted cohort graduation rate—a common method to calculate four-year high school graduation rates across states. Since a different methodology was used, this data is not directly comparable to graduation rates prior to 2010-11.

*Some states, including Delaware, calculate extended graduation rates for accountability purposes. This data represents Delaware’s calculation and differs from the preliminary four-year adjusted cohort graduation rates (ACGR) reported by the U.S. Department of Education featured on slide 12.

Gaps in graduation rates still persist and we must continue to improve opportunities to meet the needs of all students.

### Percent of Students Graduating High School by Sub-Group, Class of 2014

- **All students**: 84%
- **Special education**: 64%
- **English learner**: 75%
- **Low-income**: 78%
- **African American**: 80%
- **Hispanic/Latino**: 81%
- **White**: 87%

Delaware is one of three states that offer the SAT to all students. Districts across the state have varying levels of college readiness as measured by an SAT score of 1550 or higher.

![Percent Meeting College Readiness Benchmark By District, School Day Administration 2013 and 2014](chart_image)

*2013 did not include Charter School of Wilmington

Note: Delaware is one of three states that administers the SAT statewide to all public high school students. The highest possible score on the SAT is 2400.


In addition to preparing students academically, it is important to give students the tools they need to decide if enrolling in postsecondary education is the right fit for them. Through Delaware’s “Getting to Zero” campaign, targeted supports are available throughout the year to Delaware seniors interested in pursuing a postsecondary degree or professional certificate.

- **SEPTEMBER:** Access to Opportunity Tours—Visits to every high school to give students resources on the college application process
- **OCTOBER:** Fall counselor training
- **OCTOBER-NOVEMBER:** College Application Month
- **DECEMBER:** State-wide training for those helping students fill out the Federal Application for Student Aid (FAFSA)
- **JANUARY-MARCH:** FAFSA completion, application tracking
- **JUNE-AUG:** Addressing Summer Melt—using the state’s texting campaign and other methods to assure students who intend to enroll in college show up when classes start in the fall
- **MAY:** Celebration Season

Of those students graduating and pursuing postsecondary opportunities, a majority of Delaware students enrolling in institutions of higher education do so at in-state public schools, although some attend out-of-state institutions.

There are a wide range of occupations in Delaware requiring differing levels of experience, skill, and certifications. In order to help students make informed decisions about their postsecondary options, employment and wage opportunities, the state has begun implementing or is in the process of planning pathways programs which align with some of these major employment classifications.

*Districts and schools throughout Delaware have classes and career opportunities related to these fields. Green highlighted data indicates fields where state-developed pathways are available. These pathways are customized statewide and have common PD and curriculum for educators, provide students with work-based learning experience and opportunities to earn industry credentials and early college credits. Source: Delaware Department of Labor. (2013). Delaware Wages 2012. http://www.delawareworks.com/oolmi/information/PDFPerview.aspx?FormattedDocumentId=1953
Delaware has made significant improvements in graduation rates in recent years. A preliminary report released by the U.S. Department of Education shows that Delaware’s graduation rate is competitive with neighboring states.

Delaware ranks 14th in the nation in terms of graduation rates.

*The 2014 Delaware rate reported by the U.S. Department of Education (87 percent) differs from the rate the state calculates for accountability (84 percent) because Delaware includes students in some special schools/programs that are excluded from the calculation used for the federal reporting. This difference in reporting accounts for the difference between this Graduation rate and the rate on slide 6.

A third of the U.S. population ages 25-64 have a high school degree or less. In Delaware that’s even higher at 42 percent. It is estimated that by 2020, 65 percent of the workforce will need a postsecondary degree or credential.

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<th>Category</th>
<th>Potential Action Steps</th>
<th>Progress Underway</th>
<th>Supporters</th>
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| Connecting Education and the Workforce| • Enable all students to take courses which give them meaningful experience in a field that is in high demand in Delaware  
• Facilitate the connection between education and business so that interested students can receive meaningful workplace experience starting as early as middle school  
• Incorporate career awareness, exploration, and immersion into the typical high school experience  
• Increase funding and capacity to expand initial Pathways pilots and institutionalize the work | • Delaware Pathways  
• SPARC | • Delaware Business Roundtable Education Committee  
• Delaware Department of Education (DDOE)  
• Delaware Department of Labor (DDOL)  
• United Way of Delaware  
• Vision Coalition of Delaware |
| Supporting Teachers and Counselors in Facilitating Learning for Careers | • Create teacher and school counselor externship opportunities that will allow them to learn more about potential careers in a variety of fields  
• Provide course-specific professional learning opportunities for teachers | Delaware Pathways | • DDOE  
• Vision Coalition of Delaware |
| Enhancing Student Access             | • Increase alignment among K-12, higher education, and the workforce  
• Increase access to AP and dual enrollment courses so students can receive college credits before graduating from high school  
• Increase access to existing Delaware college scholarship programs in order to provide more students with the financial means to take courses toward a professional certificate, associate, or bachelor’s degree | • Getting to Zero Campaign  
• College Application Month  
• Foundations of College Math Pilot  
• SEED and Inspire Scholarship programs | • DDOE  
• DDOL  
• Vision Coalition of Delaware |