

**Progress Report  
April 2004  
P-20 Council**

The P-20 Council held its first meeting January 6, 2004 at Buena Vista. Council members or designees in attendance were: Cindy DiPinto, Education Policy Advisor to the Governor; Dr. David Roselle, President, University of Delaware; Dr. Daniel Rich, Provost, University of Delaware; Bette Copland, Executive Vice President, Wesley College; Dr. Pamela Bailey, Vice President for Academic Affairs, Delaware Technical and Community College; Mr. Dan Simpson, Delaware Technical and Community College; Dr. Audrey K. Doberstein, President, Wilmington College; Dr. Allen Sessoms, President, Delaware State University; Mr. Robert Sutton, Business Roundtable Education Committee; Mrs. Ann Wick, Chair, Delaware Early Care and Education Council; Representative Bruce Reynolds, Chair of the Delaware House of Representatives Education Committee; Senator David Sokola, Chair of the Delaware Senate Education Committee; Dr. Joseph Pika, President, Delaware State Board of Education; and Mrs. Valerie Woodruff, Delaware Secretary of Public Education.

Additional members unable to attend the first meeting include Scott D. Miller, President, Wesley College; Orlando J. George, President Delaware Technical and Community College; and Bruce Hammonds, Chair, Business Roundtable Education Committee.

The Council charge was reviewed by its co-chairs, Dr. Joseph Pika and Secretary Valerie Woodruff. By-laws were adopted as required by Executive Order 47.

Governor Minner addressed the Council and told the members that she looks forward to their work. She stated how important this initiative is and the value it could hold for all Delawareans.

Background information on P-16 and P-20 Councils was presented by Joan Lord from the Southern Region Education Board (SREB). Joan Lord also reviewed Delaware data of student performance on the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) tests relative to National and SREB-state averages. Particular attention was given to Delaware eighth-grade-student data on track for algebra, and other relevant student data on graduation and college preparedness. She also focused attention on two SREB publications, Delaware Featured Facts on higher education and the other on Student Readiness for College. In general, the Delaware data painted a picture of success in education reform efforts but the data highlight two areas of serious concern: Delaware students lag the national average in several areas of preparation for post-graduate study; gaps in student achievement between minority and majority populations in Delaware remain substantial, as is true for virtually the entire nation.

Dr. Audrey Noble, Director of the University of Delaware Research and Development Center presented information on what she called the frayed connections between the K-12 public education system and the higher education institutions. She noted that student aspirations and student readiness for higher education were not congruent.

Discussion took place around the issues raised. It was decided that at least one subcommittee was needed to look at the public education/higher education issues in more depth.

Mrs. Woodruff and Dr. Pika established and charged the Subcommittee on Post Secondary Success to:

- Examine the current requirements for high school graduation compared to the requirements of post secondary programs. Such programs will include both two and four year institutions of higher education, technical preparation programs, trade and apprenticeship programs
- Examine the course taking patterns of students moving from middle school to high school relative to their success on PSAT, SAT, AP, DSTP and college placement examinations
- Review the various programs and projects that engage middle and high school students and their families in understanding the importance of taking challenging courses in high school (e.g. American Diploma Project, SREB initiatives, Gear Up and others)
- Examine these programs and others relating to opportunities for financial support for postsecondary education and ways to communicate such opportunities to students and their families
- Convene discussions among middle and high school teachers, higher education faculty, and trade and apprentice instructors regarding the knowledge required for success in post secondary settings
- Other issues that relate to postsecondary success may be added by the subcommittee. Additions must be approved by the Council co-chairs.

The subcommittee membership consists of appointments from the P-20 Council members with additional individuals representing school districts and the Metropolitan Urban League. The members are: Angela Suchanic, Wilmington College; Robert Sutton,

DiMartile, University of Delaware; Gregory Lavine and Allison Murphy, Sen. Sokola's office; Scott Lykens, Caesar Rodney School District; Patricia Patterson, Wesley College; Linda Poole, Rep. Reynolds office; and Raye Jones-Avery; Wilmington Metropolitan Urban League. The subcommittee is co-chaired by Dr. Pika and Mrs. Woodruff.

The Subcommittee held its first meeting March 9<sup>th</sup>. The discussion centered on higher education information that would be helpful to school districts, students and parents. It was also decided that representation from apprenticeship training and trades would be helpful to the discussions and activities of the subcommittee.

The Research and Development Center at the University of Delaware has begun discussions with the higher education institutions to gather data on Delaware freshmen enrolled in their institutions on core course grades along with grades for relevant high school courses and other relevant information. The goal is to be able to share the status of freshman students with their high schools so that there is feedback on success and remediation needs. This information should help high schools evaluate their instructional practices.

The P-20 Council met April 8<sup>th</sup> to discuss early childhood issues. Mrs. Ann Wick, Chair of the Delaware Early Care and Education Council and Rep. Melanie George, Chair of the Legislative Task Force on Full Day Kindergarten and Universal Pre-School made presentations on the state of early education in Delaware and the direction moving forward.

It is the intent of the chairs to convene the subcommittee as needed to review findings and determine additional data collections

The Council will meet quarterly to review issues it has identified.