

## **Delaware State Board of Education Strategic Plan**

### **Background**

The Delaware State Board of Education consists of nine members who are citizens of the State of Delaware. The Board is comprised of seven voting members and two non-voting members. Voting members are appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the State Senate. Members have residence in each of Delaware's counties and the city of Wilmington, belong to different political parties, and bring a diverse set of skills and perspectives to the work. At least two members have previously served on a local board of education. Non-voting members are appointed annually by the Governor and include an 11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> grade student currently enrolled in a public school and a former State Teacher of the Year.

### **Vision**

All Delaware students are engaged in learning that provides a foundation for success, preparing them to transition into postsecondary education and careers, engage with their communities, and continue to learn throughout their lives.

### **Mission**

In collaboration with community stakeholders, the Delaware State Board of Education provides voice and leadership for Delaware citizens to ensure that the education system meets the needs of each Delaware student.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

The State Board of Education has a wide variety of roles and responsibilities, including:

- **Advancing Education Policies and Systems**
  - Approving regulations governing 100+ topics, including approval of content standards, assessments, graduation requirements, educator evaluation, Delaware Interscholastic Athletic Association (DIAA) regulations, licensure and certification, and many others;
  - Serving as the Career and Technical Education (CTE) Eligible Agency for the State Perkins Plan;
  - Approving charter school authorizations—new, major modifications, renewals, and formal review.
- **Providing Strategic Oversight and Advocacy**
  - Providing the breadth and viewpoint of a citizen's board;
  - Providing the Secretary of Education with advice in the development of policy, new initiatives, budget requests, etc.
- **Resolving Disputes and Controversies**
  - Resolving disputes and controversies of the state education system, including school district boundaries, rules/regulations of local boards and student suspensions/expulsions for disciplinary reasons.

The State Board does not oversee the implementation of state programs or policies. It is essential for the Board to work in collaboration with state agencies and organizations, schools and districts, local school boards, higher education institutions, Boards and Committees, and many other stakeholders to support and improve the education system to meet the needs of Delaware's students and communities.

The State Board of Education has developed this strategic plan to help guide its work in the best interest of the 138,000 students enrolled in Delaware 225 public schools across the state.

## Guiding Principles

The State Board remains committed to approaching its work through the following guiding principles:

- **Equitable Opportunities:** Support high-quality educational opportunities for all students that reduce disproportionate student outcomes by race, ethnicity, socioeconomic conditions, and residence.
- **Student-Focused Education:** Advocate for the development of the whole child, including strong academic, social-emotional, and physical health and safety practices that provide a rigorous, relevant, and relationship-based education.
- **Collaboration and Partnerships:** Engage and collaborate with the community and partners to enrich education policymaking with diverse perspectives that represent Delaware's citizens.
- **Data-informed Decision-making:** Utilize national, state, and local research and data to inform decisions.

## Approaches

The State Board of Education will develop a plan annually aligned with the Board's priority areas. The plan will include short-term (0-6 months) and long-term (6-18 months) sub-strategies, goals, and timelines. The plan will help guide Board planning, Board meeting agendas, and focus areas for the Board's Executive Director. Priority areas will primarily be advanced through the following approaches:

- **Partnerships and Community Engagement:** The Board will conduct strategic and intentional outreach to understand citizen and stakeholder perspectives regarding issues that come before it. The Board will utilize feedback from partners and stakeholders, data, and research to inform actions and next steps. A variety of communications strategies and events will be utilized to reach new stakeholders.
- **Board Meetings:** Board meeting agendas will reflect the Board's mission, align with the Board's priority areas, and advance the Board's policy development and implementation responsibilities. Presentations and discussions will utilize data, highlight local, state, and national models, and foster conversation on critical education issues.
- **Committee Participation:** The Board will utilize the expertise of each of its members to provide strategic participation and support for the Committees on which the Board serves. The Board will create Board goals and next steps aligned with the work of each committee with member participation.
- **Policy Development and Approval:** The Board will utilize member expertise, feedback from partners and stakeholders, data, and local and national research to inform Board-approved policies and programs.

## State Board of Education Priority Areas

The State Board of Education has identified five priorities to guide its work over the next three years. The priorities are aligned with its statutory and regulatory responsibilities. The State Board recognizes

the importance of collaboration with other agencies and organizations to attain these goals. Priorities are not listed in order of importance.

- 1) **Student Well Being:** Strengthen state policy and practice to foster learning environments that support health, safety, and well-being.
- 2) **Foundational Skills and Knowledge:** Leverage partnerships among early learning, K-12, and higher education to provide students with foundational skills and knowledge that contribute to long term academic success.
- 3) **College and Career Readiness and Success:** Build and strengthen state policy and practice to support students in gaining the knowledge, skills, and experiences necessary to pursue careers and continuing education.
- 4) **Educator Preparation and Development:** Strengthen state policy and practice to recruit, retain, and develop teachers and school leaders to ensure they have the knowledge, skills, and support needed to be successful.
- 5) **Partnerships and Innovation in Student Learning:** Engage stakeholders and members of the public, including students, to inform policy and practice. Promote school structures, systems, and initiatives that are innovative and can adapt to meet the evolving needs of the student population and community.

### **Conclusion**

This strategic plan serves a foundation for Board actions and efforts from 2019 through 2022. The Board is committed to utilizing its unique position to work with education and community stakeholders to meet the needs and address the challenges of Delaware's education system.

*Approved October 24, 2019*