

Excellent Educators Report

**An analysis of educator recruitment, hiring, and retention in
Delaware schools**

Delaware Department of Education

April 2019

Executive Summary

Overview

Research demonstrates that teacher effectiveness is the most important in-school factor influencing the rate of student learning. To hire top talent, studies suggest that districts should aim to hire teachers in the spring (TNTP, 2014)¹. As a small state in a densely populated region, Delaware faces significant competition from surrounding states in recruiting and hiring excellent educators. In recent years, the state of Delaware has demonstrated its commitment to recruiting and hiring excellent educators through Senate Bills 16 and 51, which promote early hiring by projecting enrollment earlier and increase the rigor of teacher preparation, respectively.

As a part of an ongoing effort to ensure we understand workforce patterns and hire best possible educators, the Delaware Department of Education administered a survey to all HR Directors in districts and charter schools.

This report shares key findings & recommendations in each of the following sections:

- ✓ **Teacher Hiring**
- ✓ **Teacher Recruitment**
- ✓ **Teacher Selection**
- ✓ **Teacher Effectiveness**
- ✓ **School Leader Recruitment, Selection, and Effectiveness**

Teacher Hiring

Findings

- ✓ Several Delaware districts identify early hiring, filling all positions, and hiring racially diverse teachers as important outcomes though the majority of districts identified filling all positions as the most important outcome.
- ✓ Consistent with prior years, districts recognized the importance of hiring early, but most had summer target hiring dates and reported challenges with early hiring.
- ✓ Efficient systems and policies can promote early hiring.

Recommendations

To increase the number of positions filled by the end of the school year, districts should:

- ✓ Collaborate with principals to create enrollment projections and budgets in late winter to determine vacancies in the spring

¹ Tomes, E. (2014, June 3). *TNTP: For top teachers hire early*. Retrieved from TNTP: <https://tntp.org/blog/post/for-top-teachers-hire-early>

- ✔ Provide incentives and disincentives for earlier notification of resignation and retirement
- ✔ Streamline the hiring process using online systems (like Join Delaware Schools)
- ✔ Communicate early and often with applicants during the selection process
- ✔ Increase the number of offers extended to promising candidates for hard-to-staff positions

The state can support these efforts by building out the Join Delaware Schools platform and ensuring state policy continues to encourage early hiring practices.

Teacher Recruitment

Findings

- ✔ Districts primarily recruit teachers from local universities though about a quarter frequently draw on colleges and universities in Maryland and Pennsylvania.
- ✔ The most frequently reported recruitment strategies were not always the most successful.
- ✔ Recruiting a more diverse teaching workforce will require more targeted strategies.
- ✔ A small proportion of districts use title II funds for recruitment. When asked about the use of Title II funds as a part of the recruitment budget, more than half of the districts shared that they did not.

Recommendations

To increase the effectiveness of recruitment efforts, districts should:

- ✔ Create programs that promote the profession to college students or community members
- ✔ Identify and market unique monetary and non-monetary incentives
- ✔ Increase the awareness and the use Title IIA funds to support recruitment budgets
- ✔ Build partnerships and specific programs with local universities to develop teacher pipelines

The state can support these efforts by improving reciprocity between Delaware and other districts, developing policies that promote the alignment between teacher preparation and recruitment, and encouraging districts to develop Grow-Your-Own programs.

Teacher Selection

Findings

- ✔ Districts prioritized hiring decisions at the school level.
- ✔ Districts and charter schools selection strategies varied, and charter schools appeared to be more likely to use applied methods like sample teaching.
- ✔ Only 39% of districts frequently used teaching a sample lesson as a part of the teacher selection process. In addition, only 17% of districts used performance-based tasks frequently as a part of their selection process.

Recommendations

To improve the quality of selection efforts, districts should:

- ✔ Design written/interview questions that are specific to the needs of the student population.

- ✓ Use sample lessons and feedback to gather applied information during selection.
- ✓ Increase the use of selection/ hiring rubric.

The state can support these efforts by providing a forum to share best practices between charter schools and districts and among districts in the state.

Teacher Effectiveness

Findings

- ✓ Most districts and charter schools are using observation to identify impactful teachers.
- ✓ Districts and charter schools can use their knowledge of students' and teachers' needs to inform teacher recruitment efforts.
- ✓ Aligning teacher preparation, recruitment, and induction supports can improve hiring and retention outcomes.

Recommendations

To ensure alignment between teacher recruitment/hiring/selection practices and teacher effectiveness, districts should:

- ✓ Track hiring data on teacher retention and effectiveness to inform recruitment and selection
- ✓ Ensure that teacher recruitment processes are aligned with teacher induction practices
- ✓ Use teacher effectiveness data to inform hiring needs

The state can support these efforts by promoting policies and systems that align teacher preparation, recruitment, hiring, induction, and professional development practices.

Future Research

We recommend that future research examine how the specific recruitment, hiring, and selection methods featured in this report correlate with teachers' effectiveness once in the classroom. This more robust analysis would allow the DDOE to determine the efficacy of recruitment, hiring, and selection practices.

2018 Excellent Educators Report

Overview

Research demonstrates that teacher effectiveness continues to be the most important in-school factor influencing the rate of student learning. To hire top talent, research suggests that districts should aim to hire teachers in the Spring and that districts that wait to hire until mid-to-late summer lose significant numbers of high-quality applicants. Across the country, districts have reported challenges with early hiring, particularly in certain high needs areas.² As a small state in a densely populated region, Delaware faces significant competition from surrounding states in recruiting and hiring excellent educators.

In recent years, the state of Delaware has placed an emphasis on teacher hiring. In 2011, the state legislature enacted Senate Bill 16 (SB 16), which required the Delaware Department of Education (DDOE) to estimate each district's enrollment by April 15th of the preceding school year. This guarantees that districts will receive at least 98% of the funding justified by the enrollment estimate. In 2013, Senate Bill 51 was designed to increase the rigor of the state's teacher preparation process. These policies demonstrate the state's commitment to recruiting and hiring excellent educators.

The DDOE gathered information on district's recruitment, hiring, and selection practices across the state in the 2018 hiring season (February – October 2018). This report is based on the Excellent Educators Survey, which was administered to all Delaware school districts and charter schools in Winter 2018.

This report builds on the 2017 Talent Practices Report³ and is organized in the following sections:

- ✓ **Methodology.** This section describes the approach to quantitative and qualitative data collection, which included an annual HR director survey.
- ✓ **Hiring Outcomes.** This section provides an overview of key hiring outcomes in districts and charter schools and compares district outcomes to prior years where relevant.
- ✓ **Key Findings.** This section provides best practices and challenges associated with teacher hiring, recruitment, selection, and effectiveness. Each sub-section opens with a research overview, and includes key survey data.
- ✓ **Recommendations.** This section provides recommendations for the DOE, districts, and charter schools in the areas of talent recruitment, hiring, selection, and evaluation.

² Teacher-recruitment challenges: A special report. (2016, January 25). *Education Week*. Retrieved from <http://www.edweek.org/ew/collections/teacher-recruitment-challenges-2016/>

³ Robertson-Kraft, C., & Hejlek. (2016). *2015 Delaware talent practices report*. Philadelphia, PA: Operation Public Education, University of Pennsylvania. Retrieved from <http://www.doe.k12.de.us/cms/lib09/DE01922744/Centricity/Domain/355/2015%20Delaware%20Talent%20Practices%20Report%20.pdf>

Methodology

This evaluation utilized survey methods to explore talent recruitment, hiring, and selection in districts and charter schools in Delaware. Quantitative data provided aggregate information on these practices among Delaware’s district and charter schools. Additional information on the measures and analytic methods is included below.

Quantitative Data Collection

DDOE administered a survey to human resources directors in each district and charter school in the state. This survey captured critical information on educator recruitment, hiring, selection, and evaluation practices during the 2018 hiring season (February – October 2018).

- ✔ **Excellent Educators Survey.** 18 of the 19 Delaware’s traditional public school districts responded to the Excellent Educators Survey, as well as 5 of the state’s 25 charter schools. Throughout the report, we compare results from the survey to prior years’ data for the districts. The 5 charter schools participating in this year’s survey were not the same as those in prior years, so charter data is not comparable across years.

Descriptive analysis was used to identify key findings and explore district trends over time.

Hiring Outcomes

Staffing Overview

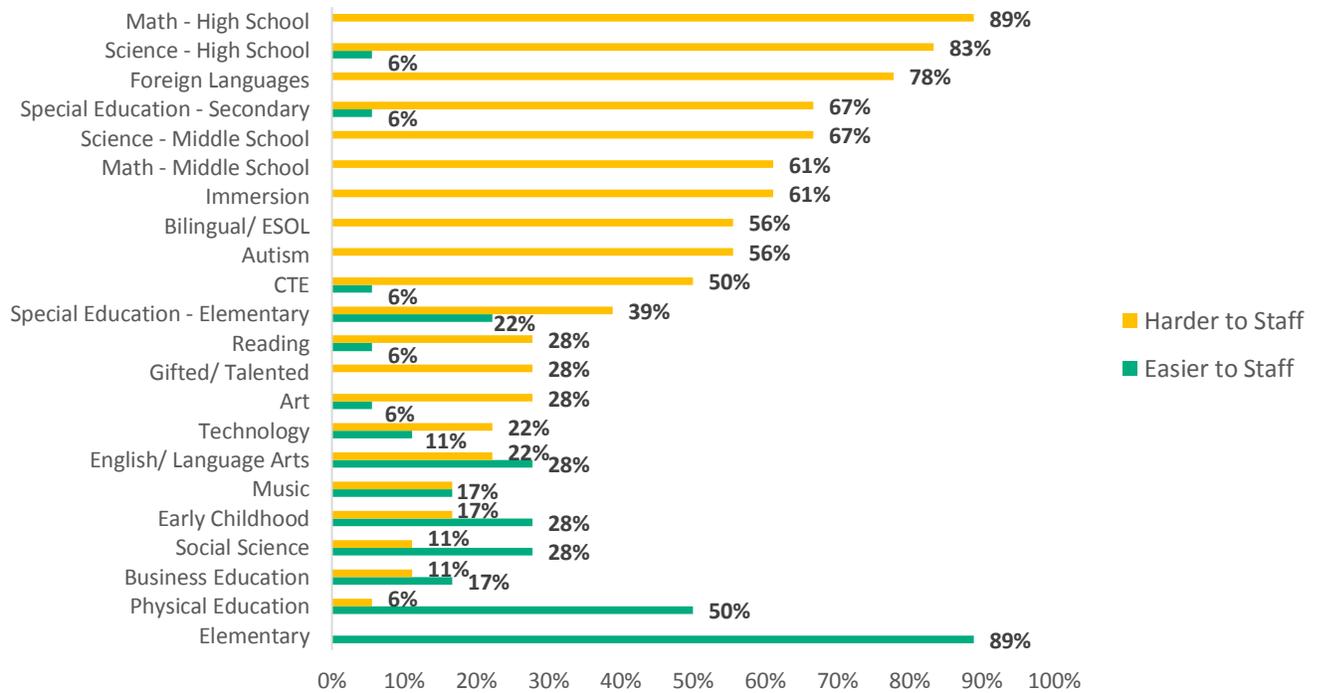
In the 2018 hiring season, over 1,000 teachers were hired to teach in the state of Delaware. This is similar to last year’s figure of 999 teachers. The one caveat is that this year’s number is not exact as some districts indicated, for instance, that more than 250 educators were hired instead of providing an exact number. There were 1,335 teachers hired in 2016, 964 teachers during the 2015 hiring season and 862 in the 2014 hiring season. Across the country, districts have reported challenges with hiring in high-needs areas like math, science, and special education.⁴ These national trends played out in Delaware, and districts reported similar positions as easiest and hardest to staff when compared to prior years.

- ✔ **Hardest to Staff (Instructional):** Districts most frequently reported that the hardest instructional positions to staff were High School Math, Foreign Language, and both Middle School and High School Science.
- ✔ **Easiest to Staff (Instructional):** Districts most frequently reported that the easiest instructional positions to staff were Elementary, Physical Education, Early Childhood, English/Language Arts, and Social Science.

⁴ Teacher-recruitment challenges: A special report. (2016, January 25). *Education Week*. Retrieved from <http://www.edweek.org/ew/collections/teacher-recruitment-challenges-2016/>

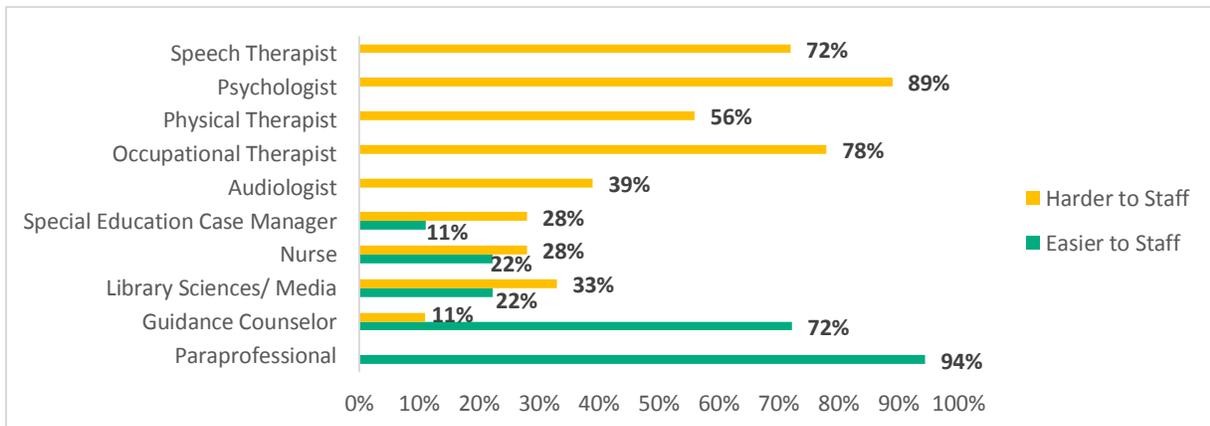
Figure 1 and Figure 2 below shows the proportion of districts that indicated specific instructional positions as being the hardest and easiest to staff.

Figure 1. Harder and Easier to Staff Instructional Positions



- ✓ **Hardest to Staff (Non-Instructional):** Districts most frequently reported that the hardest non-instructional positions to staff were Speech Therapist, Psychologist, and Occupational Therapist.
- ✓ **Easiest to Staff (Non-Instructional):** Districts most frequently reported that the easiest non-instructional positions to staff were Paraprofessionals and Guidance Counselors, followed by Nurses, Library Science/Media, and Special Education Case Manager.

Figure 2. Harder and Easier to Staff Non-Instructional Positions



Hiring Timeline

As noted above, over the past several years, the state of Delaware has placed an emphasis on early hiring. In 2011, Senate Bill 16 (SB 16) required the DDOE to estimate each district's enrollment by April 15th of the preceding school year, and in 2014, House Bill 259 (HB 259) made this permanent.

This guarantees that districts will receive at least 98% of the funding justified by the enrollment estimate. Before SB 16, districts waited until September 30th to learn the level of state funding they would receive, which created significant budget uncertainty for the districts and led to many teachers being hired after the school year had already begun.

- ✔ **The percentage of teachers hired before August 1st has increased from prior years.** The passage of the law led to a significant increase in the number of teachers hired by August 1st, from 35.7% in 2010-2011 (the year prior to the law) to 51.4% in 2011-2012 (the year after the law was passed). The percentage of teachers hired by August 1st has been increasing steadily since the 2013 – 2014 hiring season and is up to 61% for the 2018 hiring season (e.g., the 2018-19 school year).
- ✔ **Most notably districts hired more teachers in May through August.** Similar to previous hiring seasons, districts hired higher proportions of teachers in May through August (75%). Though this number was higher than 2015 (SY 2015-16) which was 71% but it was lower than the 2016 (SY 2016-17) hiring season where it was about 82%.
- ✔ **Charter schools hired teachers earlier than districts on average.** Charter schools in Delaware hired a higher percentage of their teachers in August when compared to district schools, which is a departure from previous years. However, it is important to note that only 5 of Delaware's 25 charter schools took the survey this year, which means they may not be representative of charter schools in Delaware.

Key Findings: Best Practices & Challenges

This section presents key findings in four areas – hiring, recruitment, selection, and effectiveness – that likely contributed to these hiring outcomes. We explored the best practices that appeared to positively influence successful hiring outcomes, as well as the challenges that remained, and how these challenges could be addressed. Each sub-section opens with a brief research overview and includes key survey data.

- ✔ **Teacher hiring (with a focus on early hiring).** This section explores hiring processes, including dates and timelines, as well as notification and resignation processes.
- ✔ **Teacher recruitment (with a focus on diversity recruitment).** This section explores recruitment strategies and applicant pools, with a focus on diversity recruitment.
- ✔ **Teacher selection (with a focus on rigorous practices).** This section explores selection processes and roles of various staff in the process, with a focus on more rigorous practices (e.g., sample teaching and reflection).
- ✔ **Teacher effectiveness (with a focus on the alignment to recruitment).** This section explores processes for identifying highly effective educators and explores how this

process connects to both recruitment and retention.

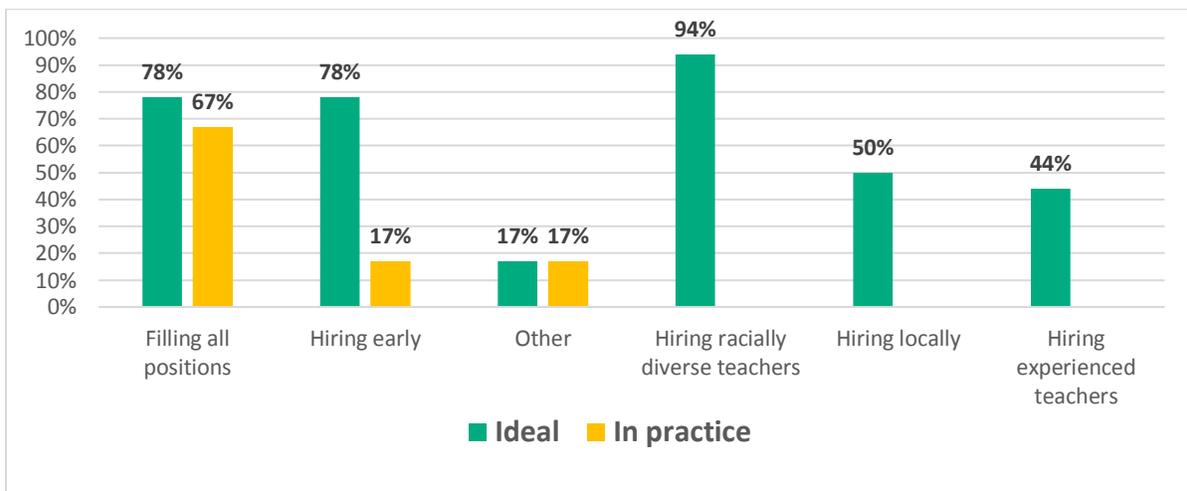
Teacher Hiring (Focus on Early Hiring)

Research demonstrates that when districts hire teachers earlier in the hiring season, it increases the likelihood that they will hire top talent. One study found that teaching applicants begin to withdraw from the hiring process in May, and 40% withdraw by the end of June. Moreover, more-qualified applicants are disproportionately likely to withdraw during an extended hiring process and take jobs with districts or schools that make offers earlier.⁵ As a result, districts that wait until the end of the summer to hire teachers are less likely to be choosing from a pool of well-qualified applicants.

✓ **Several Delaware districts prioritized filling all positions.** The survey asked two questions to better understand how districts were thinking about their hiring objectives. First, the survey asked directors to identify which of the listed hiring outcomes are the most important for a successful hiring season *under ideal circumstances*. The next question asked the directors to identify which of the listed outcomes they prioritized *given the current circumstances*.

- As demonstrated in figure 3, under ideal circumstances, majority of districts reported “Hiring a racially diverse teachers” as an ideal hiring outcome followed by “Hiring early” and “Filling all positions”.
- However, under practical circumstances, the most commonly selected answer was “Filling all positions,” which districts defined as hiring best-fit candidates, staff with similar backgrounds to the students, and hiring from Grow Our Own programs, which will be discussed in the following section on recruitment.

Figure 3. Districts’ Ideal Outcomes Vs. Currently Prioritized Outcomes



⁵ Levin, J., & Quinn, M. (2003). *Missed opportunities: How we keep high-quality teachers out of urban classrooms*. NY, NY: The New Teacher Project.

- ✔ **While districts recognized the importance of hiring early, the majority had target hiring dates in the Summer and reported considerable challenges with hiring early.** Overall, majority of districts indicated that their Local Education Agency (LEA) had a target date by which it aims to fill the majority of instructional positions. There was however a wide variance in hiring dates ranging from May 1st to August 15th, with only 2 districts aiming to fill the majority of positions by June 1st. Districts shared several challenges with hiring early, most notably:

 - Teachers accepting one position early and then later renegeing to accept another
 - Delays due to internal voluntary transfers
 - Late resignations or retirements
 - Challenges with projecting student enrollment

- ✔ **Efficient systems and policies promote early hiring.** Districts reported that efficient systems and policies supported a more streamlined hiring process.

 - Join Delaware Schools was identified as one of the top 3 most successful recruitment practices. This type of online system helped districts streamline the hiring process.
 - Early notification dates and incentives for retirement and resignation in principle should support early hiring. Notably, 13 of 18 districts reported they have policies that require or encourage teachers who intend to retire to notify the school by a certain date and only 5 of 18 did not require or encourage teachers who intend to resign to notify the school by a certain date.

Teacher Recruitment

Research has demonstrated that new teachers tend to seek employment near where they grew up or went to college.⁶ DDOE data indicates that of teachers in Delaware with five or fewer years of education experience in 2012-2013, 59% received their bachelor's degrees in Delaware.⁷ Moreover, the Delaware Aspiring Educator Survey of 348 early-career teachers indicated that 79% of the teachers who grew up in Delaware rated Delaware as their first-choice teaching destination, and 56% of the teachers who attended college in Delaware rated staying in Delaware as their top choice. Teachers who did not grow up in Delaware or did not attend college in Delaware were much less likely to rate Delaware as their preferred place to teach.⁸ Since

⁶ U.S. Department of Education, International Affairs Office. National Council on Teacher Quality. (2004, October). *Attracting, developing and retaining effective teachers: Background report for the United States*. Washington, DC: Author.

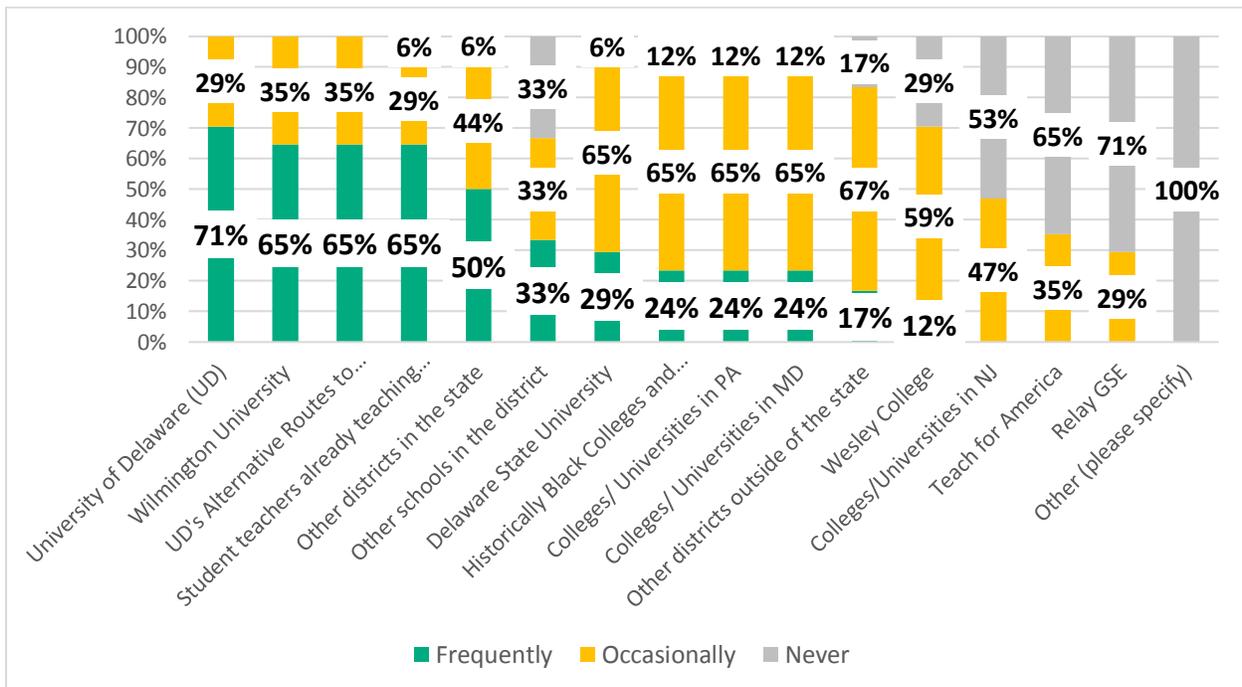
⁷ 'The Set': Where are Delaware's teachers prepared for the profession? (2013, March). Retrieved from http://www.doe.k12.de.us/cms/lib09/DE01922744/Centricity/domain/271/the%20set/March_Set_2013.pdf

⁸ 'The Set': Where do aspiring educators want to work and live (2015, December). Retrieved from http://www.doe.k12.de.us/cms/lib09/DE01922744/Centricity/domain/37/the%20set%20monthly%20data%20briefs/The_December_2015_Set.pdf

Delaware is a small state, this makes talent recruitment, and in particular, recruitment of diverse teachers, challenging.

- ✔ **Districts are primarily recruiting teachers from local universities.** As was the case in prior years, the most frequently drawn upon applicant pools were University of Delaware and Wilmington University. Districts reported that since they relied on local universities, the candidate pool was limited, particularly for diverse talent. 4 shows the frequency with which districts indicated recruiting from various applicant pools.

Figure 4. Use of Applicant Pools



- ✔ **The most frequently reported recruitment strategies were not always the most successful.** Districts were asked to identify strategies that they used most frequently to recruit teachers, and which of those strategies yielded the most successful applicants. 78% of districts reported having a recruitment budget, with an average of \$8,940, and a range of \$1,280 - \$20,000. Districts with recruitment budgets were also asked what they most commonly used their budgets for.

- The most successful overall strategies were posting jobs on the school/district website, and recruiting from Delaware Project Search and Join Delaware Schools.
- Presentations at job fairs and networking/word of mouth were reported as the most frequently used but not among the most successful.
- Recruitment budgets were most commonly used for hosting recruitment events, newspaper ads, social media, and recruitment incentives. Three districts reported

using Title IIA funds for their recruitment budgets, the remainder either did not or did not know.

✔ **Recruitment in shortage areas required more targeted strategies.** Districts reported that recruiting diverse talent required more intentionality. In particular, they asked the state for the following support in recruiting teachers of color:

- Attract more students through scholarships or offering scholarships in exchange for service.
- Providing incentives for teachers (such as tuition reimbursement, hiring bonuses, pay differential, housing allowance or subsidy).
- Reducing possible barriers to certification or improving reciprocity between Delaware and other states.

Teacher Selection

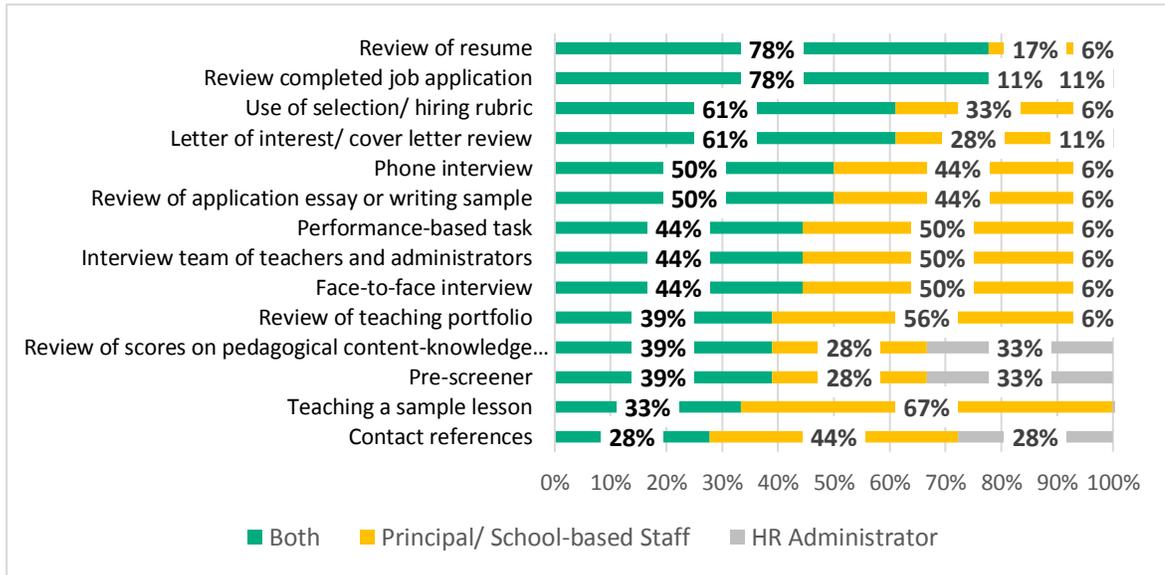
To ensure high-quality candidates, research demonstrates the importance of selection processes that involve collecting comprehensive information about each candidate under consideration. The more information principals can gather on the likelihood of a candidate's success in the classroom (e.g., through methods like sample teaching), the more likely they are to make strategic hires that result in effective instruction in the classroom.⁹ School-based staff, including principals and current teachers, are best equipped to determine fit for a particular campus or role.

✔ **Districts prioritized hiring decisions at the school level.** Figure 5 below shows each selection activity and the proportion of districts indicating that the activity fell into the responsibility of the HR Administrator, principal or school-based staff, or both.

- HR administrators were more involved in early stages of the process and less in the later stages of the process, where the Principal/School-Based Staff was more involved.
- Case study visits from prior year suggests that district leadership emphasized the importance of the “fit” of the candidate and indicated that principals and teachers were best equipped to make these decisions. 83% of districts reported frequently using interview teams of administrators and teachers as part of the selection process.

⁹ Walsh, K, Putman, H., & Lewis, A. (2015). Attracting the best teachers to schools who need them most. *State Education Standard*, 15(2), 25-31.

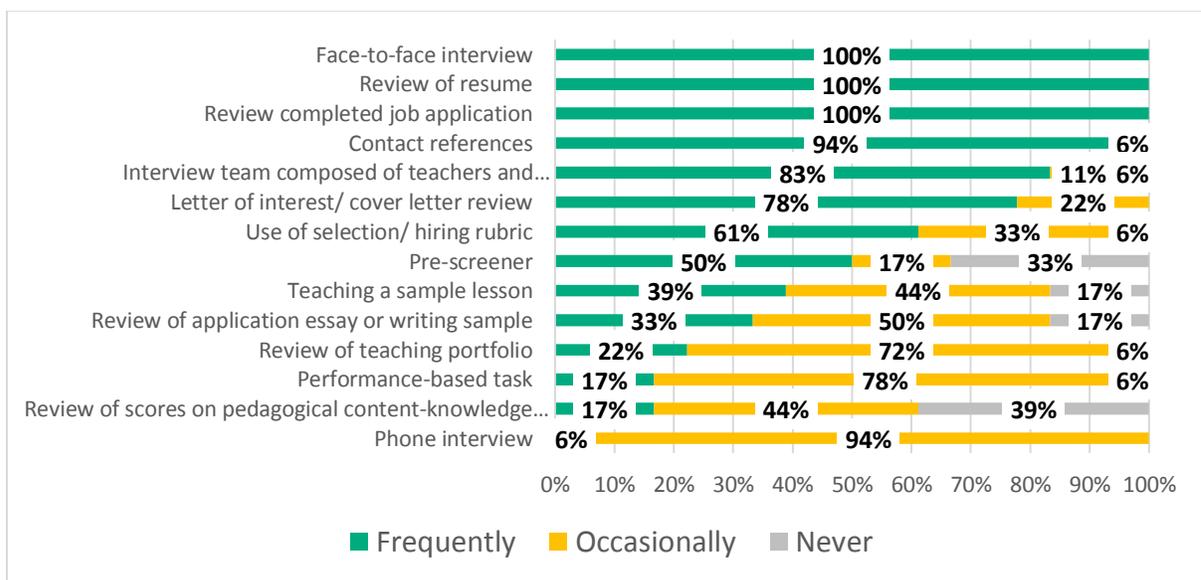
Figure 5. Selection Activity Responsibility



✔ **Districts selection strategies varied.** Districts were asked to report how frequently they use the activities in the teacher selection process. Figure 6 below shows the number of district that reported “*frequently*” using specific strategies.

- All districts reported frequently reviewing resumes, reviewing completed job applications, contacting references, and conducting face-to-face interviews.
- Districts also reported using a selection/hiring rubric, scores on pedagogical content-knowledge tests, pre-screeners, and teaching portfolios, though to a much lesser degree.

Figure 6. Percentage of Districts that Always or Frequently Use Selection Strategies



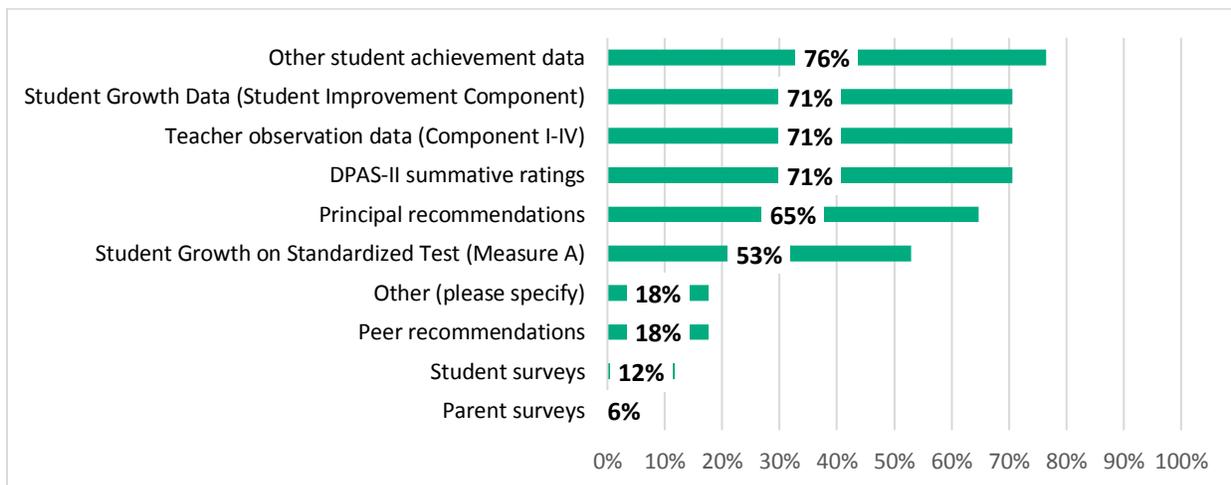
Teacher Effectiveness

Too often, teacher recruitment and hiring efforts are viewed as separate from policies focused on increasing teacher effectiveness once they are in the classroom. Indeed, research has shown that the pathway into teaching and through the early stages of a teacher’s career is characterized by a fragmented system of support.¹⁰ Supporting new teachers as they enter the teaching profession is an essential strategy for increasing effectiveness and improving retention.

✔ **Most districts are using a combination of factors including teacher observation data to identify impactful teachers.** Of the 18 districts, 13 reported having a process for identifying their most impactful teachers. Figure 7 below features the percentage of districts that reported using each of these sources of data for measuring impactful teachers.

- 13 out of the 18 districts (71%) reported using summative data, teacher observation data, and Student Improvement Component data to identify impactful teachers. 14 out of 18 districts drew on other student achievement data (76%) and 12 out of the 18 districts indicated valuing principal recommendations (65%) in identifying their most impactful teachers.

Figure 7. Most Commonly Used Strategies for Identifying the Most Impactful Teachers



✔ **Districts can use their knowledge of students’ and teachers’ needs to inform teacher recruitment efforts.** Robust systems of coaching and evaluation can be used to provide teachers with high-quality support during their first year in the profession. These systems can also be used to identify students’ needs and the needed skills in teachers. It can also help leaders identify early in the year which teachers (veteran or novice) are unlikely to

¹⁰ Goldrick, L. (2009, June). *A teacher development continuum: The role of policy in Creating a supportive pathway into the profession*. Santa Cruz, CA: The New Teacher Center. Retrieved from https://newteachercenter.org/wp-content/uploads/BRF_ATeacherDevelopmentContinuum_TheRoleofPolicy.pdf

return the following year. These more informal projections can be used to inform targets for the hiring process.

- ✔ **When teacher preparation, recruitment, and induction are aligned, it can improve hiring outcomes.** Research reveals that approximately one in three teachers leaves the classroom during their first three years of service. While this is not notably different from other professions, the attrition rate increases to 46 percent in the first five years and is considerably higher in urban areas.¹¹ These high rates of attrition are due in part to the fact that many teachers, disproportionately found in the neediest schools, participate in short-lived sink-or-swim induction processes with limited and inadequate professional support. Supporting new teachers is a critical strategy for improving teacher retention. High-quality mentoring programs can also inform teacher recruitment and preparation. Indeed, teacher preparation, recruitment, and induction should be aligned to improve hiring outcomes and increase teachers' effectiveness in the classroom.

Recommendations (for Districts & DDOE)

The following recommendations draw from the research to provide concrete suggestions for ensuring all students have access to excellent educators.

Teacher Hiring

Early hiring should continue to be prioritized because it is closely tied to the ability to pick the best possible teachers. Multiple factors can contribute to delays in early hiring. First, some districts have restrictive policies on internal voluntary transfer, resignation, and retirement. Second, other districts face challenges with projecting student enrollment and budgetary shortfalls. And finally, the competitive nature of the labor market means that teachers often accept one position early and then later renege to accept another. To increase the number of positions filled by the end of the school year, rather than over the summer months, districts should:

- ✔ Collaborate with principals to create initial enrollment projections and budgets in late winter so that vacancies can be determined in the spring
- ✔ Establish a spring deadline for the voluntary transfer period
- ✔ Require resigning and retiring teachers to notify the district of their departure earlier and provide a monetary incentive for this notification to happen in the spring or disincentive if it doesn't happen
- ✔ Streamline the hiring process by proactively using centralized online systems (like Join Delaware Schools) for efficiently receiving, processing, tracking and placing applicants

¹¹ Ingersoll, R. M. (2003). *Is there really a teacher shortage?* Philadelphia, PA: Consortium for Policy Research in Education and Center for the Study of Teaching and Policy.

- ✔ Communicate early and often with applicants during selection process so they feel valued
- ✔ Increase the number of offers extended to promising candidates for hard-to-staff positions (even if positions have yet to officially open up)

The state can support these efforts by continuing to build out the Join Delaware Schools platform and ensuring that state policy continues to encourage early hiring practices.

Teacher Recruitment

This study corroborates prior research that the majority of Delaware teachers are local, with districts reporting the University of Delaware and Wilmington University as the most common applicant pools. Given the small size of Delaware and the competitive regional labor market, this makes talent recruitment challenging. Since the local universities lack diversity, this makes recruitment of teachers of color a particular challenge for Delaware districts. To increase the effectiveness of recruitment efforts, districts should:

- ✔ Create programs that promote the profession to high school and college students or community members, including Grow-Your-Own programs
- ✔ Identify and consider how best to market your district's/school's unique monetary and non-monetary incentives (e.g., tuition reimbursement, mission)
- ✔ Use Title IIA funds to support recruitment budgets
- ✔ Build partnerships and specific programs (e.g., ESOL, student teaching/residencies) with local universities to develop strong teacher pipelines from teacher preparation programs

The state can support these efforts by improving reciprocity between Delaware and other districts, developing policies that promote the alignment between teacher preparation and recruitment, and encouraging districts to develop Grow-Your-Own programs.

Teacher Selection

While most districts use traditional selection methods (e.g., face-to-face interview), there is considerable variation in other practices. Very few districts frequently use rigorous methods (e.g., sample teaching) that provide an understanding of the applicants' classroom effectiveness and fit for the population. To improve the quality of selection efforts, districts should:

- ✔ Design written/interview questions that are specific to the needs of the student population
- ✔ Gather applied information during selection through sample lessons and provide feedback during the process and observe the applicants' reflective capabilities
- ✔ Continue to involve a team of school staff in the selection process

The state can support these efforts by providing a forum to share best practices between charter schools and districts and among districts in the state.

Teacher Effectiveness

All Delaware districts have a process for identifying impactful teachers. However, it's unclear the extent to which this process informs recruitment and hiring practices. To ensure alignment between teacher recruitment/hiring/selection practices and effectiveness in the classroom, districts should:

- ✔ Track hiring data on teacher retention and teacher effectiveness from various pathways and programs to inform the recruitment and selection processes
- ✔ Ensure that teacher recruitment processes are aligned with teacher induction practices
- ✔ Use teacher effectiveness data to inform hiring needs

The state can support these efforts by promoting policies and systems that align teacher preparation, recruitment, hiring, induction, and professional development practices.