

# Educator Preparation Program Reports Revisions & Considerations From the 30-Day Review Period, 2015

## Overview

This document outlines the revisions the Delaware Department of Education made to the 2015 Delaware Educator Preparation Program Reports in response to feedback collected over the 30-day review period. Feedback was solicited from national experts, education leaders in other states, varying levels of Departmental leadership, Local Education Agencies (LEAs), and most notably from the programs, institutions and organizations that prepare Delaware's educators.

The 30-day review period is delineated in Delaware Regulation 290. See Sub-Section 6.0:

<http://regulations.delaware.gov/AdminCode/title14/200/290.shtml#TopOfPage>

The revisions and considerations below are grouped into two overarching categories: 1) Immediate revisions that were incorporated into the unofficial reports (both across programs and at the individual program-level) to be published in Fall 2015, and 2) Considerations (planned or potential) for the official release of program reports in Fall 2016.

Additional stakeholder discussion will occur with groups of educators, district leaders, program leaders, and state and national networks before the formal 2016 release.

The primary intent of the 30-day review period is to consider and update data pertaining to individual programs as needed. Amongst the revisions to the 2015 reports, there were those that impacted the design/structure of all reports as well as program-specific revisions pertaining to the accuracy of data for individual programs. Amongst the considerations for the 2016 reports, there was input pertaining to which domains should receive more or less emphasis/weight, which metrics could be excluded in the future, and what additional metrics may be of greater value in the future. Further, there were several different methodological considerations put forward by various audiences, many of which deserve further deliberation.

While these decisions have been discussed and deliberated with Delaware program leaders over the last five years, the Department continues to host discussion forums and individual program meetings about how the reports could be stronger and more actionable. DDOE also continues to provide significant funding and grant opportunities for Delaware programs.

The catalogs below are not exhaustive of all feedback/input received during the 30-day review period in 2015 (September/October). It should be noted that feedback was gathered through both formal (e.g. written responses) and informal (e.g. discussions in meetings) channels.

## 2015 Educator Preparation Program Reports: *Overall Revisions*

Revisions made to all program reports for 2015

Several revisions were made to the 2015 Educator Preparation Program Reports that will be evident in every program report generated. Revisions of this magnitude were not taken lightly and involved varying levels of technical complexity. These revisions were integrated into the reports upon gathering feedback from multiple stakeholder groups. Each “overall revision” is listed below as a reader might encounter it when reading through the reports:

- The display order of the four performance tiers on the first page has been reversed for the reader to show the lowest tier to the highest tier as the reader reads left to right.
- The value displayed for “Percent of Points Earned” will no longer be rounded, and will instead be truncated (showing no decimal points). This will reduce confusion between the tier assignment (Tier 3) and the Percent of Points Earned display of a program with 54.5% of points earned, e.g. (since the minimum number of points for Tier 2 is 55%).
- The “About this Scorecard” section is renamed to read “How to Read this Scorecard” to signal the importance of this section to the reader’s understanding of the full report.
- The content within “About this Scorecard”/“How to Read this Scorecard” has been streamlined/re-considered based upon feedback from several focus groups.
- The sample graphic and accompanying text illustrating how to interpret a program’s performance on a metric have been allotted more space in the “About this Scorecard”/“How to Read this Scorecard” section. The various pieces of information have also each been labeled more clearly to aid reader understanding.
- Language was added to the “About this Scorecard”/“How to Read this Scorecard” section that explains that these reports remain under advisement and should not be used to make “high-stakes decisions”. This has been publicly communicated in 2015.
- Each metric performance graphic is now labeled with the limits of possible performance on that metric. Previously, only metrics whose scale was not the standard 0%-100% range were labeled.
- The previously included data elements displaying each metric’s state and institution average were removed to limit confusion in interpreting the individual program’s performance on a given metric.
- For each metric with enough data to merit a score, the number of educators or candidates included in that calculation will be displayed in a new data field (“n”).
- The descriptions for all metrics were scrutinized, and those within the Graduate Performance domain were edited to increase their clarity and specificity.
- The display order of metrics within the Graduate Performance domain were re-organized to list them in decreasing order of weight. The Student Growth Outcomes metric was moved from first in the display order to third, for instance.
- Instead of “Total Enrollment”, the “Graduates” table on the “About this Program” page now displays “Number of Candidates” for each time period in question.

## 2015 Educator Preparation Program Reports: *Specific Revisions*

### *Program-Specific Revisions for 2015*

Educator Preparation Programs are provided the opportunity to bring any “perceived factual errors” to the Department’s attention, and the following revisions were made as a result of those conversations and information-sharing.

- Corrections were made to the program display name for all of Wilmington University’s programs, as well as for UD’s ARTC, and Wesley College’s Elementary Education.
- Conflicting information regarding the grades served by Wesley’s Elementary Education program was resolved on their program report.
- The Average SAT Score of Incoming Class metric and the “Average GPA” data element on the “About this Program” for UD’s Health and Physical Education Program and its Foreign Language Education Program are now suppressed due to the small number of educators in the cohort in question. These values were previously displayed in error.
- The Average SAT Score of Incoming Class metric for UD’s various Elementary Education concentrations now properly reflects the correct value for all five programs. Previously it was reported missing from two of the five programs.
- The “Placement Rate in Delaware” metric for UD-ARTC is now displayed and included in its score. Due to data collection challenges, it was not previously calculated.
- The “Average GPA” in the “About this Program” section for UD-ARTC has been updated. In its original data collection, this value included the minimum GPA required for program admissions instead of the calculated average.
- The “Number of Spring Graduates” in the “About this Program” section for UD-ARTC has been updated to reflect the number of its candidates entering in each academic year. Given the lexicon employed when discussing alternative-route programs, data collection and reporting for this data element may not be intuitive for all readers.
- A note has been added to the program reports for UD-ARTC and TFA to help clarify that their “participants”, not merely their “graduates” or program completers, are utilized/included when calculating scored metrics.
- Teach For America’s data under the “Graduates” section of “About this Scorecard” was internally aligned (correct years and correct numbers of candidates are now displayed).
- Missing data in Wilmington University’s reports (specifically in the “About this Program”) section, were repaired in collaboration with faculty/staff from Wilmington University. Multiple program reports were updated as a result.
- At the University of Delaware’s request, its five different elementary teacher education programs were combined into a sixth report, aggregating all candidates prepared in any of those five programs. Thus, it is now also represented as an individual program.
- Delaware State University requested an opportunity to co-author a statement about their programs for the state’s website, subject to editorial review by the Department. It was collaboratively produced and published as part of the “state summary”.

## 2016 Educator Preparation Program Reports: Considerations

### Considerations: Planned Revisions and Potential Revisions for the 2016 Reports

*It has been suggested that the Delaware Department of Education consider various modifications to the information included in the 2016 Educator Preparation Program Reports, including:*

- Removing Average SAT Score of Incoming Class (*under consideration*)
- Including GRE scores in lieu of SAT scores for graduate programs (*under consideration*)
- Including GPA of recent high school or undergraduate coursework (*under consideration*)
- Shifting Average Score on the General Knowledge Exam from the Candidate Performance domain to the Recruitment domain or including it in both domains (*under consideration*)
- Adding a "dispositional screening tool" metric to the Recruitment domain (*under consideration*)
- Measuring diversity in the Placement domain in addition to in the Recruitment domain (*under consideration*)
- Adding a measure of gender diversity to the Recruitment domain (*under consideration*)
- Adding a measure of Content Readiness (i.e. Praxis Subject tests) to the Candidate Performance domain (*planned revision*)
- Measuring placement in the profession more broadly, including private/parochial schools in Delaware, nationally or internationally (*potential revision*)
- Decreasing the weight of the Placement and Retention domains if measuring placement/retention in the profession more broadly cannot be achieved immediately (*planned revision*)
- Increasing the weight of the Candidate Performance domain (*potential revision*)
- When evaluating alternative programs, adding clarifying language/caveats (*planned revision*)
- Evaluating graduates of dual-certification programs in the strand within which they eventually are employed, rather than the program overall (*under consideration*)
- Providing more detailed program reports directly to institutions (containing disaggregated data) for the purposes of continuous program improvement (*planned revision*)
- Adding within-program candidate evaluations aligned to the state's educator evaluation system to measures of Candidate Performance (*under consideration*)
- Removing the "Tier" rankings, and instead relying on the "Percent of Points Earned" to differentiate program performance (*under consideration*)
- Separating the various sections of the General Knowledge Exam when calculating impacted metrics (*under consideration*)

**NOTE: Several of these proposals would require intensive data collection by Delaware's Educator Preparation Program faculty and staff.**

### **Potential Future Methodological Considerations**

It has been suggested that the Delaware Department of Education consider the following in regards to calculations within the 2016 Educator Preparation Program Reports:

- Consider using a method such as “nearest neighbor matching,” to predict what a missing metric value may have been (i.e. in the event of missing data) to alleviate purported potential bias associated with asymmetrical data reporting.
- Conduct non-response bias and “bootstrapping” analyses to further validate findings from the 2015 Educator Preparation Program Reports.
  - Note: Preliminary non-response bias analyses shows there is not a statistically significant difference in the total percent of points earned by programs with different numbers of points available overall.
- Continue to study the performance outcomes of candidates with low-SAT scores to see if it remains a predictor in determining successful educator and student performance.
- Assess candidate knowledge (e.g. SAT and Praxis I/Core) by their individual subject sections so that the meaningful variations that occur beneath a composite or averaged score are not lost.
- Adjust or control for the potential compounding of school-level factors in retention metrics (Note: This was considered throughout the development of the 2015 Reports).
- Further increase the size of the minimum analytic sample (currently ten) to potentially increase the statistical precision of the program reports.
- Aggregate smaller programs across grade-bands/content areas within an institution to increase the sample sizes of program reports, and to potentially increase the number of programs scored. (Note: This would have regulatory implications for programs as well).
  - Note: DDOE pooled educators at several points in this analysis, both to increase the sample size within a given metric and to ensure that the ratings are more stable over time, with variance dependent upon program performance rather than other potential factors.
- Consider adjusting the threshold by which programs generate reports (currently this is based upon a single domain: Graduate Performance)
  - Note: There is not consensus across programs about whether this threshold should be raised (e.g. all domains scored to generate a scorecard), or lowered (e.g. any domain scored to generate a scorecard).
- Consider allowing program providers to decide at which level to report data and be held accountable (e.g. institution, program, or cluster of programs). This would require regulatory change.

NOTE: *These should not be considered exhaustive of all feedback/input received from stakeholders.* Questions, non-actionable feedback (e.g. statements of support or statements of criticism received), and the full spectrum of ideological, philosophical and/or methodological perspectives may not be represented here in their entirety.