

Wesley College Response to DDOE on 2015 Education Preparation Program Reports

We appreciate the work done by the state of Delaware Department of Education (DDOE) to publish an Institutes of Higher Education (IHE) programs report card in the name of accountability to Delaware's public schools. We also thank DDOE for the extended opportunity to provide a response. Many of Wesley's concerns were previously expressed in the University of Delaware's earlier response, and we asked that our name be added to their response. This response, tailored to our own programs, should be considered an addendum to that of the University of Delaware. Our general concerns remain the same as those they expressed.

We recognize that in its current state the Education Preparation Reports, or scorecards, do not report all the data that might impact the tier scores assigned to programs for this year. Missing from the report are student growth measures; perception data from schools, districts, and graduates; and self-report data used by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) to gauge the rigor of admission and exit requirements and quality of an IHE's teacher preparation curriculum. Any possible points to be earned in these areas were either not considered or rolled into another category. Since there is a space for some of these metrics on the current scorecards, we assume that they at some point will be included in determining program "scores".

Regardless of what is included in future state scorecards, we have specific concerns and questions about Wesley programs' metrics reported in this year's publication, particularly in light of DDOE having created a competitive, tiered rating system that will be publically advertised. Though DDOE told the IHE's that there would be "no consequences" for this year's scorecards, DDOE is not only publishing the scores, but widely publicizing them. These scores are incomplete and non-transparently derived, yet they will, in fact, have high-stakes consequences, compelling Wesley and the other IHE's to publish and advertise disconfirming evidence and information. This energy could best be spent in more constructive efforts to improve our programs. Once released, the public and school district personnel will likely view the ratings as a state-sanctioned ranking of programs across the IHE's – and most probably use these scores to color or influence their hiring decisions in the coming year.

In an effort to partner with DDOE to develop valid and accurate assessment of the state's teacher preparation programs, here are Wesley's specific recommendations to help improve the Education Preparation Program Reports:

- 1) We recommend that DDOE provide us with and also report the n's on which the metrics in each domain of the report card were based. Wesley was not provided with the n's for any of its program cohorts on any of the metrics. Wesley's programs have small completer n's, and thus even smaller DE n's, so how comparable are our programs' percentages to larger institutions? We do not know because we do not know the n on which our metrics were calculated.
- 2) We recommend a more transparent and extended interchange with DDOE about the raw data used to calculate each metric. Wesley was not provided with the raw data used to determine each of the metric percentages.
- 3) If Wesley better understood, through pre-reporting interchanges with DDOE, the data that was used to calculate each metric within a domain, then perhaps we could reconcile what we believe to be some contradictions on some of our program metrics within the same domain. Some categories within a domain seem to report conflicting information. For instance: in the graduate performance domain for the Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT), student growth outcomes for program graduates teaching in English, Math,

Science or Social Studies are not reported because n is fewer than 10; yet student improvement component ratings showed a score of 50%. The MAT has largely prepared initial licensure English, Math, Social Studies, and Science teachers. A very small percentage have been prepared for other areas such as PE or Business. So we find this score puzzling. The same holds true for the Physical Education program scores in the same domain.

4) We recommend that DDOE explain the consequences for the programs judged to have fewer than 10 completers over a five-year span. We are concerned that our Master of Education (M.Ed.) and Master of Arts in Education (MA.Ed.) graduate scores were not reported, and we do not have data to confirm how many of the 13 advanced preparation candidates we have graduated in the past five years (who were Delaware teachers) are still in practice. We assume fewer than 10, but we have not seen a roster from DDOE. Also, we know that programs in other IHE's were not scored because of fewer than 10 in the sample. Does this mean that these programs will not be ranked? What are the consequences for these programs?

5) We recommend a longer window for examining rosters between DDOE and the IHE's. As we worked to correct our rosters and provide DDOE with the many corrections to their data, we feel that some of the information we sent might have "slipped through the cracks" given the short timeline between our feedback and the metrics being calculated. We would like to be able to spend more time with the state's data on our programs to make sure it aligns with our data (e.g. rosters of our grads, etc.).

6) Lastly, we recommend that DDOE not rank IHE's on metrics that are beyond their realm of influence. While some of Wesley's programs were highly ranked for placement and retention as measured, IHE's have NO control over who hires their graduates, where their graduates choose to go after program completion, or how long they will stay in education if they are hired in Delaware. Once we are given a clearer picture of how metrics in the graduate performance domain are calculated, and are allowed to see the raw data on which these metrics were calculated, we stand fully prepared to support the intent of the DDOE's scorecards. However, we do not see the purpose of the ranks. It provides an incomplete picture of the quality of each of our programs, as well as that of other Delaware IHE's, to our K-12 school partners who are in a position to hire our graduates.

Again, thank you for extending the window for responses to the scorecards prior to its publication.

Please feel free to contact us should you have any questions or if we can provide any further assistance.

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