

Enrollment Preferences Task Force: Current Landscape in Delaware and Nationwide

September 26, 2013

Task Force Charge (HB 90)

Purpose:

- Established to consider the current landscape of enrollment preferences and practices used by magnet, vocational technical, and charter schools and develop recommendations, if necessary.

Student Enrollment

- According to the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools there are estimated to be over 6,000 charter schools serving about 2.3 million students in the 2012-2013 school year.
- According to credo.stanford.edu there are only eight states who do not have charter school laws on the books.

Student Enrollment

- In Delaware, during the 2013-2013 school year, 131,514 students attended public school.
- Out of the 131,514 students:
 - 10,438 students attended one of the 22 charter schools.
 - 7,079 students attended one of the 6 vo-tech schools.
 - 2,386 students attended one of the 3 magnet schools.
 - Totaling 19,903 students enrolled in a charter, vo-tech or a magnet school.

Context: Legislative Intent (HB 90)

“The application process for choice and charter schools has become too burdensome and complicated. I talk to parents with children in multiple schools and they look forward to school choice and charter applications with the same enthusiasm that they have for tax season. Multiple applications. Numerous deadlines. Different requirements. “

-Governor Jack Markell, 2013 State of the State

“Not only does this bill make the process easier, it makes it fair. **All students deserve a level playing field in the choice system.** I am thrilled to have helped get this measure passed and I look forward to continuing to work with schools and educators to help our children succeed.”

-Rep. Kim Williams on House Bill 90 (official press release)

-“We’re making the school choice application process easier for families to use by requiring uniform application forms and deadlines,” Poore said. “We’re also making sure that the choice program offers our children with disabilities who have IEP plans a chance to participate, and that makes this **law a great opportunity for every child in Delaware.**

-Sen. Nicole Poore, on House Bill 90 (official press release)

Context: Legislative Intent (HB 90)

1. Updated the school choice program, which had not received substantive attention since 1998.
2. Made it easier for parents to navigate the choice process by standardizing application forms and deadlines across traditional, vocational technical, and charter schools; allowing parents to submit choice applications through the Department of Education website; and requiring districts to hold public information sessions about choice opportunities.
3. Eliminated discrimination against choice students by requiring districts to use the same standards for choice students as they do for students in their attendance zone, and limiting the criteria a district may use to evaluate choice applications.

Context: Legislative Intent (HB 90)

4. Streamlined the role of school capacity in the choice process by specifying the criteria that may be used in reporting capacity and requiring districts to accept choice students until they are at 85% of capacity.
5. Helped state leaders understand and recommend changes to all public school enrollment preferences by creating a task force to explore enrollment preferences and practices used by magnet, vocational technical, and charter schools, and to develop recommendations, if necessary.

Current Landscape: Magnet Schools

Definition:

A public school offering special instruction and programs not available elsewhere, designed to attract a more diverse student body from throughout a school district.

Delaware Code:

Title 14, Chapter 10 § 1049- Policy Making

(4) Grade and standardize all the public schools under its jurisdiction and may establish kindergartens and playgrounds and such other types of schools, as in its judgment will promote the educational interest of the reorganized school district;

Number of Delaware Magnet Schools- 3

- Cab Callaway School of the Arts: Red Clay Consolidated School District
- Conrad School of Science: Red Clay Consolidated School District
- Southern School of Arts and Sciences: Indian River School District

Enrollment Practices, Not defined in State Code: See attached chart

Current Landscape: Vocational Technical Schools

Definition:

A public school designed to bring vocational and technical training to its students

Delaware Code:

State Code, Title 14, Chapter 2, Section 205 and Chapter 10 section 1029

§ 205. Vocational-technical centers, or schools.

- *The Department of Education with the approval of the State Board of Education may establish such vocational-technical centers, or schools as in its judgment will promote the educational interests of the State. 14 Del. C. 1953, § 205;*

§ 1029. Vocational-technical school districts; school boards.

- *(a) Vocational-technical school districts superimposed on other reorganized school districts shall be operated and maintained as other reorganized school districts under the control of the State through its Department of Education as provided in this Code.*
- *(b) In each reorganized vocational-technical school district there shall be a vocational-technical school board which shall have the authority to administer and to supervise all the vocational-technical centers or schools of the vocational-technical school district and which shall have the authority to determine policy and adopt rules and regulations for the general administration and supervision of the vocational-technical centers or schools of the reorganized vocational-technical school district. Such administration, supervision and policy shall be conducted and formulated in accordance with Delaware law and the policies, rules and regulations of the State through its Department of Education as provided in this Code. All vocational-technical centers or schools shall come within the authority of the vocational-technical school board in the county in which they are located.*

Current Landscape: Vocational Technical Schools

Number of Delaware Vocational Technical Districts -3, Schools- 6

- **New Castle County Vo-Tech District**
 - Delcastle Technical High School
 - Paul M. Hodgson Vocational Technical High School
 - Howard High School of Technology
 - St. Georges Technical High School
- **POLYTECH School District**
 - PolyTech High School
- **Sussex Technical School District**
 - Sussex Technical High School

Enrollment Practices, Not defined in State Code: See attached chart

Current Landscape: Charter Schools

Definition: Delaware Code Title 14, Chapter 5 § 503- Legal Status

A charter school is a public school including 2 or more of grade kindergarten through 12 and having at least 200 students (provided, however, that a charter school may enroll fewer than 200 but no less than 100 students in its first 2 years of operation or for a charter school serving at-risk or special education students), managed by a board of directors, which operates independently of any school board.

Delaware Code: full section see handout (excerpts regarding preferences below)

Title 14, Chapter 5 § 506- Restrictions

(b) Preferences in student admissions may be given to:

(1) Siblings of students currently enrolled at the school;

(2) Students attending an existing public school converted to charter status.

Parents of students at a school converted to charter status shall be provided with a plan the district will use to address the educational needs of students who will not be attending the charter school;

(3) Students enrolling in a new (nonconverted) charter school may be given preference under the following circumstances as long as the school has described its preferences in the school's charter:

a. Students residing within a 5-mile radius of the school;

Current Landscape: Charter Schools

Delaware Code: Continued

Title 14, Chapter 5 § 506- Restrictions

- b. Students residing within the regular school district in which the school is located;*
 - c. Students who have a specific interest in the school's teaching methods, philosophy, or educational focus;*
 - d. Students who are at risk of academic failure;*
 - e. Children of persons employed on a permanent basis for at least 30.0 hours per week during the school year by the charter school.*
- (4) Children of a school's founders, so long as they constitute no more than 5% of the school's total student population. For the purposes of this paragraph "founder" shall not include anyone whose sole significant contribution to the school was monetary, but otherwise shall be determined by the founding Board of Directors subject to Department of Education regulations.*

Current Landscape: Charter Schools

Number of Delaware Charter Schools: Including approved applications: 27 **New Castle County**

1. ASPIRA Academy
2. Delaware Academy of Public Safety
3. Delaware College Preparatory Academy
4. Delaware Military Academy
5. EastSide Charter School
6. Family Foundations Academy
7. Gateway Lab School
8. Kuumba Academy Charter School
9. MOT Charter School
10. Moyer
11. Newark Charter School
12. Odyssey Charter School
13. Prestige Academy
14. Reach Academy for Girls
15. The Charter School of Wilmington
16. Thomas A. Edison Charter School

Current Landscape: Charter Schools

Number of Delaware Charter Schools: Continued **Kent County**

17. Academy of Dover
18. Campus Community Charter School
19. Positive Outcomes Charter School
20. Providence Creek Academy Charter School

Sussex County

21. Sussex Academy of Arts and Sciences

Delaware State Board of Education Approved Charter Schools

22. Academia Antonia Alonso
23. Delaware Design Lab High School
24. The Delaware Met
25. Early College High School at DSU
26. First State Military Academy
27. First State Montessori Academy

Current Landscape: Charter Schools

- ***Enrollment Preferences and Practices:*** See attached chart

Current Landscape: Nationally

- ***See attached chart on 50 state enrollment preferences***