

December 2018



# Governor's Advisory Council on English Learners

Annual Report

## Executive Committee

Javier Torrijos, chair of the Delaware Hispanic Commission

Guy Danjoint, Haitian community leader & pastor

Dr. Oribel McFann-Mora, English learner teacher, DELLTA president

## Membership

The Governor's Advisory Council on English Learners is comprised of the 22 members named in Executive Order 20.

- a. **Javier Torrijos, Guy Danjoint:** *Two members appointed by the Governor*
- b. **Michael Rodriguez:** *One member of the Delaware Department of Education*
- c. **Senator David Sokola:** *One Representative appointed by the Pro Tempore of the Delaware State Senate*
- d. **Representative Sean Matthews:** *One Representative appointed by the Speaker of the Delaware House of Representatives*
- e. **Dr. Dusty Blakey (Colonial SD superintendent), Dr. Heather Cramer (North Georgetown Elementary principal), Terri Sharpe (Dover High School assistant principal):** *Three individuals appointed by the executive director of the Delaware Association of School Administrators (DASA), who must include a superintendent, a principal, and an assistant principal from different Delaware school districts or charter schools*

- f. **John Marinucci:** *One elected member of a Delaware school board, appointed by the executive director of the Delaware School Boards Association (DSBA)*
- g. **Ana Viscarra-Gikas:** *One representative of the Delaware State Education Association (DSEA), appointed by the president of the DSEA*
- h. **Clara Martinez:** *One representative of the Delaware Early Childhood Council (DECC), appointed by the chair of the DECC*
- i. **Valentina Maza:** *One student who is currently or was previously an English learner, appointed by the Secretary of Education*
- j. *Four representatives from institutes of higher education, which shall include:*
  - (i) **Dr. Steven Amendum:** *One representative of the University of Delaware, appointed by the president;*
  - (ii) **Dr. Brody Bluemel:** *One representative of Delaware State University, appointed by the president;*
  - (iii) **Dr. Robert Rescigno:** *One representative of Wilmington University, appointed by the president; and*
  - (iv) **Allison Castellanos:** *One representative of Delaware Technical & Community College, appointed by the president*
- k. *The following members, who shall be appointed by the co-chairs:*
  - (i) **Margie Lopez-Waite (Las Americas ASPIRA Academy), Dr. Bridget Amory (Milford School District):** *Two Delaware school district/charter employees, from different counties;*
  - (ii) **Ennio Zaragoza:** *One representative of the business community;*
  - (iii) **Maria Matos (New Castle), Dr. Oribel McFann-Mora (Kent), Georges Odaris (Sussex):** *One advocate for English learner families in each of New Castle, Kent and Sussex counties.*

## Governor's Advisory Council Mission

The council holds all stakeholders accountable for shared ownership of the implementation of Delaware's English Learner Strategic Plan. Furthermore, the council drives alignment between state and community agencies as well as districts and charters. It reviews and provides policy recommendations to the Governor, General Assembly, Department of Education and State Board of Education on matters pertaining to the education of Delaware English learners.

## Meetings

The council held a total of four (4) meetings in 2018. The first meeting was held on June 26. The meeting minutes for each session are available on the Delaware Public Meeting Calendar. Highlights of the meetings are below:

*June 26, 2018*

The council held its inaugural meeting. During this meeting the council established a vision, reviewed Delaware's English Learner Strategic Plan and determined key stakeholders for continued involvement.

*August 7, 2018*

Council members established by-laws (see attached), and subcommittee structures were reviewed. A presentation on the current state, federal and civil rights regulations for English learners was provided by the Delaware Department of Education. A request was made by the council for a presentation on school funding.

*October 2, 2018*

Council members finalized the organization of subcommittees focused on each of the four goals identified in the Delaware's English Learner Strategic Plan. A presentation on Delaware school funding was provided by the Office of Management and Budget and a district business manager.

*November 13, 2018*

Each subcommittee provided initial recommendations for action to the council to be included in the annual report. The council identified areas of focus for 2019. Dates for six (6) meetings in 2019 were established.

## **Subcommittees**

Four subcommittees have been established to engage both council members and additional stakeholders in the development of future recommendations. The subcommittees provide input and action items to the council. All subcommittees held initial meetings during the months of October and November. Presentations of subcommittee discussions and selected goals to achieve were provided to the full council during the November 13, 2018 meeting. The council discussed and selected the specific recommendations to be included in the current report.

## **Recommendations**

*Goal 1: Engage every English learner in high-quality instruction and assessment designed to meet individual needs*

- No formal recommendations at this time.

*Goal 2: Foster highly effective educators of English learners*

- Request that the Delaware Department of Education conduct an assessment of the status of services provided to all Delaware English learners (ELs) in all districts and

charters to determine if there is a gap between the services provided and the federal regulations. If gaps are determined in the delivery of service to Delaware ELs, a formal request shall be made for funding to be appropriated to ensure minimum compliance of all federal regulations can be met.

*Goal 3: Mobilize the community and engage the public to support English learners*

- Request from the Delaware Department of Education the racial make-up of the current students enrolled in the Teacher Academy Career Pathway to better understand the diversity of the group and encourage this career pathway for English learner students.
- Request that the Delaware Department of Education conducts and releases a study on the number of EL certified teachers needed to appropriately serve all English learners.
- Request that the Delaware Department of Education provide a report demonstrating data for English learners currently enrolled in Delaware's World Language Immersion programs.
- Request the Governor issue an executive order mandating all state agencies to comply with the Civil Rights Title VI Limited English Proficiency requirements.

*Goal 4: Continue to refine English learner education through intentional analysis of data*

- Request that the Delaware Department of Education adopt a recognition program for schools, districts and/or charters that achieve significant growth for English learners.

## **Areas of Focus for 2019**

The Governor's Advisory Council on English Learners and the subcommittees have established the following areas for further exploration and focus during 2019.

*Goal 1: Engage every English learner in high-quality instruction and assessment designed to meet individual needs*

- Build a collaborative network that allows best practices to be shared and scaled across the state.

*Goal 2: Foster highly effective educators of English learners*

- Engage members of the General Assembly to develop a student-focused funding system that will provide districts and charters with the necessary funding to maintain an appropriate teacher-to-student ratio.

*Goal 3: Mobilize the community and engage the public to support English learners*

- Acquire a clearer understanding of the English learner standards required for pre-k and kindergarten programs (not just state funded).

- Research the family services for which English learner families are eligible based on their legal status. Moreover, determine the state agency services families can receive, and develop a toolkit that highlights the range of state and community services available to families (e.g. education, health, nutrition, employment training services).
- Develop a statewide language access plan similar to City of Philadelphia's EO No. 7-16 Citywide Policy on Language Access and the Office of Immigrant Affairs.

*Goal 4: Continue to refine English learner education through intentional analysis of data*

- Develop a recognition program for districts and charters that achieve significant growth for English learners
- Advise the Delaware Department of Education on the development of an annual English learner data report.