Dear Delawareans,

The role of school leaders is second only to teachers in achieving high student performance. School leaders are critical to effective schools and high student performance. School leaders must be strong advocates for their students and must establish a culture of academic excellence. This is particularly true for the leadership role. Effective school leaders are those who can create a positive learning environment for all students. School leaders who are strong advocates for their students are those who can create a positive learning environment for all students.

Sincerely,

Valerie A. Woodruff
Secretary of Education

For more information, contact Project Director Jacqueline Wilson (jowilson@udel.edu, 302-855-1621).
A growing body of evidence has highlighted this basic fact: behind excellent teaching and current schools is excellent leadership—the kind that ensures that effective teaching practices don’t remain isolated and unshared in single classrooms and ineffective ones don’t go unnoticed and unremedied. The Delaware Department of Education (DOE) in collaboration with Delaware’s universities, districts, and policymakers has supported a range of efforts aimed at significantly improving student learning by strengthening the standards, the training, and the performance of education leaders along with the conditions and incentives that affect their success. Delaware has been able to leverage reform in the area of school leadership with financial support from The Wallace Foundation. This report provides a summary of the work that has been accomplished to build Delaware’s Cohesive Leadership System—-to ensure that every Delaware school has great leadership.

**Why Delaware Needs a Cohesive Leadership System**

**School Leader Development for Practicing Administrators**

**School Leader Induction Program**

- Developmental Assessment Center
- State-Funded School Leader Mentoring Program
- Professional Development Coordinators

**Task Force Committees**

- Recruitment and Retention of School Leaders
- Enhancing Working Conditions for School Leaders
- Development and Retention of Minority School Leaders
- Professional Development for School Leaders
- Professional Development Coordinators

**Policy Recommendations**

As a result of the work of the task forces on recruitment and retention and enhancing working conditions for school leaders, DOE developed 20 policy recommendations for strengthening school leadership in Delaware, which were shared, discussed, and prioritized at the inaugural Policy and Practice Institute, June 2010.

**Annual Policy and Practice Institute**

The Policy and Practice Institute is held annually the fourth week in June. The purpose of the institute is to bring educators and policymakers together to look at issues related to Delaware’s Cohesive Leadership System and make the connections among state, district, and school policies and practices that influence student achievement.

**Pre-Service Preparation Program—Critical Friends Review**

- The University of Delaware and Wilmington College have revised both their master’s and doctoral programs in school leadership in response to the “Critical Friends” Review process to align school leadership programs with Delaware’s School Leader Standards.

**Collaboration Initiatives**

- Delaware Principals’ Academy
- Delaware Academy for School Leaders
- Delaware Association for School Administrators
- Delaware Department of Education
- Delaware State University
- Delaware State University: School Districts and Charter School Partnerships
- University of Delaware: Community College Initiatives

**Models of Distributed Leadership**

- Delaware has developed and piloted the Delaware Standards for School Leadership as a model for guiding school leadership programs with Delaware’s School Leader Standards.

**Delaware State University**

- Developed and piloted the Delaware Standards for School Leadership program in alignment to the Delaware School Leader Standards.

**Models of Succession Planning**

- Delaware has continued to support two models of distributed leadership: the Delaware Standards for School Leadership and the Delaware School Leader Standards.

**Effective School Leadership**

- Delaware has established, implemented, and maintained a framework for building leadership capacity and district learning goals.

**Principals who:**

- Use data and other means to diagnose shortfalls in student achievement.
- Participate in professional development opportunities that align with their individual learning needs.
- Support an evidence-based approach to school improvement.

**Districts**

- Participate in national study in three Delaware districts on the topic of distributed leadership in secondary schools.

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