

DSEA Legislative Matters

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In This Issue

- State of the State
- ESP of the Year
- Paid Family Leave
- Certificate of Eligibility
- State School Board

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Governor Carney Delivers State of the State

From the Newsroom of Governor John Carney

DOVER, Del. – Governor John Carney delivered his 2018 State of the State Address on Thursday in the House Chamber at Legislative Hall in Dover, outlining his priorities for strengthening Delaware’s economy, improving Delaware’s public schools, lowering healthcare costs for Delaware businesses and families, improving public safety, and investing in Delaware’s state workforce.

Full text of the speech, as prepared for delivery, is available [here](#).

“We won’t always agree on the solutions, but we can all agree on the goals,” said **Governor Carney**. “To make our economy stronger. Our healthcare system more effective. Our communities safer. Our state workforce strong and stable. Our children more ready to compete for the future. Working hard and working together, we can and we will get this done.”

Below are highlights from the Governor’s address:

ON EDUCATION:

“Working with you last year, we created the Opportunity Grants program to provide new resources to students who need it most. We reached thousands of students across 13 schools last year. Next week, we will be proposing additional funding for Opportunity Grants that will more than triple the number of schools receiving this support. Schools could use this funding for things like after school programs, reading interventions, or other resources to help students and teachers be successful.”

ON THE BUDGET:

“The budget smoothing task force is considering several good ideas to bring more fiscal discipline to our spending patterns. For the long-term, we need structural spending reform, just as we need structural revenue changes. I want to continue working with the General Assembly – Democrats and Republicans – to do both. And, this is important, we cannot build new ongoing spending on top of one-time revenues. It’s just not responsible, and we can’t allow it, no matter how compelling the cause.”

ON HEALTHCARE:

“Here’s the bottom line. We’re spending too much money on healthcare, and not getting the best results. We all need to come to the table – state government and hospitals most of all – and be part of the solution. The hospitals and other providers have been laying the groundwork for this effort for years. Now it’s time to make the hard decisions, and change the way we deliver healthcare.”

ON THE CITY OF WILMINGTON:

“I firmly believe that the strength of our state lies in the strength of our largest city. But as everyone here knows, we continue to face significant challenges in Wilmington that pose a threat to its long-term success. I’ve called Wilmington home for three decades. Tracey and I raised a family there. And I care deeply about its success. But we all have a stake in helping our city succeed. Its success is closely linked to the success of our state. That’s why, over the past year, Delawareans have seen this administration work with Mayor Purzycki and members of Wilmington City Council to devote unprecedented time and attention to making Wilmington strong again.”

ON WORKPLACE CONDITIONS:

“As part of our focus on improving workplace conditions for state employees, I directed Secretary Johnson to analyze our state’s current sexual harassment policy and training, and to recommend ways to improve it. In the coming weeks we will announce a series of changes to ensure that no state employee is made to feel uncomfortable or threatened at work.”

ON DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION:

“We have been working every day since February 2nd to make our prisons safer, and to address the conditions that contributed to that terrible tragedy. Based on the Independent Review Team’s recommendations, we reached an agreement to increase salaries for Delaware’s correctional officers. We have implemented significant investments in equipment, recruitment, technology and training at the Department of Correction. And we’re installing cameras at James T. Vaughn and other correctional facilities as we speak. I made a commitment that the Independent Review report will not collect dust on a shelf. It has not. And it will not.”

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Full text of the speech, as prepared for delivery, is available [here](#).

ESP of the Year – House Bill 134

House Bill 134 is an effort to fully recognize and celebrate the contributions Education Support Professionals provide to Delaware schools. Quite simply, the bill would establish an Educational Support Professional of the Year award program throughout the State.

Delaware does not currently have a statewide ESP of the Year award. There are several individual school districts who honor a district-wide ESP of the Year, but the award is still not one which the State has seen fit to establish.

With the hard work and advocacy of prime sponsors Rep. Earl Jaques and Sen. Dave Sokola, along with the 27 other Senate and House co-sponsors, DSEA hopes the General Assembly will provide for this long-overdue formal recognition of ESP's, who are critical to the success of every one of our schools.

We are pleased to report that last Thursday, HB 134 passed the House of Representatives unanimously! The next step is a hearing of the bill in the Senate Education Committee, hopefully next week. After that, we will begin lobbying Senators to pass the bill and send it off to the Governor for his signature.

Click here to view the bill- <http://legis.delaware.gov/BillDetail?LegislationId=25639>

Paid Family Leave- House Bill 3



Governor John Carney joined members of the General Assembly on Tuesday to call for passage of legislation that would offer 12 weeks of paid parental leave to state workers. The bill, **House Bill 3**, would allow state workers to care for their families without losing wages, and would make Delaware just the 6th state to offer the benefit to public workers.

Governor Carney hosted Tuesday's announcement in his Legislative Hall office as lawmakers returned to Dover for the second half of the 149th General Assembly.

"Delaware can and should lead on this issue," said **Governor Carney**. "This legislation is about

supporting our state workers – and creating a workplace that values family. Workers deserve time to spend with their families when their children are born, and this benefit will help us attract and keep good employees. Thank you to the state workers, members of the General Assembly, and advocates who are leading on this issue. I urge lawmakers to offer their full support for this legislation."

DSEA members Lori Sebastian, Appoquimink teacher, Tameka Mays, Colonial Paraeducator and her husband Warren Mays, Brandywine Teacher and Mary Pieri, Christina Teacher, along with their children attended the press conference and spoke out in favor of the benefit.

For complete coverage of their comments- click here

<https://www.delawareonline.com/story/news/politics/2018/01/09/carney-back-paid-parental-leave-state-workers/1014815001/> and http://www.wdel.com/news/delaware-seeks-to-become-th-state-to-offer-paid-parental/article_3bab4920-f580-11e7-a7aa-3b03db3324af.html

DSEA is proud to support this bill. Members who support the proposal can sign up for updates here: de.gov/paidleave.

Certificate of Eligibility- House Bill 286

Early in 2017 Delaware was alerted to a serious change in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act - in essence required the DOE to stop issuing emergency certification for special education teachers. In response, the Delaware Department of Education stopped issuing emergency certificates in the area of special education this past October in order to remain in compliance. Since that time, districts have had to seek Secretary of Education reviews to hire special education teachers who previously would have been eligible for an emergency cert.

HB 286 creates a Certificate of Eligibility that is fully compliant with federal requirements. Additionally, this bill allows educators that are willing to go through the full certification process for high demand positions in special education, the ability to keep their job while doing so.

The bill was released by the House Education Committee and is expected to be voted on by the full House of Representatives later this month, read the full bill here: <http://legis.delaware.gov/BillDetail?legislationId=26229>

State Board of Education Appointment and Confirmation- Wali Rushdan

Wali W. Rushdan, II was appointed to the State Board of Education by Governor John Carney and confirmed by the State Senate on January 17, 2018. His term expires in 2024.

After graduating from William Penn HS in New Castle, DE, Wali received an Associate's degree from Delaware Technical & Community College and then earned a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Delaware. He began his professional career as a mortgage loan officer, worked in the restaurant industry, and then served as a federal caseworker for U.S. Senator Tom Carper. He then entered Rutgers Law School, earned his Juris Doctor degree and is a member of the Bar in DE, PA, and NJ. Currently, he is employed as an Associate at Fox Rothschild in Wilmington, DE. He lives with his wife in Wilmington.

During law school, Wali was a Marshall-Brennan Constitutional law fellow, a student attorney in the Rutgers Camden Children's Justice Clinic, President of the Black Law Student's Association and Business Editor for the Rutgers Journal of Law and Public Policy. He served a semester teaching constitutional law to students from inner-city Camden, NJ which he states helped contribute to his deep appreciation for the hard work that teachers do every day to work within their resources to deliver quality education to

students. As a member of the Graduate Advisory Board for William Penn HS, he also gained an understanding of the unique challenges facing public school administrators.

Wali has a wide range of experience assisting organizations in volunteer and leadership capacities. Wali has organized large auctions benefiting students pursuing public interest law careers, as well as banquets supporting access to higher education for disadvantaged youth. He is a former co-chair and current board member of the Achievers Inc., a self-development and leadership training program for young men in Delaware. Wali is a former chairman of the Provincial Political Awareness Committee of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc., as well as a former board member for Mainstream Leadership LLC.

Access to quality education is precisely the reason that Wali came to Delaware in 1994. Thus, the opportunity to have a hand in ensuring public education in DE is held to the highest standards for this generation of students as a member of the State Board is a weighty honor that he is humbled to be given.