

# Education Funding Backgrounder:



## Why Do We Need To Update Delaware's School Funding System?

**80 YEARS OLD**

Delaware has one of the oldest systems in the country and is one of the last to undergo updates

**1/4 STATES**

Delaware is one of only 4 states that doesn't provide state funding for **English learners** and one of only four states that doesn't provide state funding for **low-income students**

**1/7 STATES**

Money **doesn't follow individual students**. Instead, Delaware is one of only seven states to still use a unit funding formula

**70 PERCENT**

70% of funding follows personnel, whose salaries are based on years of experience and degrees—**not the students served**

**1.4B SPENT ANNUALLY**

We are one of the top states in terms of education spending but spend less and have worse outcomes than neighboring states

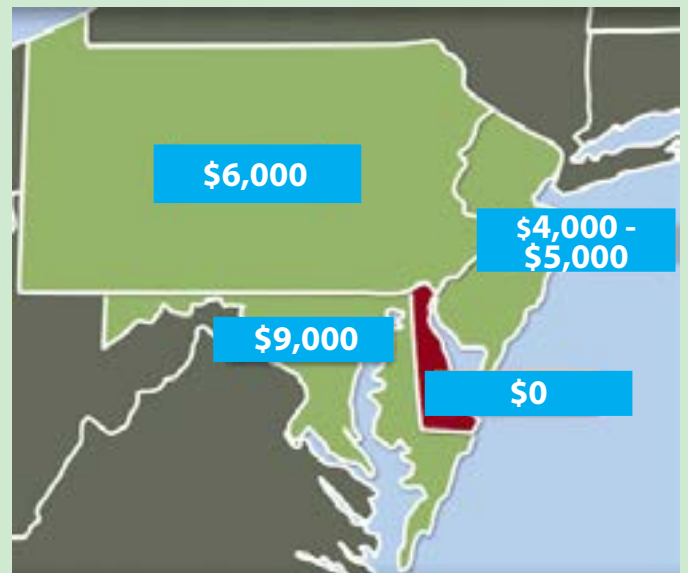
**10 PERCENT**

Less than ten percent of state funding provided to districts is truly flexible since units are mostly prescriptive



If Delaware adopted other states' policies for providing additional funds for individual students, each student would annually receive:

### ***Low-Income & English Learner Students***



## It's Time To Fix The System

- Governor proposed additional funding for student needs, an important first step toward full system change
- High-need student populations grow every year, overall and as a percentage of student enrollment
- Passed Senate Bill 172 to increase transparency of school-level funding data
- 30+ (and growing) organizations advocating together for change
- Opportunity to act before decision from pending lawsuit
- Increased interest from legislators



## Our Goals

### Increase Transparency and Engagement

- Grow the coalition
- Build public understanding of how the system works and how money is allocated
- Advocate for school-level funding data that is comparable across the state so that we can understand our state's investments in education

### Update Education Funding System

- Address how much funding is provided for students with greater needs, AND how well all funds are allocated, ensuring money follows students and meets their individual needs
- Learn lessons from other states and undergo the recommended process of **gradually transitioning** to a system where funding follows students and high-needs students get what they deserve

### Better Serve Delaware's Students

- Create the conditions that will allow for increased student learning
- **Great leaders** are attracted to flexible, adequate resources—and **great teachers** stay where leadership is strong. Flexible, student-based resources can be targeted, and spent innovatively to **address the holistic needs of diverse learners**. A simpler, transparent system allows taxpayer and **parent engagement**

## Principles For An Updated Student-Centered Funding System



Our Principles	Where We Want To Go
Money follows students	Each student receives the same guaranteed funding level as students with similar characteristics, regardless of what public school they attend.
Responsive to student needs	Each English learner, low income, and special education student receives additional, weighted funds.
Flexibility	Local leaders closest to the students are empowered to make decisions about resource use, rather than the state dictate how schools spend.
Transparency	Investments are easily understood by all stakeholders. Consistent reporting requirements show how money is used.
Predictability	Funding is sustainable and predictable. Districts and charters are supported with professional development, a gradual phase-in with planning time, and no one loses during the transition.

### Act Now

Visit our [website and subscribe \(http://bit.ly/2E66g3b\)](http://bit.ly/2E66g3b) to the Education Equity Delaware email newsletter for more information and opportunities to get involved.

### About Education Equity Delaware

A group of organizations committed to **excellent** and **equitable** education **opportunities** for all Delaware students—who believe the underpinning of an equitable education is the funding system.