

EDUCATION

COURSE CORRECTION: THE REPUBLICAN PLAN TO ENSURE OUR STUDENTS' SUCCESS

FACT: In the *Nations Report Card*, Delaware is the 4th worst performing state on the National Assessment of Educational Progress while being in the top 10 in spending (\$20,231 per student per DE DOE).

FACT: In Delaware, 17 schools have less than 1 in 10 students that can read or do math at grade level. Many of these schools predominantly serve minority students.

FACT: Delaware spends over \$20K per student, per year, and at many of the schools with the lowest performance, Delaware spends even more - over \$30K per student, per year!

FACT: Delaware has 19 school districts governed by elected school boards, along with 3 vo-tech high schools and 25 charter school entities. Public education for K-12 is more than 1/3 of the state budget at about \$2.1 billion dollars.

FACT: Over the past 8 years public school student enrollment has increased only 3.6% yet spending on education has increased 56.2%! The spending on a vague category of "total support services", whatever these are, has increased 49%.

FACT: Chronic absenteeism is defined as missing at least 1 of every 10 days of school and in 2023, chronic absenteeism was 21%. Districts have 400+ open teacher slots they are struggling to fill, even with big pay increases.

FACT: Behavior and discipline issues have dramatically increased in the classroom. Many schools are now practicing "restorative justice" rather than traditional discipline, which has led to a lack of consequences and increased violence and disruptions.

The Republican Party Plan

Make Schools Accountable to Parents,

Let Teachers be Teachers Again

As Albert Einstein stated, "*Doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results is the definition of insanity.*" We believe this describes the current situation in Delaware, when you consider that leaders: continue with mandates that aren't working; change the curriculum when teachers haven't yet learned the current one; throw more money at every problem.

GOAL: Each individual school will be a business that produces a product: well-educated students. The school's customers are the parents. Teachers are professionals, empower them! Let teachers be teachers again!

GOAL: Ensure each school has both autonomy and accountability so that the principal and teaching staff can customize plans and actions to meet the needs of their students. Minimize administrative overhead and redirect funds to education enrichment services.

GOAL: Implement the BOLD (<https://ronrusso.net/>). ensuring schools are accountable at the local level to the parents. Expand parental school choice, and engage in partnerships with business leaders, military officials, trade unions, and the hospitality industry.

GOAL: Lower the teacher to student ratio in our failing schools. Hire the correct specialized staff so that students facing challenges can be provided with the necessary specialized support.

GOAL: Pass the “Single Digit Proficiency Bill.” This legislation would require the 17 lowest-performing schools to develop and implement a 1 and 2-year improvement plan.

GOAL: Pass the “School Profile Bill.” This legislation would require the Department of Education to publicly post information about school and district performance.

GOAL: Implement processes to address discipline and non-educational issues. Students who have repetitive discipline issues need to be entered a separate program until their issues are resolved.

GOAL: Address mental health crisis. We need to do a better job of addressing the mental health crisis impacting our school children, especially after the COVID lockdowns. Focus on teacher training to recognize common signs of mental distress and support a plan to encourage and intervene with counselors while having a psychologist on call within the district. At home services and emergency services.

GOAL: Improve reading skills for students in grades K-3. Pass new legislation based upon the “Mississippi Literacy-Based Promotion Act (LBPA)” that focuses on improving reading skills for young students, and rapidly implement this program state-wide. Third graders who aren’t reading at grade level by the end of the school year must repeat the grade.