



Parents, educators cheer announcement of \$100 million 'Race to the Top' award to Delaware

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Parents and educators cheered today's announcement that Delaware will receive \$100 million in federal "Race to the Top" education money.

"I am thrilled that Delaware has been able to secure these funds," said Peter Barry, principal at the Brandywine School District's Lancashire Elementary School. "I know we've been working very hard in the state to prepare for this. Our goal is to be able to create a world-class education for all the children in Delaware. By getting these funds, it will help us achieve that goal."

Parent Dana Thompkins, who has a son at the Prestige Academy charter school in Wilmington and a daughter at Harlan Elementary School in the Brandywine district, referred to the announcement as "great news."

"They can use the money to help the students close the achievement gap, and to help the schools get different programs within the schools to help the schools and students," she said. "I'm glad they did get it."

John Mackenzie, a board member in the Christina School District, said the federal money is intended as a short-term stimulus and won't help the district with its long-term needs that have resulted in the board asking for an almost \$19 million operating referendum in May. But it could help out, nonetheless.

"I'm eager to see this partnership come about, and I think we're going to benefit," he said. "We're in very bad financial straits right now. We've got to find dollars where we can. The expectation is we're going to be a key partner in this. This is going to provide some short-term benefit."

Lake Forest School District Superintendent Dan Curry also hailed the announcement.

"A lot of work went into the application," he said of the state's request. "And now that that has paid off, that means a lot of work is going to go back to districts. It seemed like at one point, all the efforts and the buy-in was at a higher level. Now, all that work and planning will be pushed down to the school districts."

"We expect our share, and we don't mind the work at all," he added. "Hopefully, it's going to provide a better education for our kids, and that's what it's all about."

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