

# Governor Carney, Community Leaders Unveil Strategic Plan for English Learners

*Governor creates Advisory Council for English Learners, a key aspect of the plan, and appoints council co-chairs*

GEORGETOWN, Del. – Joined by community leaders and educators, Governor John Carney unveiled Delaware’s [English Learner Strategic Plan](#) at North Georgetown Elementary School on Wednesday.

To coordinate this important work, the Governor has asked a group of community leaders to help Delaware improve its delivery of services to English learners with the creation of the Governor’s Advisory Council for English Learners, one of the key recommendations of the plan. Governor Carney on Wednesday announced Javier Torrijos and Guy Danjoint as the co-chairs after visiting English learner classrooms at North Georgetown Elementary in the Indian River School District.

“The changing demographics of Delaware require us to think differently about how we provide learning opportunities for our students, particularly to our English learners, to ensure they acquire the language skills they need to be ready for success in college, career, and life,” said **Governor Carney**. “Delaware’s English Learner Strategic Plan helps lay the groundwork for us to improve our delivery of services to these children. This council will help keep us accountable to the strategies and goals outlined in the plan.”

“The English Learner (EL) student population has grown at a fast rate and the majority of the population is Hispanic,” said **Javier Torrijos, chair of the Delaware Hispanic Commission**. “It is very important that Delaware meets the educational needs of all EL students. These students not only

face a language barrier but also often come from low-income homes that present more challenges for them to obtain a higher education and eventually a pathway to a successful career. By implementing the EL Statewide Strategic plan we set out a pathway that will help the EL children have a successful future.”

Since 1997, the number of English learners in Delaware has increased by more than 433 percent. This school year, Delaware public K-12 schools serve nearly 12,000 English learners. The Indian River School District has the highest percentage of English learners in the state at 15.5 percent (nearly 1 out of 6 students). North Georgetown Elementary itself serves more than 500 English learners in grades 1 to 5 – 60.8 percent of its student body.

“To meet the needs of our students, we must coordinate services and collaborate with our community partners,” said **Mark Steele, Superintendent of the Indian River School District**. “Together, we can help every child succeed.”

The strategic plan, officially released at Wednesday’s event, was created “by the community for the community,” Governor Carney said, referring to the year-long work of a steering committee and guiding coalition that helped draft the plan. It represents the beliefs and goals of a number of organizations and stakeholders—all for the singular vision of increasing the likelihood of success for each of Delaware’s English learners.

***The plan’s goals include:***

- Engaging every English learner in high-quality instruction and assessment designed to meet individual needs.
- Fostering highly effective educators of English learners.
- Mobilizing the community and engage the public to

support English learners.

- Continuing to refine English learner education through data analysis.

Both Torrijos and Danjoint were a part of the original steering committee for the state's English Learner Strategic Plan and continued to contribute to its development on the guiding coalition. In the coming months, they will work with community groups, state agencies, and the administration to round out the body.

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*Photo caption: Governor Carney visits an English learner classroom at North Georgetown Elementary.*

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