

DISCLAIMER: This transcript is produced from Data Delaware podcast electronically; the conversion is being offered on a best-efforts basis.

- Dace Blaskovitz: Welcome back to Money and Politics in Delaware. Charlie Copeland always, always, always bring it out of the house. Tuesday night, Caesar Rodney Institute had a wonderful, I mean a moving speaker come to Delaware. Charlie will give you that recap again. And the tease coming out of the break was, why did Massachusetts and Minnesota do so much better than Delaware? If I remember, this is a question, Charlie, Minnesota did, because they... Excuse me. Yeah, Minnesota did because they embraced school choice. Massachusetts because, I won't say clandestinely, but clandestinely they brought accountability to the bureaucracy in the teachers. Did I remember that correctly?
- C. Copeland: You did. That's exactly right.
- Dace Blaskovitz: So pick up your story and run, baby, run.
- C. Copeland: Yeah, so, the good news is that it is possible for Delaware to get better. And between 1992 and 2009, so that 16 year timeframe, when you had Governor Carper, and Governor Minner, Delaware's test scores during that period of time improved at the third best rate in the nation on the National Assessment of Educational Progress, the NAEP, which is the nation's report card. So during the Carper/Minner administrations, Delaware's test scores improved, the improvement rate was the third best in the nation.
- C. Copeland: And what happened during the Carper and Minner administrations? Well, the then Governor Carper brought in charter schools, and they were somewhat unfettered. And so all of a sudden there was this competition, there was some school choice, and Minner actually at the same time there was a movement to bring accountability to teachers and start to publish, and there were some state tests and this kind of stuff were brought up, and accountability is actually being seriously looked at.
- C. Copeland: And of course Charlie Copeland was in the state Senate for six of those years, but that's an aside. And so during that 18, I'm sorry, that 16 year period of time under Carper and Minner, Delaware's educational achievement improved because we brought in, just like Minnesota, we brought in charters, and just like Massachusetts, we were focusing on accountability. And then we elected Jack Markell and John Carney, both graduates of elite universities in the northeast-*tony kinds of places*. And, by the way, charter schools got more and more regulated, and in many ways shut down, and the freedom to experiment went away. And accountability was thrown out the window as those two gentlemen needed the DSEA support.

DISCLAIMER: This transcript is produced from Data Delaware podcast electronically; the conversion is being offered on a best-efforts basis.

- C. Copeland: And so over the last 10 years, during Markell and Carney, our educational test results have plummeted to where Delaware is right back where it was in the early 1990s in educational achievement. So, we can do it, we've shown we can do it with Carper and Minner, but we also know that we can fail, like we failed with Markell and Carney. So, if we continue on the same trend that we're on right now with our educational achievement, and as you regularly point out Dace, John Carney has claimed that economic growth is his number one priority. But if we continue on the same trend, which has Delaware performing at the fifth worst economic performance in the nation, from the end of the Markell era through the Carney era, and that comes from the Federal Bureau of Economic Analysis.
- C. Copeland: If we continue underperforming, Delaware working families will continue to have to survive on less than \$24,000 a year, which is what one in four Delaware families earn, according to Carney's own Department of Labor. And so, Eric, at CRI dinner said, "How do you improve this? How do you change this trend? Well you *need to improve your quality of teachers*. And if you can't do that, the second thing you need to try to do is *improve the quality of your teachers*. If you can't do that, the third thing you need to do is try to *improve the quality of your teachers*."
- C. Copeland: And so how do you do that? Well, we've tried certifications, and the analysis shows that a certified teacher provides no better education than a non-certified teacher. We've tried paying more for master's degrees. And what we found is that a master's degree teacher does no better than a non-master's degree teacher. So he said, "Well, tenure, the longer the teachers in." What it turns is a teacher with five years of experience teaches and produces just the same outcome as a teacher with 25 years of experience. So, evidently what the state measures and tries to approve has no impact what so all."
- Dace Blaskovitz: But, but, but, if you pay those teachers, uh oh, you get a better quality individual in the seat. Is that fair?

**DISCLAIMER: This transcript is produced from Data Delaware podcast electronically;
the conversion is being offered on a best-efforts basis.**

- C. Copeland: That can be, if you let the school districts, and the schools, get rid of those teachers that are not performing, because if you're just going to pay a good teacher more, but leave the bad teacher in place, so here's one of the things that Eric said. If you have the best one out of four teachers, that 75th percentile teacher, but that teacher on average will bring their class of 30 people will earn \$400,000 more in annual income in aggregate. So, and this is statistics that have been studied across the board, so that those best teachers, the best out of four, if you have that teacher in your classroom, that class will earn \$400,000 a year per year into the future. But, if you have the worst teacher, that one out of 10, that bottom teacher, that teacher is subtracting \$800,000 per year from his class of 30 students.
- C. Copeland: So going from the fourth best, that that one in four, to the worst one in 10 is a negative drop of \$1.2 million a year for that classroom's earnings. So you have to be able to get rid of bad teachers. If you cannot, you will have underperforming economy and then you want to reward good teachers. And that, of course, is not what Delaware does at all. It's not what the teacher's union does at all. And then you look at the school choice piece of it. Well how does Delaware do on choice? Well, out of 226 public schools in the state, only 33 of them are choice schools. One out of seven. So in other words, six out of seven schools have fundamentally, they are not choice schools. They're just regular district schools, and if you live near there, you're going there unless you can escape to those one out of seven.
- C. Copeland: In addition to that, because of all the regulations that Markell and Carney have dropped onto these schools, there is no local control and they basically are dancing to what the Department of Education at Dover is requiring them. And if you want to see what that's done to Delaware's education, the Rodel Foundation, which is no member of that's a right wing conspiracy, you can go to their website at RodelDE.org/ataglace, RodelDE.org/ataglace, and you can see the ugly numbers as it turns to Delaware's educational achievement. And some of the verbiage, they try to put a good spin on it, but when you just look at the numbers and you see that 80% of our African American students are failing miserably, and you look at that, that's 25% of the population of the state of Delaware. And you want to get economic growth, those students deserve good teachers and the Democrat leadership out of John Carney and Jack Markell, and these are just the numbers, I mean, I'm just calling balls and strikes, has failed these students and these families miserably, and they ought to be embarrassed. They ought to be embarrassed.

DISCLAIMER: This transcript is produced from Data Delaware podcast electronically; the conversion is being offered on a best-efforts basis.

Dace Blaskovitz: Charlie, to go back to the very beginning, because we're going to run out of time and I do want to underline it in red and make sure that you tackle it a second time, but Delaware's growth correlates to its schools. Nations, communities, states all determine their future by their economic growth rate, which is determined by the education of its constituents. It is that straightforward. What causes growth rates? The answer is quality of the labor force. It's all about the schools. You got a minute and a half, put a recap to it.

C. Copeland: Yeah, that is absolutely the case. Again, the summary, as I started saying, better teachers will make you richer, and Delaware's educational system is designed and run so that you will not get better teachers and you can see the outcome. Delaware is getting poorer. As you started at the beginning, you said, "Look in 2000, the average income in Delaware was \$70,000. In 2016, it was \$58,000, a 17% drop. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Delaware's economy has been the fifth worst performing over the last four or five years. It is as simple as this, if you had a good teacher in the classroom, your economy grows faster, and this is across countries, across states, and the dollar value of a good teacher means that a student will earn 20% more per year for their entire lifetime.

Dace Blaskovitz: On that, let me jump in. His name is Charlie Copeland, just absolutely fascinating. Gosh, looking to next week, next week is, let's see, we bring back Dennis O'Brien with the China deal tentative. He'll give us the insights from China, Greg Lavelle stops back, the week after, Robert Fry, the most right economist. See you back next week for more money and politics in Delaware.