

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
Final Report: Delaware Child and Family Services Review
July, 2007

This document presents the findings of the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) for the State of Delaware. The CFSR assesses State performance with regard to seven child and family outcomes and seven systemic factors. The Delaware CFSR was conducted the week of March 5, 2007. The findings were derived from the following documents and data collection procedures:

- The Statewide Assessment, prepared by the State child welfare agency – the Division of Family Services (DFS);
- The State Data Profile, prepared by the Children’s Bureau of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, which provides State child welfare data for the years 2003 through 2005;
- Reviews of 65 cases across the three counties in the State; and
- Interviews or focus groups (conducted at all three sites and at the State-level) with stakeholders, including, but not limited to children, parents, foster parents, all levels of child welfare agency personnel, collaborating agency personnel, service providers, court personnel and attorneys.

Background Information

The CFSR assesses State performance on 23 items pertaining to the 7 outcomes and 22 items pertaining to the 7 systemic factors. In the Outcomes Section of the report, an overall rating of Strength or Area Needing Improvement is assigned to each of the 23 items. An item may be assigned an overall rating of Strength if 90 percent of the applicable cases reviewed were rated as a Strength. State performance on the seven outcomes is evaluated as Substantially Achieved, Partially Achieved and Not Achieved. In order for a State to be in substantial conformity with a particular outcome, 95 percent of the cases reviewed must be rated as having substantially achieved the outcome. A State that is not in substantial conformity with a particular outcome must develop and implement a Program Improvement Plan (PIP) to address the areas of concern within that outcome.

The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) has set a very high standard of performance for the CFSR Review. The standards are based on the belief that because child welfare agencies work with our country’s most vulnerable children and families, only the highest standards of performance should be acceptable. The focus of the CFSR process is on continuous quality improvement; standards are set high to ensure ongoing attention to the goal of achieving positive outcomes for children and families with regard to safety, permanency and well-being.

It should be noted, however, that States are not required to achieve these standards through their PIP. ACF recognizes that the kinds of systemic and practice changes necessary to improve outcomes are complex to implement and are not likely to have immediate results. Instead, States establish their own goals for their PIP. That is, for each outcome or item that is an area needing improvement, each State specifies how much improvement they will demonstrate, and determines the procedures for demonstrating that level of

improvement. Both the extent of improvement specified and the procedures for establishing improvement vary across States. Therefore, a State can meet the requirements of their PIP and still not meet the 95 or 90 percent requirements of the onsite CFSR.

The second round of the CFSR is intended to address the issue of State's current level of functioning with regard to child outcomes by once more applying the high standards and consistent comprehensive case review methodology. This is intended to serve as a basis for continued PIPs, addressing areas where the State still needs to improve, even though specific PIP requirements may have been achieved. The goal is to ensure that program improvement is an ongoing process and does not end with the closing of the PIP.

Because many changes have been made in the onsite CFSR process based on lessons learned during the first round and in response to feedback from the child welfare field, a State's performance in the second round of the CFSR is not directly comparable to their performance in the first round, particularly with regard to comparisons of percentages. Key changes in the CFSR process that make it difficult to compare performance across reviews are the following:

- An increase in the sample size from 50 to 65 cases.
- Stratification of the sample to ensure a minimum number of cases in key program areas, resulting in variations in the number of cases relevant for specific outcomes and items.
- Changes in criteria for specific items to increase consistency and to ensure an assessment of critical areas, such as child welfare agency efforts to involve non-custodial parents.

The issue of sample size is particularly relevant to Delaware, because in Delaware's first CFSR in 2001, only 39 cases were reviewed, compared to 65 cases in the 2007 review.

CFSR Findings

The CFSR identified several areas of exceptional performance in the State. Delaware meets the national standards for the national data indicators pertaining to the recurrence of maltreatment and the maltreatment of children in foster care. In addition, there was no recurrence of maltreatment in 95 percent of the applicable cases reviewed. Delaware also meets the national standards for three of the data composites pertaining to Permanency Outcome 1—Children have permanency and stability in their living situations. It is particularly noteworthy that Delaware demonstrated considerable improvement on the measure assessing the percentage of adoptions occurring in less than 24 months of the child's entry into foster care. The percentage for 2005 for this measure (42.7 percent) places Delaware in the top 25 percent of the nation. Another area of high performance pertains to the provision of services to meet children's educational needs (Well Being Outcome 3). Although the percentage of cases that were determined to have substantially achieved this outcome (90.5 percent) did not quite meet the 95 percent or more required for an overall determination of substantial conformity, it was very close to this goal.

With regard to systemic factors, Delaware was found to have a well-established and highly functional statewide information system, quality assurance system and training program for agency staff and foster parents. Delaware also was found to be responsive to the community in terms of seeking input from all relevant stakeholders regarding implementing the provisions of the Child and Family Services Plan. It also was apparent from the Statewide Assessment that the agency made concerted efforts to seek input from stakeholders in the development of that document.

Despite these areas of positive performance, Delaware was not in substantial conformity with any of the seven CFSR outcomes, or with two of the systemic factors—Case Review System and Service Array. One of the most salient issues that emerged from the CFSR as impacting performance on the outcomes and the systemic factors pertains to the operations of the courts. Case review findings and stakeholder interview information indicate that there are frequent extensions and continuances in scheduling and completing permanency hearings and termination of parental rights hearings that result in significant delays in achieving permanency for children. Three of the 14 cases with a permanency goal of adoption were rated as an Area Needing Improvement because of delays in scheduling termination of parental rights hearings.

Another area of concern identified through the CFSR pertains to the State's use of Alternative Planned Permanent Living Arrangement (APPLA) as a case goal for many children. Case review findings and stakeholder interview information indicate that this case goal often is being established for children younger than age 16, and is being established without prior diligent efforts to explore other permanency options, such as adoption and guardianship. An additional finding was that, once established, the case goal of APPLA appears to be rarely revisited in terms of its appropriateness for the child.

A third area of particular concern pertains to the CFSR finding that there is a severe shortage of services to prepare children for making the transition from foster care to independent living. Although there are independent living services available to children in the system, there are not enough to meet the need. This scarcity, coupled with the fact that contracted independent living services are not offered to children in foster care in Delaware until they are 16 years old, results in many children not receiving the services until they are at least 17, and in many other children leaving foster care without having received adequate independent living services. Prior to the provision of contracted services, it is the responsibility of the primary caseworker to offer independent living services to a child at age fourteen. Because most of the children with a case goal of APPLA will eventually be expected to assume adult responsibilities at a young age, the need for increased independent living services is critical.

These areas of concern are reflected in State performance on Permanency Outcome 1—Children have permanency and stability in their living situations, and Well-Being Outcome 1—Families have enhanced capacity to provide for children's needs. Less than 50 percent of the cases reviewed were found to have substantially achieved either of these outcomes. Performance on Well-Being Outcome 1 may be attributed to both the issues noted above and to an inconsistency on the part of DFS with regard to efforts to involve parents in case planning, and to maintain sufficient contact with the parents of the children in their caseloads.

Although the major concerns identified with regard to the CFSR findings applied to all three counties in the State, there were differences in performance across counties on some items. For several items, performance in Kent and Sussex Counties was higher than performance in New Castle County.

The specific findings with regard to the State's performance on the safety and permanency outcomes are presented in table 1 at the end of the Executive Summary. Findings regarding well-being outcomes are presented in table 2. Table 3 presents the State's performance with regard to the seven systemic factors assessed through the CFSR. In the following section, key findings are summarized for each outcome.

I. KEY FINDINGS RELATED TO OUTCOMES

Safety Outcome 1: Children are first and foremost protected from abuse and neglect.

Safety Outcome 1 incorporates two indicators. One pertains to the timeliness of initiating a response to a child maltreatment report (item 1), and the other relates to the recurrence of substantiated or indicated maltreatment (item 2).

Delaware did not achieve substantial conformity with Safety Outcome 1. This determination was based on the finding that the outcome was substantially achieved in 65.6 percent of the applicable cases, which is less than the 95 percent or higher required for a rating of substantial conformity. However, Delaware did meet the national standards for the data indicators pertaining to the absence of maltreatment recurrence and the absence of maltreatment of children in foster care by foster parents or facility staff.

Performance on Safety Outcome 1 varied across sites. The outcome was determined to be substantially achieved in 87.5 percent of applicable Sussex County Cases, compared to 75 percent of Kent County cases and 53 percent of New Castle County cases.

Key findings with regard to the case reviews were the following:

- An investigation of a maltreatment report was initiated in accordance with State policy in only 69 percent of the cases. However, performance with regard to timeliness of investigations was higher in Sussex County than in the other two counties.
- There was little incidence of maltreatment recurrence for the 23 applicable cases.

Despite the case review findings regarding timeliness of initiating investigations, most stakeholders commenting on this item expressed the opinion that the agency is effective in responding to maltreatment reports in a timely manner. Stakeholders' opinions were more varied with regard to agency effectiveness in preventing maltreatment recurrence.

Safety Outcome 2: Children are safely maintained in their homes when possible and appropriate.

Performance on Safety Outcome 2 is assessed through two indicators. One indicator (item 3) addresses the issue of child welfare agency efforts to prevent children's removal from their homes by providing services to the families that ensure children's safety while they remain in their homes. The other indicator (item 4) pertains to the child welfare agency's efforts to reduce risk of harm to children.

Delaware was not found to be in substantial conformity with Safety Outcome 2. This determination was based on the finding that the outcome was substantially achieved in 78.5 percent of the cases reviewed, which is less than the 95 percent required for a rating of substantial conformity. Performance with regard to this outcome varied across counties. The outcome was determined to be substantially achieved in 94 percent of Sussex County cases, compared to 82 percent of Kent County cases, and 68 percent of New Castle County cases.

Key findings with regard to this outcome were the following:

- Case review findings suggest that DFS is generally effective in providing services to prevent children's entry into foster care (item 3) and in assessing risk of harm (item 4). The concerns that were noted in the cases pertained primarily to an inconsistency in providing services to address the issues identified through the risk assessments.
- Stakeholder interview information indicates that many stakeholders perceive DFS as effective with regard to conducting safety and risk assessments, both initially and on an ongoing basis.

Permanency Outcome 1: Children have permanency and stability in their living situations.

There are six indicators incorporated in the assessment of permanency outcome 1, although not all of them are relevant for all children. The indicators pertain to the child welfare agency's efforts to prevent foster care re-entry (item 5), ensure placement stability for children in foster care (item 6) and establish appropriate permanency goals for children in foster care in a timely manner (item 7). Depending on the child's permanency goal, the remaining indicators focus on the child welfare agency's efforts to achieve permanency goals (such as reunification, guardianship, adoption and permanent placement with relatives) in a timely manner (items 8 and 9), or to ensure that children who have, "other planned living arrangements," as a case goal are in stable placements and adequately prepared for eventual independent living (item 10).

Delaware did not achieve substantial conformity with Permanency Outcome 1. This determination was based on the following findings:

- The outcome was substantially achieved in 42.8 percent of the cases, which is less than the 95 percent required for an overall rating of substantial conformity.
- The State Data Profile indicates that for Federal fiscal year 2006, the State did not meet the national standard for Composite 3: Timeliness of Adoptions.

The State did meet the national standard for composite 1: Timeliness and permanency of reunifications; Composite 3: Permanency for children in foster care for extended time periods; and Composite 4: Placement stability. Performance on the individual measures included in these composites is presented in the discussion of the related items.

Performance was fairly low on this outcome across all sites. Key concerns identified through case review findings pertain to the following:

- Inconsistent performance with regard to establishing permanency goals in a timely manner,
- Inconsistent performance with regard to efforts to achieve goals in a timely manner,
- The frequent establishment of a goal of APPLA for children under the age of 16,
- Questions regarding the “permanency” of APPLA placements and the lack of formal agreements with foster parents regarding the permanency of the placement, and
- A lack of independent living services to prepare children in making the transition from foster care to independent living.

Stakeholder interview information generally supported these concerns. However, some stakeholders suggested that the agency is effective in establishing permanency goals in a timely manner.

Permanency Outcome 2: The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children.

Permanency Outcome 2 incorporates six indicators that assess the child welfare agency’s performance with regard to (1) placing children in foster care in close proximity to their parents and close relatives (item 11); (2) placing siblings together (item 12); (3) ensuring frequent visitation between children and their parents and siblings in foster care (item 13); (4) preserving connections of children in foster care with extended family, community, cultural heritage, religion, and schools (item 14); (5) seeking relatives as potential placement resources (item 15); and (6) promoting the relationship between children and their parents while the children are in foster care (item 16).

Delaware did not achieve substantial conformity with Permanency Outcome 2. This determination was based on the finding that the outcome was rated as substantially achieved in 65.8 percent of the cases, which is less than the 95 percent required for substantial conformity. Performance on this measure did not differ substantially across the counties.

Key case review findings with regard to this outcome were the following:

- The agency was generally effective in placing children in close proximity to their parents (item 11), when relevant.
- There was a lack of consistency in ensuring sufficient visitation between children and parents, and between siblings who are placed apart (item 13).

- There was inconsistency with regard to agency efforts to support the bond between parents and children (item 16).
- There was a lack of consistency with regard to seeking and evaluating relatives as placement options (item 15) and maintaining connections between the children and their extended families, communities and religious/cultural heritage (item 14).

Although many stakeholders suggested that DFS makes concerted efforts to preserve the continuity of family relationships and connections for children in foster care, they noted that often there are insufficient resources to ensure that these efforts are successful.

Well Being Outcome 1: Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children’s needs.

Well Being Outcome 1 incorporates four indicators. One pertains to the child welfare agency’s efforts to ensure that the service needs of children, parents, and foster parents are assessed and that the necessary services are provided to meet identified needs (item 17). A second indicator examines the child welfare agency’s efforts to actively involve parents and children (when appropriate) in the case planning process (item 18). The two remaining indicators examine the frequency and quality of caseworker’s contacts with the children in their caseloads (item 19) and with the children’s parents (item 20).

Delaware did not achieve substantial conformity with Well-Being Outcome 1. This determination was based on the finding that the outcome was rated as substantially achieved in 47.7 percent of the cases reviewed, which is less than the 95 percent required for a determination of substantial conformity.

Performance on this outcome varied across sites. The outcome was rated as Substantially Achieved in 65 percent of Kent County cases and 59 percent of Sussex County cases, compared to only 32 percent of New Castle County cases. There was a slight difference in performance based on type of case. The outcome was found to be substantially achieved in 19 (45 percent) of the 42 foster care cases, and in 12 (52 percent) of the 23 in home cases.

Case reviews indicated the following key findings:

- DFS was generally effective with regard to caseworker visits with children. These tended to be of sufficient frequency and quality to meet the needs of the child (item 19), although the percentage of strength ratings for this item (86 percent) suggests that there is some need for improvement in this area.
- There was considerable inconsistency with regard to DFS effectiveness in assessing and meeting the service needs of parents and foster parents (item 17). However, the agency was effective in assessing and meeting children’s service needs.
- There was inconsistency with regard to DFS efforts to engage parents and children in the case planning process (item 18) and to conduct visits with parents that were of sufficient frequency and quality to further attainment of the child’s goals (item 20).

Well-Being Outcome 2: Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs.

There is only one indicator for Well-Being Outcome 2. It pertains to the child welfare agency's efforts to address and meet the educational needs of children in both foster care and in-home services cases (item 21).

Delaware did not achieve substantial conformity with Well-Being Outcome 2 based on the finding that 90.5 percent of the cases reviewed were determined to have substantially achieved this outcome. This percentage is less than the 95 percent required for substantial conformity.

Performance on this item was high for all sites. Only 9 (39 percent) of the 23 in-home cases were considered applicable for this outcome. The outcome was rated as substantially achieved in 7 (78 percent) of the 9 cases. The item was considered applicable for 33 of the 42 foster care cases. It was rated as substantially achieved in 31 of those cases (94 percent).

Case review findings indicate that the educational needs of children in foster care and in the in-home cases generally were routinely assessed and met. However, there were four cases in which the children's needs were not met, suggesting that there is room for improvement in this area.

Well-Being Outcome 3: Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs.

This outcome incorporates two indicators that assess the child welfare agency's efforts to meet children's physical health (item 22) and mental health (item 23) needs.

Delaware did not achieve substantial conformity with Well-Being Outcome 3. This determination was based on the finding that the outcome was rated as substantially achieved in 82.4 percent of the applicable cases, which is less than the 95 percent required for a determination of substantial conformity. Performance on this outcome did not differ substantially across sites or across types of cases.

Key findings were the following:

- Case reviews indicated that for the most part children's physical health needs were being assessed and addressed. However, in several cases, it was noted that children's dental health needs were not being met (item 22).
- Although many children in the cases were appropriately assessed for mental health service needs and were receiving the necessary mental health services, there were a few cases in which children's needs were not being met (item 23).
- Stakeholders indicated that the agency was generally effective in meeting children's physical health needs, but that access to mental health services is a general problem statewide, and is a particular problem for children in foster care.

II. KEY FINDINGS RELATED TO SYSTEMIC FACTORS

Statewide Information System

Substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Statewide Information System is determined by whether the State is operating a Statewide Information System that can identify the status, demographic characteristics, location and goals for children in foster care.

Delaware was found to be in substantial conformity with this factor. It was determined that the State has a well-established information system that can identify the status, demographic characteristics, location and goals for the placement of all children in foster care.

Case Review System

Five indicators are used to assess the State's performance with regard to the systemic factor of a Case Review System. The indicators examine the development of case plans and parent involvement in that process (item 25), the consistency of 6-month case reviews (item 26) and 12-month permanency hearings (item 27), the implementation of procedures to seek termination of parental rights (TPR) in accordance with the timeframes established in the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) (item 28), and the notification and inclusion of foster and pre-adoptive parents and relative caregivers in case reviews and hearings (item 29).

Delaware is not in substantial conformity with the factor of the Case Review System. The State was found to hold periodic reviews of cases at least once every 6 months, and usually more often. DFS also was found to have procedures in place for termination of parental rights proceedings in accordance with the provisions of the Adoption and Safe Families Act. In addition, a key area of strength for the State was that foster parents usually are notified about court hearings and reviews in a timely manner, and judges and review administrators ensure that, when foster parents attend the hearings or reviews, their views are heard.

Despite these strengths, the areas identified as needing improvement for this systemic factor pertained to item 25 (development of the case plan) and item 27 (timely permanency hearings). Key concerns were the following:

- DFS is inconsistent with regard to efforts to involve parents and children (when age appropriate) in the initial development of the case plan and any ongoing revisions.
- Permanency hearings are not routinely held in a timely manner due to difficulties with court scheduling and the granting of continuances.

Quality Assurance System

Performance with regard to the systemic factor of Quality Assurance System is based on whether the State has developed standards to ensure the safety and health of children in foster care (item 30) and whether the State is operating a statewide quality assurance system that evaluates the quality and effectiveness of services and measures program strengths and areas needing improvement (item 31).

Delaware was found to be in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Quality Assurance System. The State has developed and implemented licensing standards and other provisions to ensure the safety and health of children in foster care. In addition, the State operates a quality assurance system that is well-established, used at the State level for ongoing monitoring and feedback and functions effectively, although there are opportunities to strengthen its usefulness at the local level.

Training

The systemic factor of Training incorporates an assessment of the State's new caseworker training program (item 32), ongoing training for child welfare agency staff (item 33) and training for foster and adoptive parents (item 34).

Delaware was found to be in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of training. The State has a well-established, comprehensive, competency-based pre-service training program for all staff and clear requirements regarding ongoing training. The State also has a well-established training program for caregivers that is functional and effective, despite some opportunities for improving ongoing training for foster parents. Most stakeholders expressed the opinion that the State did not place children in a home until the initial training was completed. They also noted that the same training is required for relative foster parents as well as non-relative foster parents.

Service Array

The assessment of the systemic factor of Service Array addresses three questions: (1) Does the State have in place an array of services to meet the needs of children and families served by the child welfare agency (item 35)? (2) Are these services accessible to families and children throughout the State (item 36)? (3) Can services be individualized to meet the unique needs of the children and family served by the child welfare agency (item 37)?

Delaware was not found to be in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Service Array. The CFSR found that the array of services is not sufficient to meet the needs of children and families and that the accessibility of services varies considerably across jurisdictions in the State. A particular concern identified pertained to a scarcity of independent living services for youth, and the variability of access to existing independent living services across the State.

Despite these concerns, the State was found to have the capacity to individualize services to meet the unique needs of children and families served by DFS. A particular strength noted was the ability of DFS caseworkers to access various funding streams to pay for services that are not contracted for by the agency, but that are needed by children and families.

Agency Responsiveness to the Community

Performance with regard to the systemic factor of Agency Responsiveness to the Community incorporates an assessment of the State's consultation with external stakeholders in developing the Child and Family Services Plan (items 38 and 39), and the extent to which the State coordinates child welfare services with services or benefits of other Federal or federally-assisted programs serving the same population (item 40).

Delaware was found to be in substantial conformity with the factor of Agency Responsiveness to the Community. The general finding was that the State engages in ongoing consultation with key stakeholders to obtain their input regarding the goals and objectives of the Child and Family Service Plan. The State also includes the input of these stakeholders in the development of annual reports of progress and services. Finally, the CFSR found that there was extensive coordination between DFS and other Federal or federally-assisted programs to meet the service needs of the children and families served by the agency.

Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention

The assessment of this systemic factor focuses on the State's standards for foster homes and child care institutions (items 41 and 42), the State's compliance with Federal requirements for criminal background checks for foster and adoptive parents (item 43), the State's efforts to recruit foster and adoptive parents that reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of foster children (item 44), and the State's activities with regard to using cross-jurisdictional resources to facilitate permanent placements for waiting children (item 45).

Delaware was found to be in substantial conformity with the systemic factor of Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention. The CFSR found that the State has clear standards for foster family homes and child care institutions and that these standards are implemented in a uniform manner. In particular, the same standards are applied to both non-relative and relative foster homes. In addition, there was clear evidence that the State complies with Federal requirements for criminal background clearances.

The one concern noted with regard to this systemic factor pertained to the scarcity of foster and adoptive families and efforts to recruit a sufficient number of families to meet the needs of the children in foster care. Although the agency describes diligent recruitment efforts, the results of those efforts have not kept pace with the increased need for foster care placements. However, it was noted that the State is effective in using cross-jurisdictional resources to facilitate both adoptive placements and placements of children with relatives who live in other States. Some stakeholders expressed concern regarding the length of time required for the ICPC process.

Table 1. Delaware CFSR Ratings for Safety and Permanency Outcomes and Items

Outcomes and Indicators	Outcome Ratings			Item Rating	
	<i>In Substantial Conformity?</i>	<i>Percent Substantially Achieved*</i>	<i>Met National Standards?</i>	<i>Rating**</i>	<i>Percent Strength</i>
Safety Outcome 1-Children are first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect	NO	65.6	YES		
Item 1: Timeliness of investigations				ANI	69
Item 2: Repeat maltreatment				Strength	95
Safety Outcome 2 – Children are safely maintained in their homes when possible and appropriate	NO	78.5			
Item 3: Services to prevent removal				Strength	92
Item 4: Risk of harm				ANI	83
Permanency Outcome 1- Children have permanency and stability in their living situations	NO	42.9	Met 3, Did not meet 1		
Item 5: Foster care re-entry				Strength	94
Item 6: Stability of foster care placements				ANI	69
Item 7: Permanency goal for child				ANI	64
Item 8: Reunification, guardianship and placement with relatives				ANI	65
Item 9: Adoption				ANI	43
Item 10: Other planned living arrangement				ANI	60
Permanency Outcome 2 - The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved	NO	65.8			
Item 11: Proximity of placement				Strength	93
Item 12: Placement with siblings				ANI	80
Item 13: Visiting with parents and siblings in foster care				ANI	52
Item 14: Preserving connections				ANI	83
Item 15: Relative placement				ANI	84
Item 16: Relationship of child in care with parents				ANI	58

*95 percent of the applicable cases reviewed must be rated as having substantially achieved the outcome for the State to be in substantial conformity with the outcome.

**Items may be rated as a Strength or an Area Needing Improvement (ANI). For an overall rating of Strength, 90 percent of the cases must be rated as a Strength.

Table 2. Delaware CFSR Ratings for Child and Family Well Being Outcomes and Items

Outcomes and Indicators	Outcome Ratings		Rating**	Percent Strength
	<i>Substantial Conformity?</i>	<i>Percent Substantially Achieved*</i>		
Well Being Outcome 1 - Families have enhanced capacity to provide for children's needs	NO	49.2		
Item 17: Needs/services of child, parents, and foster parents			ANI	54
Item 18: Child/family involvement in case planning			ANI	52
Item 19: Worker visits with child			ANI	86
Item 20: Worker visits with parents			ANI	50
Well Being Outcome 2 - Children receive services to meet their educational needs	NO	90.5		
Item 21: Educational needs of child			ANI	90.5
Well Being Outcome 3 - Children receive services to meet their physical and mental health needs are met	NO	82.4		
Item 22: Physical health of child			ANI	81
Item 23: Mental health of child			ANI	89

*95 percent of the applicable cases reviewed must be rated as having substantially achieved the outcome for the State to be in substantial conformity with the outcome.

**Items may be rated as a Strength or an Area Needing Improvement (ANI). For an overall rating of strength, 90 percent of the cases reviewed for the item (with the exception of item 21) must be rated as a Strength. Because item 21 is the only item for Well Being Outcome 2, the requirement of a 95 percent strength rating applies.

Table 3: Delaware CFSR Ratings for Systemic Factors and Items

Systemic Factors and Items	Substantial Conformity?	Score*	Item Rating**
STATEWIDE INFORMATION SYSTEM	YES	4	
Item 24: State is operating a statewide information system that, at a minimum, can readily identify the status, demographic characteristics, location, and goals for the placement of every child who is (or within the immediately preceding 12 months, has been) in foster care.			Strength
CASE REVIEW SYSTEM	NO	2	
Item 25: Provides a process that ensures that each child has a written case plan to be developed jointly with the child’s parents that includes the required provisions.			ANI
Item 26: Provides a process for the periodic review of the status of each child, no less frequently than once every 6 months, either by a court or by administrative review.			Strength
Item 27: Provides a process that ensures that each child in foster care under the supervision of the States has a permanency hearing in a qualified court or administrative body no later than 12 months from the date the child entered foster care and no less frequently than every 12 months thereafter.			ANI
Item 28: Provides a process for termination of parental rights proceedings in accordance with the provisions of the Adoption and Safe Families Act			Strength
Item 29: Provides a process for foster parents, pre-adoptive parents, and relative caregivers of children in foster care to be notified of, and have an opportunity to be heard in, any review or hearing held with respect to the child.			Strength
QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM	YES	4	
Item 30: The State has developed and implemented standards to ensure that children in foster care are provided quality services that protect the safety and health of children.			Strength
Item 31: The State is operating an identifiable quality assurance system that is in place in the jurisdictions where the services included in the CFSP are provided, evaluates the quality of services, identified strengths and needs of the service delivery system, provides relevant reports, and evaluations program improvement measures implemented.			Strength
TRAINING	YES	4	
Item 32: The State is operating a staff development and training program that supports the goals and objectives in the CFSP, addresses services provided under titles IV-B and IV-E, and provides initial training for all staff who deliver these services.			Strength
Item 33: The State provides for ongoing training for staff that addresses the skills and knowledge base needed to carry out their duties with regard to the services included in the CFSP.			Strength
Item 34: The States provides training for current or prospective foster parents, adoptive parents, and staff of State licensed or approved facilities that care for children receiving foster care or adoption assistance under title IV-E that addresses the skills and knowledge base needed to carry out their duties with regard to foster and adopted children.			Strength

Table 3: (Continued)			
Systemic Factors and Items	Substantial Conformity	Score*	Item Rating
SERVICE ARRAY	NO	2	
Item 35: The State has in place an array of services that assess the strengths and needs of children and families and determine other service needs, address the needs of families in addition to individual children in order to create a safe home environment, enable children to remain safely with their parents when reasonable, and help children in foster and adoptive placements achieve permanency.			ANI
Item 36: The services in item 35 are accessible to families and children in all political jurisdictions covered in the State's CFSP.			ANI
Item 37: The services in item 35 can be individualized to meet the unique needs of children and families served by the agency.			Strength
AGENCY RESPONSIVENESS TO THE COMMUNITY	YES	4	
Item 38: In implementing the provisions of the CFSP, the State engages in ongoing consultation with tribal representatives, consumers, services providers, foster care providers, the juvenile court, and other public and private child- and family-serving agencies and includes the major concerns of these representatives in the goals and objectives of the CFSP.			Strength
Item 39: The agency develops, in consultation with these representatives, annual reports of progress and services delivered pursuant to the CFSP.			Strength
Item 40: The State's services under the CFSP are coordinated with services or benefits of other Federal or federally assisted programs serving the same population.			Strength
FOSTER AND ADOPTIVE PARENT LICENSING, RECRUITMENT, AND RETENTION	YES	3	
Item 41: The State has implemented standards for foster family homes and child care institutions which are reasonably in accord with recommended national standards.			Strength
Item 42: The standards are applied to all licensed or approved foster family homes or child care institutions receiving title IV-E or IV-B funds.			Strength
Item 43: The State complies with Federal requirements for criminal background clearances as related to licensing or approving foster care and adoptive placements and has in place a case planning process that includes provisions for addressing the safety of foster care and adoptive placements for children.			Strength
Item 44: The State has in place a process for ensuring the diligent recruitment of potential foster and adoptive families that reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of children in the State for whom adoptive homes are needed.			ANI
Item 45: The State has in place a process for the effective use of cross-jurisdictional resources to facilitate timely adoptive or permanent placements for waiting children.			Strength

*Scores range from 1 to 4. A score of 1 or 2 means that the factor is not in substantial conformity. A score of 3 or 4 means that the factor is in substantial conformity.

**Items may be rated as a Strength or as an Area Needing Improvement (ANI)