The State of Education in Delaware: Our Journey

2005

Delaware's schools are not meeting expectations.
- 70% of early childhood programs are rated mediocre or poor
- Greater than 5% high school dropout rate annually
- Delaware academic standards are not nationally benchmarked
- Minimum standards for entering teaching profession are far too low
- Lots of data, but not effectively used or accessible

2006

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2007

A coalition of education, government, business, and civic leaders throughout Delaware comes together to establish Vision 2015, a bold plan to provide a world-class education to all public school students in Delaware. Recommendations include:
- Invest in early childhood education
- Raise academic standards
- Improve teacher quality
- Build links to college and career

2008

Vision Coalition releases “A Vision for Education in Delaware in 2025” (ED25) plan to the public.
- More than 2,025 individual Delawareans engaged in the process

2010

Delaware makes early progress supporting business and families.
- Water Network of 50 schools focuses on developing high performing teams of leaders in schools
- Delaware establishes Stars rating and improvement system to support early learning

2011

Delaware earns $119M in federal student achievement on part of “Race to the Top.”
- Higher academic standards are in place
- Delaware fully implements policies and systems developed
- Improved teacher prep policies proposed
- Lower performing schools get more support and resources
- New approach to testing and accountability

2013

Real traction on the Vision 2015 plan begins to take hold.
- Delaware invests an additional $22M in early learning, and state review $49M as part of federal Early Learning Challenge
- Delaware high school dropout rate reaches 30-year low; public provides input on new “ED25” draft plan.
- Delaware win national recognition for its efforts.
- The Education Commission of the States awards Delaware the Frank Newman State Innovation Award for its improvement efforts
- The Data Quality Campaign recognizes Delaware for building one of the most robust student data systems in the U.S.
- National Council on Teacher Quality recognizes Delaware’s newly increased teacher preparation standards

2014

Delaware high school dropout rate reaches 30-year low; public provides input on new “ED25” draft plan.
- All of the state’s college-ready high school seniors apply to at least one institution of higher learning
- The Data Quality Campaign recognizes Delaware for building one of the most robust student data systems in the U.S.
- The Data Quality Campaign recognizes Delaware’s newly increased teacher preparation standards

2015

Vision Coalition releases “A Vision for Education in Delaware in 2025” (ED25) plan to the public.
- More than 2,025 individual Delawareans engaged in the process
- The plan builds on the success of Vision 2015 while acknowledging that much is still left to be done

2016

Global competition
- Advancements in technology
- Rapid pace of change
- Changing demographics
- Constrained resources

Building toward our future... because the world isn’t slowing down

Education does not exist in a vacuum, and the world isn’t going to slow down and wait for our kids to catch up. We are continuing our work through ED25 because we need to collectively address these issues so our students can be successful in a changing world. We have an exciting opportunity to design the future rather than watch it happen.
Collectively, we have a tall task: To prepare our students for careers, further education, and citizenship in a world we cannot predict. We have the will and ability to give every student a world-class education. Please join us as we take the next step on this journey.

Learn more and help. Join us.

Since it was created in 2006, Vision 2015 has grown from an idea, to a cause, to an agent for change. Shaped by teachers, parents, and leaders from across the state, Vision 2015 set a goal of building the best education system in the world for every Delaware student. The vision was emphatic and clear: We must demand excellent schools… no exceptions, no excuses. Together we must offer a great education for every student in Delaware. The resulting Vision 2015 plan was clear and inspiring, focusing on six major system improvements.

1. Establish a simple and equitable funding system
2. Invest in early childhood education
3. Develop and support high-quality teachers
4. Empower principals to lead
5. Encourage innovation and require accountability
6. Set sights high

In 2006, a broad cross-section of Delaware’s leaders came together with a singular goal in mind—create the best schools in the world for every student in Delaware. To accomplish this, the Vision 2015 plan was created by a 28-member Steering Committee, composed of educators, community leaders, business representatives, and leading public officials from across the state. Together, we’ve accomplished much of the original plan in less than a decade, motivated by the desire to see every student reach his or her potential and to ensure our public education system is improving every year and striving to be world-class.

Think about the children who entered first grade this fall. What skills will they need in the next ten years to prepare them for the world that awaits them? This question guides our next phase of work as we build on the foundation of the Vision 2015 plan.

We're motivated by this challenge and excited about the work we have done thus far in developing “A Vision for Education in Delaware in 2025,” also known as “ED25.” Thousands of Delawareans have weighed in on the draft plan, including students, families, educators, community-based organizations, policymakers, faith communities, criminal justice communities, higher education, and more. We look forward to sharing the final version publicly in early 2015.

As chair of the Vision Coalition of Delaware, I hope you will join us in our efforts to prepare every Delaware student for a lifetime of success.

Sincerely,

Ernest J. Dianastasis
Chair, Vision Coalition
Managing Director, CAI