

One year ago, **VISION 2015** invited you to
IMAGINE . . .



the best schools
in the world
for every Delaware student
... no exceptions ...
no excuses.

***Look inside to find out how we're
making it happen.***

VISION 2015 BUILDING A STRONG FOUNDATION

Highlights of Vision 2015's Progress

November 2005

Vision 2015 Steering Committee holds first meeting.

February–September 2006

Citizens engage in more than 50 meetings statewide on Vision 2015.

October 2006

Steering Committee releases the Vision 2015 plan to the public and launches www.Vision2015Delaware.org.

January 2007

Governor Ruth Ann Minner commends Vision 2015 in her State of the State address.

February 2007

Vision 2015 publishes its first e-newsletter.

February–April 2007

The News Journal publishes a 10-part series on Vision 2015 recommendations.

June 2007

Governor Minner's Executive Order No. 98 establishes the Leadership for Education Achievement in Delaware (LEAD) Committee.

June 2007

Delaware General Assembly passes Senate Joint Resolution 7, supporting Vision 2015 and the LEAD Committee.

June 2007

Delaware Early Childhood Council, which reflects the priorities of Vision 2015, is written into law.

June 2007

Delaware Business Roundtable invests \$2.9 million in Vision 2015 and the Rodel Foundation commits an additional \$2 million.

August 2007

First group of districts and schools joins Vision Network.

August 2007

LEAD Committee begins work on cost efficiency analysis and school funding study.

October 2007

Vision Network school administrators and teacher leaders begin executive leadership training program.

VISION 2015 ONE YEAR LATER

Delaware is building the foundation for a world-class education system — a foundation that is strong and adaptable enough to prepare our students to thrive in our rapidly changing global economy. Vision 2015 is a vital part of that effort.

The following report summarizes what the Vision 2015 Implementation Team — in collaboration with our education and business partners, public officials, and Delawareans statewide — has accomplished over the past 12 months.

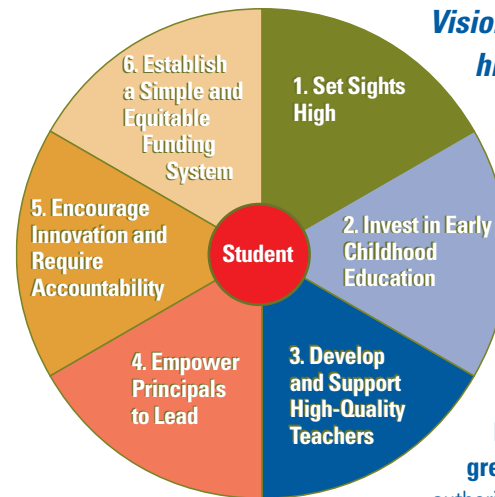
“It’s an exciting time for education reform in Delaware and across the nation. The planets are aligned. The energy is palpable as organizations, such as the National Governors Association, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and our own Vision 2015, have stepped forward to improve schools.”

— **Valerie A. Woodruff**, Secretary, Delaware Department of Education,
The News Journal, July 13, 2007

Putting World-Class Policies in Place. In her State of the State address, Governor Minner called the Vision 2015 plan “a bold, creative blueprint to support our goal of making our schools the best in the world.” Several actions are moving us closer to that goal.

The Governor included \$3.9 million in her FY 2008 budget recommendation for programs aligned with Vision 2015, including seed funding for an online, 24/7 virtual school and support for enhanced quality early childhood education.

The Six Building Blocks on Which Vision 2015 Is Based



Vision 2015 means setting our sights high, with challenging expectations for every educator, parent, and child.

It means **investing in high-quality early childhood education** for more children with the greatest need.

It means **developing and supporting great teachers** in every classroom.

It means **empowering principals to be great school leaders** with the knowledge, authority, and flexibility to get results.

It means **encouraging instructional innovation and more learning options** including school choice and involving families to support their children’s learning. And it means requiring accountability across the system, including for students and parents.

It means **establishing a simple and fair funding system** so each school can meet the learning needs of all of its students.

Vision 2015 in the News

Vision 2015 plan holds bold steps

Imagine the best schools in the world ... no exceptions, no excuses

VISION 2015
New view of schools starts with rethinking where money goes

Vision 2015 calls for engaging families in education

Schools are for parents, too

Challenge: Keeping top teachers teaching

The Governor's Executive Order No. 98 established the Leadership for Education Achievement in Delaware (LEAD) Committee (*see back cover*) to:

- ✓ help develop an easy-to-understand "performance dashboard" with at-a-glance information on how well individual schools, districts, and the state are meeting student achievement and other goals;
- ✓ produce a report by December 1, 2007 on how Delaware spends public education funds with recommendations on how those dollars could be spent more efficiently; and
- ✓ produce a report by March 15, 2008 that offers better ways of generating and distributing education dollars, including consideration of a weighted funding formula that accounts for individual student needs.

Both houses of the General Assembly unanimously passed Senate Joint Resolution 7, which offers support for Vision 2015 and encourages cooperation with the LEAD Committee.

Legislation has been introduced to implement the early childhood quality rating and improvement system, Delaware Stars for Early Success, as specified in the Vision 2015 plan. The General Assembly codified the Governor's Early Childhood Council, which has created a comprehensive plan to give every child a strong start, improve program participation and quality, and publicly elevate the importance of early childhood education.

"I want to choose the Delaware public school system for my children because it is the best choice in Delaware. And I know that is what [Vision] 2015 is trying to bring about."

— Carol King-Ries, mother of two school-age children,
Vision 2015 Release Event, October 17, 2006

Bringing "Best Practice" Teaching and Learning to Delaware Classrooms.

Beginning in fall 2007, the Vision Network of schools and districts is beginning to implement Vision 2015 recommendations and research-based instructional and organizational practices. Ten public schools have formed the first cohort of the Vision Network — two schools each from Appoquinimink, Capital, Indian River, and New Castle County Vocational Technical districts, as well as Kuumba Academy and MOT charter schools.

Leaders from these districts and schools will spend the 2007–08 school year:

- ✓ learning first-hand how high-performing schools and districts work,
- ✓ receiving training to help them improve organizational skills, and
- ✓ taking a hard look at their performance data and developing targeted strategies to meet their students' individual needs.

Making the Vision a Reality: A Message from the Vision 2015 Implementation Team

When we released the Vision 2015 plan on October 17, 2006, we understood that it was the beginning, not the end, of our work. The result of many months of collaboration by a team of educators, business and community leaders, parents, and other stakeholders, Vision 2015 set a clear and comprehensive course toward our goal of world-class schools for every Delaware student. At the same time, our plan presented strong evidence that this goal is of vital importance to the future of our children and our state. We were aware that we had to begin at once to make the Vision a reality.

We also believed that just as Vision 2015 holds everyone at every level of our education system accountable for results, our implementation team also should provide a public accounting of what we have done. Keeping in mind our true measure of success — increasing student achievement — we directed our first-year efforts toward necessary, realistic goals that will set a strong foundation for the systemwide changes to come.

Of course, our work has only begun. We look forward to continued progress for Vision 2015 in the years ahead until we have achieved our goal of a world-class education for every Delaware student ... no exceptions ... no excuses.

We Want to Hear From You!

Please visit www.Vision2015Delaware.org/tellus and tell us what you think is the most important issue in education today.

Find Out More

www.Vision2015Delaware.org
100 W. 10th Street, c/o Suite 4
Wilmington, DE 19801
302-504-5240

Training will be provided by the University of Delaware Academy for School Leadership and the acclaimed consulting firm Focus on Results. Leaders also will investigate best practices in the United States and abroad.

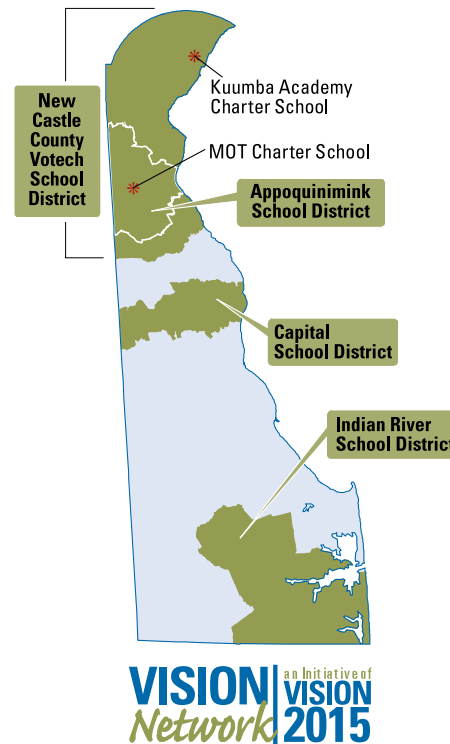
Beginning with the 2008–09 school year, districts and schools will receive grants and increased flexibility to implement Vision 2015 recommendations.

So far, nearly 80 percent of districts and about half of the charter schools have expressed interest in the Vision Network. We look forward to the day when all of Delaware’s districts and public schools will be involved in the Network.

Building Partnerships to Support World-Class

Transformations. Vision 2015 has generated substantial investments from public and private sources (*see box*) to implement its recommendations in our schools.

- ✓ Governor Minner included \$3.9 million in her FY 2008 budget to support initiatives aligned with Vision 2015, including the launch of the Delaware Virtual School and early childhood education.
- ✓ Twenty members of the Delaware Business Roundtable committed \$2.9 million to Vision 2015 with specific support for the cost efficiency study and launch of the Vision Network, Delaware Virtual School, and Delaware Stars for Early Success program.
- ✓ The Rodel Foundation also doubled its initial investment in Vision 2015, for a total contribution of more than \$4 million to date. Funds will be used for best practice research, the launch of the Vision Network, seed grants, and operational support to Vision 2015 and LEAD.
- ✓ Generous funding and support also has been committed by JPMorgan Chase Foundation, The Wallace Foundation, the Delaware Department of Education, and the University of Delaware. These investments primarily will support the Vision Network.



The Vision Network of districts and schools will bring “best practice” teaching and learning to Delaware classrooms.

Generous Supporters of Vision 2015 Include:

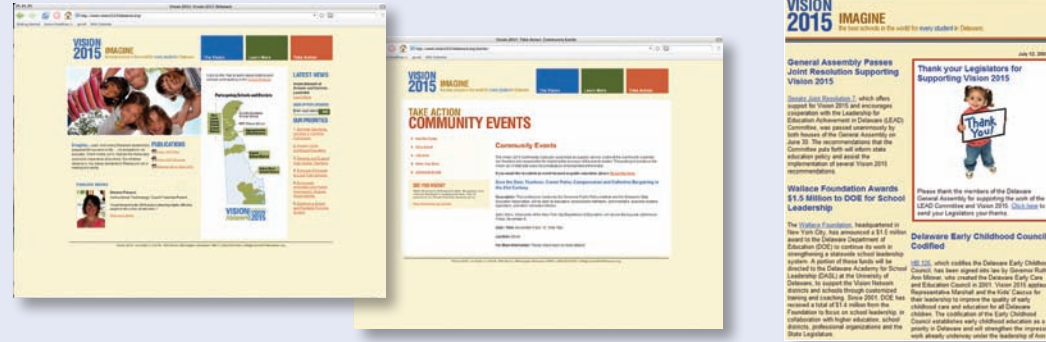
- AAA Mid-Atlantic
- AstraZeneca
- Bank of America
- Barclays Bank Delaware
- Blue Cross Blue Shield of Delaware
- CAI
- Christiana Care Health Services
- Citizens Bank
- Colonial Parking, Inc.
- Delaware Department of Education
- Delmarva Power
- Dover Downs, Inc.
- DuPont
- Glenmede Trust Company, N.A.
- Hercules Incorporated
- JPMorgan Chase Foundation
- McConnell Development, Inc.
- Peninsula Capital Advisors, LLC
- PNC Foundation
- Rodel Foundation of Delaware
- The Schell Trust, Ltd.
- University of Delaware
- Verizon Delaware, Inc.
- The Wallace Foundation
- WSFS Foundation

“[The Vision Network is] going to make the schools in Delaware take a good look at themselves and see where they want to be in 2015. Some people don’t like change, but I love it. There are times when you need a breath of fresh air.”

— **Mark Steele**, Indian River High School principal,
The News Journal, August 15, 2007



Informing and Engaging the Public through Our Website and E-Newsletter



Generating Awareness and Support for Education Excellence. Since the release of the Vision 2015 report in October 2006, we have held more than 30 forums and presentations with business, community, and parent groups to talk about public education in Delaware and how Vision 2015 can accelerate student achievement. We have met with the Delaware PTA, Delaware State Education Association, county and state Chambers of Commerce, the Delaware School Boards Association, several Rotary International groups, the Metropolitan Wilmington Urban League, and the Delaware Teachers Network Leadership Institute, among many other local and national groups.

“The whole state needs to understand the significance and importance of education. I think Vision 2015 really provides the opportunity. I think it’s a fully-defined, complete vision of what can be done. For that reason, I think we need to stay very focused and engaged in it.”

— **Michael Castle**, U. S. Representative (R-Delaware)

We also inform and engage the public with our Vision 2015 website, www.Vision2015Delaware.org. Interactive features on the site include community event postings and an opportunity to “share your story,” plus surveys and videos. Our twice-monthly e-newsletter provides updates on Vision 2015 and education news from around the state and nation to more than 3,000 readers in Delaware and across the country.

Our website and e-newsletter report on best practices in Delaware classrooms — for example, schools that benefit from extended learning time or family-school relations coordinators. Our electronic media also feature perspectives on public education in Delaware from parents and teachers.

Delaware media have been supportive in helping inform the public about Vision 2015. In spring 2007, a 10-part series in *The News Journal* on research and best practices related to Vision 2015 generated high reader response and invigorated public interest in transforming the state education system. The first meeting of the LEAD Committee and the launch of the Vision Network also prompted media coverage nationally and throughout our state.

VISION 2015 WHAT'S NEXT?

Building on a Strong Foundation. Over the past year, we laid many of the planks needed for a world-class school system in Delaware, but we still have a number of critical areas to address. Tackling these will be our task in the coming years, and by October 2008, we plan to report specifically on:

- ✓ Recommendations of the LEAD Committee to improve the way the state raises, distributes, and allocates its K–12 public education dollars in order to accelerate student achievement.
- ✓ Progress of Vision Network district and charter school leaders in implementing practices that improve student achievement.
- ✓ Seed funding available to districts and schools for such projects.
- ✓ Launch of the Delaware Virtual School to provide online instruction and more real-world learning opportunities for all students, no matter where they live.
- ✓ Expansion of the Delaware Stars for Early Success program, and its progress in raising the quality of early childhood education providers.
- ✓ Initiatives that support innovative and better ways to recruit, pay, and retain great teachers.
- ✓ Creation of a user-friendly “performance dashboard” that all schools will use to report on performance in such key areas as raising student achievement; interacting with families; managing funds; and increasing satisfaction among parents, students, and educators.

“If we continue to do what we’ve always done, we will continue to get the same results. That’s not good enough.”

— **Barbara Grogg**, President, Delaware State Education Association, Vision 2015 Release Event, October 17, 2006

- ✓ A doubling of parent leadership training, through the Parent Information Resource Center, to help parents become better advocates for their children’s learning and for Delaware’s schools.
- ✓ A statewide definition of effective family and community engagement, intended to improve how we can work together to support Delaware’s students.
- ✓ Benchmarking of our standards against those in high-performing countries to ensure that students’ sights are set high and that they are given the support they need to meet those standards.
- ✓ New and increased investments in Vision 2015 from public and private funders, both nationally and locally.
- ✓ Increased public awareness about our schools and the steps required to move Delaware’s student performance from its current state ranking of No. 27 in the United States to the best in the world.

“Part of what Vision 2015 tries to do is say we’re going to put decision making down to the principal — down to that local school level. An expectation that the principal will involve the faculty, involve the parents. And, to the extent that they do that, we will hold them all accountable. So responsibility and accountability go hand in hand.”

— **Thomas R. Carper**, U. S. Senator (D-Delaware)



We Want to Hear From You!

Please visit www.Vision2015Delaware.org/tellus and tell us what you think is the most important issue in education today.

Find Out More

www.Vision2015Delaware.org
 100 W. 10th Street, c/o Suite 4
 Wilmington, DE 19801
 302-504-5240

Vision 2015 Steering Committee

A broad-based, 28-person group that led the development of Vision 2015 in 2005–06. (Titles reflect 2006 affiliation.)

Jean W. Allen

President, Delaware State Board of Education

H. Raye Jones Avery*

Executive Director, Christina Cultural Arts Center

Peter Basile

Executive Director, Delaware Association of School Administrators

Lisa Blunt-Bradley

President, Metropolitan Wilmington Urban League

Kevin E. Carson*

Superintendent, Woodbridge School District

Ann C. Case

Policy Analyst, Delaware State Board of Education

Jennifer W. Davis

Director, Delaware Office of Management and Budget

Ernest J. Dianastasis

Managing Director, CAI

Cynthia L. DiPinto*

Wood, Byrd & Associates

Nancy A. Doorey

Education Chair, Metropolitan Wilmington Urban League

Susan Francis

Executive Director, Delaware School Boards Association

Barbara Grogg

President, Delaware State Education Association

Kevin Hall (ex officio)

Chief Operating Officer, The Broad Foundation

Paul A. Herdman*

President and CEO, Rodel Foundation of Delaware

Dorothy R. Jacobson

Vice President, Rodel Foundation of Delaware

Dennis L. Loftus

Director, Delaware Academy for School Leadership

Tony J. Marchio

Superintendent, Appoquinimink School District

Robert W. Rescigno

Former Director, MBNA Foundation Scholars Program

Daniel Rich*

Provost, University of Delaware

Jaime "Gus" Rivera

Director, Delaware Division of Public Health

Marvin N. "Skip" Schoenhals*

Chairman, WSFS Bank

Dianne G. Sole

Superintendent, Polytech School District

Robert G. Sutton

Senior Vice President, Bank of America

John H. Taylor, Jr.*

Executive Director, Delaware Public Policy Institute

William M. Topkis

Delaware Small Business Alliance

Howard Weinberg*

Executive Director, Delaware State Education Association

James A. Wolfe

President and CEO, Delaware State Chamber of Commerce

Valerie A. Woodruff*

Secretary, Delaware Department of Education

**Indicates member of the Vision 2015 Implementation Team*

Leadership for Education Achievement in Delaware (LEAD) Committee

Established by Governor Ruth Ann Minner, Executive Order No. 98

Marvin N. "Skip" Schoenhals

Chairman, WSFS Bank (Chair)

Valerie A. Woodruff

Secretary, Delaware Department of Education (Vice Chair)

Jean W. Allen

President, Delaware State Board of Education

H. Raye Jones Avery

Executive Director, Christina Cultural Arts Center

Kevin E. Carson

Superintendent, Woodbridge School District; Past President, Delaware Chief School Officers Association

Sally C. Coonin

Education and Policy Advisor, Office of Governor Ruth Ann Minner

Jennifer W. Davis

Director, Delaware Office of Management and Budget

Carol A. DeSantis

Secretary, Delaware Department of Services for Children, Youth and Their Families

Barbara Grogg

President, Delaware State Education Association

Paul A. Herdman

President and CEO, Rodel Foundation of Delaware

Frank R. Ingram, Jr.

Board Member, Polytech School District

Vincent A. Lofink

Education Chair, House Education Committee, Delaware General Assembly

Gregory Meece

Director, Delaware Charter School Network; School Director, Newark Charter School

G. Scott Reihm

Executive Director, Delaware Association of School Administrators

Daniel Rich

Provost, University of Delaware

David P. Sokola

Education Chair, Senate Education Committee, Delaware General Assembly

Connie Bond Stuart

Chairman, President and CEO, PNC Bank, Delaware

William H. Willis

President, Willis Chevrolet, Inc.