

**VISION
2015**

Seizing THE Moment



**5 YEAR ANNIVERSARY
REPORT**



OCTOBER 2011

Small State, Big Job

Nearly two years after placing first in the federal Race to the Top grant competition, Delaware is in the midst of turning our public education system into one that our children can count on to prepare them for the future. Our opportunity for reform is unprecedented, yet putting the state's ambitious plan into place is a challenge. Are we up to it?

In 2009 we designed the plan, and in 2010 we laid the groundwork. Now in 2011 and 2012, it's time to implement these plans, perhaps the hardest work of all. All the efforts ahead are important, but a few immediate priorities take precedence for the coming year:

"Education is everything in today's globally competitive environment."

— Delaware Governor Jack Markell
*State of the State Address,
January 2011*

Teacher Evaluation System

Determining how student performance factors into the evaluation and development of teachers and principals is difficult, but necessary. The extension granted by the U.S. Department of Education to fine-tune the Delaware Performance Appraisal System (DPAS II) will last until spring 2012. Getting it right is the foundation for making sure we have the best educators possible in front of every child in the state. It's also critical to prevent the loss of more than \$10 million in federal funding.

Early Childhood Education

We must start early if all of our students are to succeed. Effective implementation of Governor Markell's \$22 million commitment to strengthen early childhood education is crucial — not only for meeting the needs of our youngest learners, but for bolstering the K–12 work underway through Race to the Top. Our goals are to increase participation in the Delaware Stars quality rating program, improve training and compensation for early childhood providers, strengthen the alignment of services, and enable every child to arrive at school ready to learn.

Partnership Zone Schools

Making sure that these schools can dramatically change the lives of the children they serve is crucial, as both the state and the United States have placed big bets on the importance of turning around low-performing schools. Ten "PZ" schools will receive millions of dollars to redesign themselves in ways that will dramatically improve student performance. We need to do everything we can to help these schools and prove that change is possible.

Flexible Funding

We need a fair, flexible, and student-focused funding system. It is imperative to re-examine how we spend limited public education dollars and direct those resources to better support every Delaware student. Our current "unit count" system that served our state for nearly 70 years no longer meets student needs. Our goals are to provide school leaders with the flexible funding they need to support continuous improvement, encourage innovation and collaboration, and hire and retain the best teachers.



Vision 2015 is a coalition of public, private, and civic leaders from across the state united around a common purpose: to provide an excellent education for all of Delaware's children — no exceptions, no excuses. Since it was created in 2006, Vision 2015 has grown from an idea to a cause to an effective agent of change. This report is a statement of Vision 2015 priorities and of the progress that all of us — the state, our educators, our business and philanthropic communities, our lawmakers, our parents and citizens, and our students — have made to help create the best schools in the world for Delaware's children. We use the iconic image of the apple as an indicator of educational progress. The fuller the apple, the closer we have come to our goals.

1 Set Sights High as Delaware redesigns assessments, curriculum, and standards to align them with the world's best, while preparing students for college and careers.



PROGRESS

- ✓ Adopted international **Common Core Standards** and began training with more than 9,000 teachers.
- ✓ Launched the online, adaptive **Delaware Comprehensive Assessment System (DCAS)** to measure student progress, improve instruction, and provide quick information to teachers, parents, and students.
- ✓ Offered the **SAT** free to all 11th grade public school students, plus college courses for high school students and pre-AP courses for middle schoolers.
- ✓ Employed **data systems** to help teachers improve instruction so students learn well: placed 29 data coaches in schools and began using video feedback for teachers.

WORK AHEAD

- Join other states in adopting a **"Common Core platform"** to help teachers and students track their progress.
- Complete **preschool to college coordination efforts** currently underway to share student data among state agencies and higher education institutions.
- Complete **statewide education portal** with information on pre-K programs, K–12 schools, and higher education to help families make informed choices.
- Provide **meaningful additional time** for academics, enrichment, and teacher collaboration and planning.
- Provide online learning opportunities with **relevant, challenging coursework** that allow students to work at their own pace.
- Develop more **concrete measures of college readiness** and increase the rigor of graduation requirements.



DCAS: HOW DELAWARE IS RAISING THE BAR

During the 2010–11 school year, Delaware students took the Delaware Comprehensive Assessment System (DCAS), a first-of-its-kind computer testing system that tracks students' growth throughout the year. DCAS assesses students on more rigorous, nationally benchmarked standards, raising the bar on student achievement statewide. Despite an initial dip in scores, DCAS provides a clearer picture of how Delaware students compare with peers in the United States and abroad, critical to preparing our students to compete in the global economy.



2 Invest in Early Childhood Education (ECE) so that every child enters kindergarten ready to learn. Make high-quality early childhood education widely available, especially to at-risk children.



PROGRESS

- ✓ **\$22 million investment** in early childhood education passed by Delaware legislature to improve support programs and reimbursement for ECE providers as they work to increase their quality ratings.
- ✓ **Delaware Stars for Early Success program** improved early childhood education in more than 30 percent of centers serving more than 80 percent of high-need children.
- ✓ More **Early Childhood Centers** earned excellent state ratings.
- ✓ Support of **public-private partnerships**, such as the newly revamped **Delaware Early Childhood Council** that aims to provide enrichment to children from birth through age eight.

WORK AHEAD

- **Professionalize the field** for early childhood educators by creating career pathways and improving pay.
- **Strengthen coordination** among child services agencies, early childhood providers, and schools.
- Establish a **kindergarten readiness system** to help tailor instruction.
- **Increase family and community engagement.**

EARLY LEARNING CHALLENGE FUND

On June 30, 2011, Delaware's legislature approved Governor Markell's \$22 million investment proposal for early childhood education. The money helps subsidize child care and offers incentives for child care providers to earn quality ratings. It also positioned Delaware to compete for the federal Early Learning Challenge Fund, also known as "Baby Race to the Top."

In July 2011, Delaware, along with 36 states and the District of Columbia, formally announced its intention to apply for the federal grant. In October, Delaware crafted its application with the help of hundreds of stakeholders, including the Department of Education, Children's Department, Health and Social Services Department, child care providers, nonprofit organizations, foundations, health care groups, and parents and families. The state also established seven Early Childhood Action Teams (ECATs) to assess how Delaware stacks up against the federal government's criteria and shape the plan accordingly.

Delaware could win up to \$50 million of the Early Learning Challenge Fund's \$500 million in grants to improve learning and development opportunities for low-income children. Providing every Delaware child an excellent start is critical to help the state reach its education goals.



3 Develop and Support High Quality Teachers

in every Delaware school and provide the professional support they need to succeed.



PROGRESS

- ✓ With the help of 300 educators, further developed the **Delaware Performance Appraisal System (DPAS II)** to measure student growth for use in teacher evaluations.
- ✓ Trained educators in the **Vision Network's** 26 schools to improve school leadership, instruction, and student achievement.
- ✓ Recruited more teachers to the **Delaware Teaching Fellows** program, which places highly qualified teachers in high-need schools.
- ✓ Established Delaware as an official **Teach for America** region with corps members teaching more than 3,000 students in high-need schools.
- ✓ Expanded **alternative certification paths** for teachers of hard-to-staff subject areas, such as math, and those joining high-need schools.
- ✓ Launched **STEM residency** at the University of Delaware to train and place science and math teachers in high-need schools.

WORK AHEAD

- Ensure that **DPAS II** contains appropriate measures for all subjects and all grades.
- Support programs such as **The New Teacher Project's Delaware Teaching Fellows** to ensure that high-need students get outstanding teachers.
- Create new teacher career paths such as **mentor** and **master teacher**.
- Help advance legislation encouraging the **earlier hiring and retention of great teachers**.
- **Measure and report the effectiveness of educator preparation programs** and provide incentives to expand successful ones.



“Never before in my 28-year history of working in our state have I felt such a sense of hope.”

— 2011 Delaware State Teacher of the Year Joe Masiello



4 Empower Principals to be great leaders with the knowledge, authority, and flexibility to get results.



PROGRESS

- ☑ Launched the **Delaware Leadership Project** to offer alternative certification to aspiring principals.
- ☑ Hired **development coaches** to help principals evaluate educators.
- ☑ Increased use of **School Administration Manager (SAM)** programs in schools to help principals better manage their time.
- ☑ Worked with **26 principals and their leadership teams** in Vision Network schools.

WORK AHEAD

- ☐ Give principals more **hiring and budgeting freedom**.
- ☐ **Utilize DCAS results** on student achievement growth to inform teacher evaluation, professional development, and teacher promotion and removal.
- ☐ **Provide leadership coaches** to work with 40 novice principals and principals in high-need schools.
- ☐ Begin evaluating educators based on **DPAS II**.

“As a principal, I’ve learned to share decision-making with teachers ... for the betterment of our kids’ education, it was the right thing to do.”

— Mark Steele, Principal, Indian River High School



5 Encourage Educational Innovation and Require Accountability, engaging educators, families, legislators, businesses, and the public.



PROGRESS

- ✓ Offered bonuses to **attract and retain highly effective educators** to teach hard-to-staff subjects such as math.
- ✓ Provided **professional development support**.
- ✓ Continued to support programs like the **Learning Link's Delaware Parent Leadership Institute (DPLI)** that trains parents to better understand school data.
- ✓ Since 2006, the private sector has supported and **invested \$16 million to launch the Vision Network**, conduct cost efficiency studies, and strengthen ECE programs.
- ✓ **Gave \$150,000 in academic achievement awards** to ten schools for academic success of low-income students.

WORK AHEAD

- Continue to help schools **implement turnaround plans**.
- **Clarify consequences** for schools that do not improve by the Partnership Zone deadline.
- Expand access to **respected teacher preparation programs** to recruit outstanding educators.
- Create policies that **encourage growth and replication of high-performing charter and district school models**.
- Support and **deepen citizen engagement** efforts such as the Governor's Education Road Show.



THE PARTNERSHIP ZONE

In 2010 the state established the "Partnership Zone" — a turnaround plan designed to produce significant achievement gains in the state's lowest-performing schools within two years. A portion of Race to the Top funds are being channeled toward 10 schools to improve operations and working conditions for teachers and administrators so they can focus on elevating student performance.

- | | | |
|----------------------------------|------------------|------------------------------------|
| ■ Bancroft Elementary | ■ Laurel Middle | ■ Dover High |
| ■ Lewis Dual Language Elementary | ■ Stanton Middle | ■ Glasgow High |
| ■ Marbrook Elementary | | ■ Howard High School of Technology |
| ■ Stubbs Elementary | | ■ Positive Outcomes Charter |

6 Establish a Simple and Equitable Funding System

to more effectively spend taxpayers' education dollars.



PROGRESS

- ✓ **Captured a fraction of the \$158 million** in cost efficiency recommendations made by the Leadership for Education Achievement (LEAD) Committee in 2008.
- ✓ **Posted education budget reports online**, offering the public transparent, clear, and timely information.



WORK AHEAD

- Approve and implement a **funding flexibility pilot** to allow volunteer districts greater control over their budgets.
- **Cut additional costs** as recommended by the LEAD Committee, and redirect that money to the classroom.
- **Create a needs-based formula** so funding follows student needs, ensuring that schools serving English language learners, disabled students, and other populations with special needs receive extra resources.

WHY FUNDING MATTERS

Delaware's funding system is nearly 70 years old and no longer fits our schools' needs. To be globally competitive, we need a simple, flexible, and equitable system that allows the people who are closest to the students to make funding decisions. The state's massive effort revitalizing public education requires significant Race to the Top startup funds, but that money won't last forever. That's why we need a modern school finance system if we want to improve our public schools for the long term.

HOW FUNDING AFFECTS STUDENTS:

- Students with special needs rely on critical additional services funded by Race to the Top and would suffer without them.
- District and school leaders have little flexibility to use limited dollars to best serve students.
- District and charter schools want to cut costs by sharing resources but cannot due to Delaware's rigid funding formula.

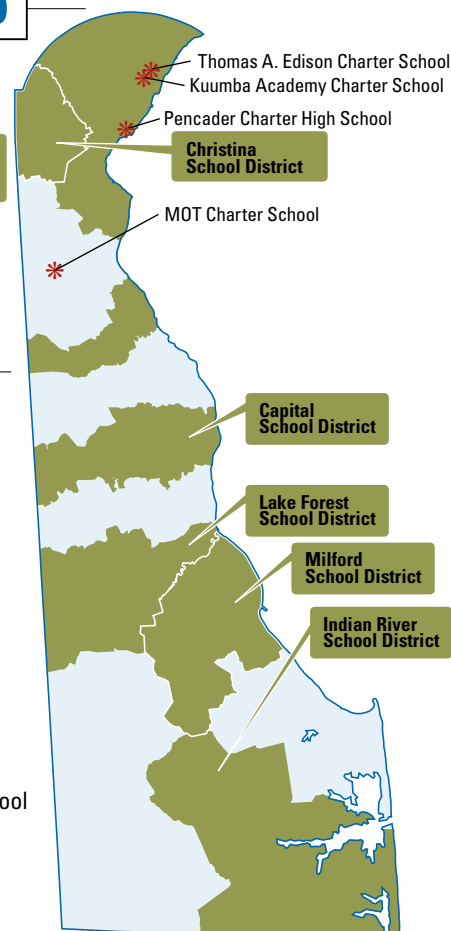


The Vision Network

is a coalition of Delaware school districts and charter schools that agree to pursue the goals and recommendations of Vision 2015, making improved student achievement their top priority. To help students excel, Network schools use a team approach, in which principals make decisions with their leadership team and teachers. These model schools are paving the way for the transformation of public schools across Delaware. The Network is composed of 26 schools, representing six districts, four charter schools, and all three of Delaware's counties.

MAKING STRIDES

Vision Network schools were among top performers in fall-to-spring gains for the 2010–2011 school year: Three of the top five schools that made the greatest gains in 7th grade math and three of the top five with the greatest gains in 6th grade reading were Network schools.



Capital School District:

Central Middle School
William Henry Middle School
Dover High School

Christina School District:

Christiana High School
Newark High School
Bayard Middle School
Gauger-Cobbs Middle School
George V. Kirk Middle School
Shue-Medill Middle School

Indian River School District:

Georgetown Middle School
Millsboro Middle School
North Georgetown Elementary School
Selbyville Middle School
Sussex Central High School

Lake Forest School District:

Lake Forest Central Elementary School
W.T. Chipman Middle School
Lake Forest High School

Milford School District:

The Central Academy

New Castle County Vocational-Technical School District:

Howard High School of Technology
St. Georges Technical High School
Delcastle Technical High School
Paul M. Hodgson Vocational Technical High School



AIMING HIGH: THE 2011–12 SCHOOL YEAR

The Network focuses efforts on three specific areas proven to be critical to student performance: leadership, teacher feedback, and student culture.

LEADERSHIP: School leaders work as a team to identify the most effective education reforms and employ them in classrooms.

TEACHER FEEDBACK: Teachers receive concrete feedback on a daily and weekly basis that they can use to improve student learning, in addition to follow-up support.

STUDENT CULTURE: Schools build a strong culture in which students are accountable for their growth, think critically, and “work hard to get smart.”

“The Vision Network saved our school.”

— Sally Maldonado, Head of School, Kuumba Academy Charter School

VISION NETWORK SCHOOL SPOTLIGHT

Delcastle Technical High School

THE SCHOOL: Delcastle Technical High School

THE MOTTO: "Preparing students to be ahead of the curve"

AYP STANDING: Above target

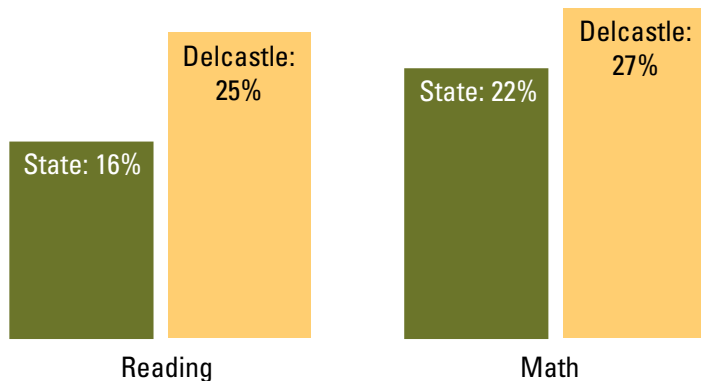
MODEL: Vocational/technical

Delcastle Technical High School is not your typical school. Here, ninth graders learn to write resumes, resolve conflicts, and navigate business etiquette.

HOW IT WORKS

Standard academic courses such as math and reading are combined with specialized instruction in 23 career "cluster areas" as well as career skill training to encourage students to become well rounded, educated young adults ready for the workplace or higher education. Career cluster areas include nursing, auto technology, carpentry, digital media, cosmetology, electronics and more.

2011 fall-to-spring growth in 9th grade student proficiency on DCAS



"Delcastle is one of these quiet schools you don't hear much about, but you should. Students here made some of the strongest gains in the state last year — among the top ten schools in both math and reading."

— Vision Network Executive Director Mark Murphy



THE PRINCIPAL: Joseph Jones, Ed.D

Years working in education: 15

Years as Delcastle Principal: 6



*How does the vocational approach work?
What is the benefit?*

"We do everything through the lens of a business. Companies want to hire students who are ready for the workplace. They want us to teach them how to be prompt, how to conduct themselves, how to communicate, and how to work in a work environment. What really allows our kids to excel is their work ethic and the ability to take criticism. We teach them that from day one, when they're freshman in the auditorium."

What have you changed in the last year and how has it made Delcastle stronger?

"We started offering different courses for 9th and 10th graders who need remedial work or enrichment, the goal being to really tailor what these students need as early on as possible. We also have tried to be much more sophisticated in the classroom, asking ourselves, 'What is the purpose of what we're doing here?' Things like that. We've also gained many new staff members. Some see turnover as a bad thing, but we see it as an opportunity to hire great people, which is exactly what we did. It's not the change itself that determines your success, it's how you deal with that change."

What is great about Delcastle?

"What I love about this school is that with over 1,500 kids, we're a big school, yet we have a small school community. The really great thing is to watch students go through our school, graduate and then go out and make their way in the world."

VISION 2015

We invite you to join us in creating outstanding Delaware schools.

- Sign up for the Vision 2015 newsletter: www.vision2015delaware.org
- Learn about the latest Race to the Top news: www.doe.k12.de.us
- Participate in your local school board meetings (visit your school district website)
- Urge your local legislators to prioritize education reform: <http://legis.delaware.gov>

THE VISION 2015 IMPLEMENTATION TEAM

Chair: Marvin N. Schoenhals, Chairman, WSFS Bank

H. Raye Jones Avery, Executive Director, Christina Cultural Arts Center

Susan Bunting, Superintendent, Indian River School District

Paul A. Herdman, President and CEO, Rodel Foundation of Delaware

Lillian Lowery, Secretary, Delaware Department of Education

Marcia Lyles, Superintendent, Christina School District

Daniel Rich, Chair, Delaware Early Childhood Council

John H. Taylor, Jr., Executive Director, Delaware Public Policy Institute

Howard Weinberg, Executive Director, Delaware State Education Association

Ex officio: Nancy Brickhouse, Deputy Provost, Professor, School of Education, University of Delaware

WITH APPRECIATION TO:

AAA Mid-Atlantic

Artesian Water

AstraZeneca

Bank of America

Barclays Bank Delaware

Bayhealth Medical Center

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Delaware

The Buccini/Pollin Group

CAI

Chesapeake Utilities Corporation

Christiana Health System

Citizens Bank

Colonial Parking, Inc.

Delaware Community Foundation

Delaware Department of Education

Delaware General Assembly

Delmarva Power

Dover Downs Hotel & Casino

DuPont

Glenmede Trust Company, N.A.

Hercules Incorporated (Ashland, Inc.)

JPMorgan Chase Foundation

The Longwood Foundation

Nemours/Alfred I DuPont Hospital for Children

Peninsula Capital Advisors, LLC

PNC Foundation

Rodel Foundation of Delaware

The Schell Trust, Ltd.

University of Delaware

U.S. Department of Education

Valero Energy

Verizon Delaware, Inc.

The Wallace Foundation

The Welfare Foundation

Wilmington Trust

W.L. Gore and Associates

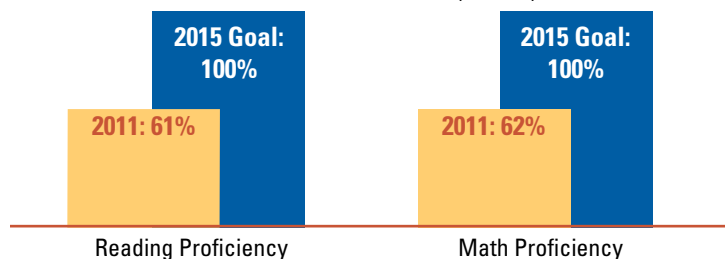
WSFS Foundation

More information at www.vision2015delaware.org

Where We Stand

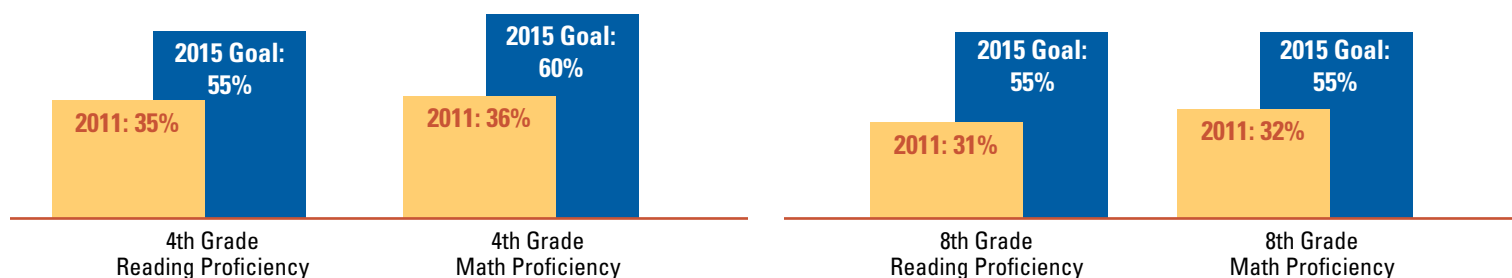
MEETING STATE STANDARDS

Results of spring 2011 Delaware Comprehensive Assessment System (DCAS)



MEETING NATIONAL STANDARDS

Delaware student proficiency according to National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) standards



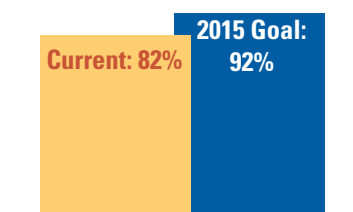
ACHIEVEMENT GAP

Disparity in NAEP scores among student subgroups



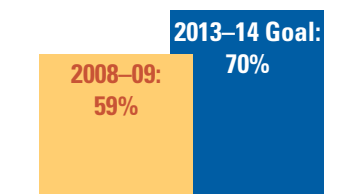
HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION

Percentage of Delaware students graduating high school as measured by the National Governors Association

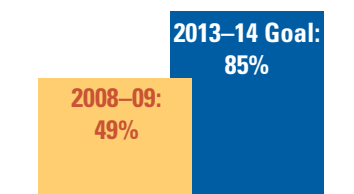


COLLEGE READINESS AND RETENTION

Delaware students enrolling in college



College retention rate



“Because we have a community of hope around reforming our public schools, we’re going to stay strong and meet our benchmarks.”

— Delaware Secretary of Education Lillian Lowery

VISION
2015



Learn more about
Vision 2015



Keep up to date on
Delaware education

