

# Positioned to LEAD

EDUCATION  
IN THE FIRST STATE



# 2012

Snapshot of Delaware Public Education

VISION  
2015

OCTOBER 2012

# Please join us in creating outstanding Delaware schools.

## We invite you to join us in creating outstanding Delaware schools:

- Sign up for the Vision 2015 newsletter: [www.vision2015delaware.org](http://www.vision2015delaware.org)
- Learn about the latest Race to the Top news: [www.doe.k12.de.us](http://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>

## This work is not easy.

Gains in student achievement do not happen overnight.

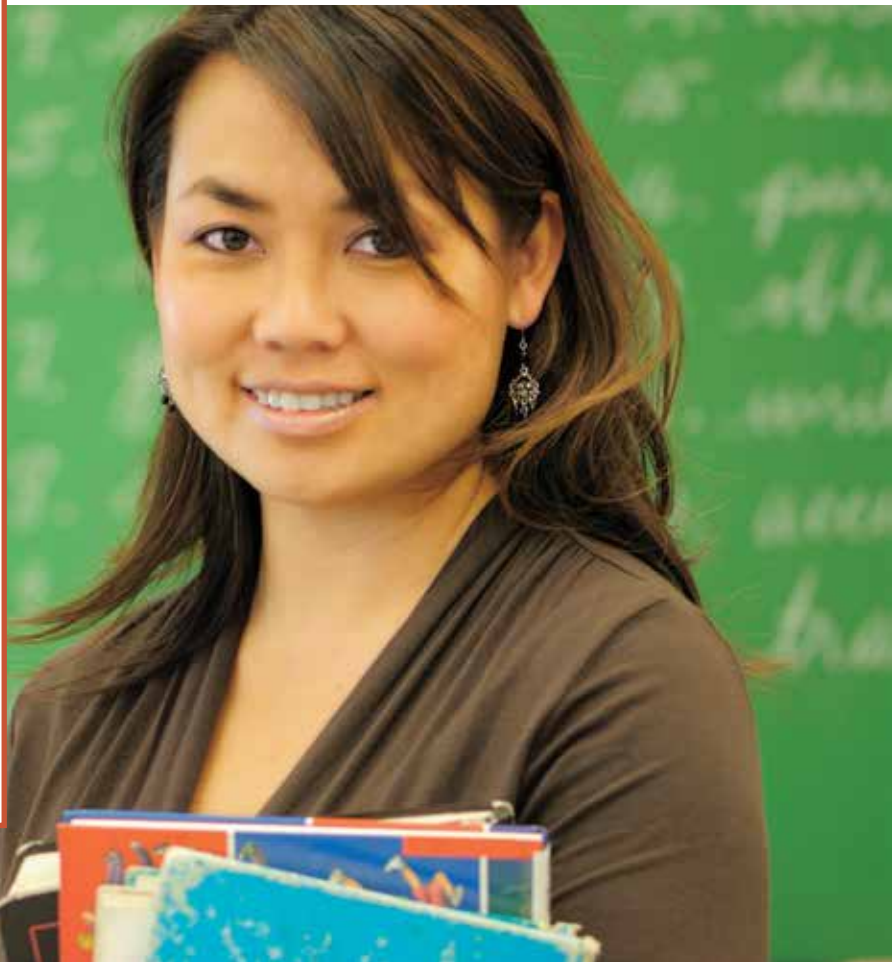
The good news is that, collectively, Delaware educators and citizens have made an extraordinary commitment to our state's children over the past several years.

We have put in place many of the pieces, perhaps more than any other state.

These reforms are beginning to yield results, but the dramatic student gains we want to see over time will only come if we stay the course and deliver on our promises. Our children deserve nothing less.

“The late Steve Jobs put it bluntly: ‘Apple employs seven hundred thousand factory workers in China because it can’t find the thirty thousand engineers in the U.S. that it needs on site at its plants.’ **We need to do something about that.** This is why, when the history of our time here is written, the determined push we are making to **raise student achievement will prove to be the biggest game-changer of all.**”

— Governor Jack A. Markell



# Now comes the hard part, implementing our bold promise to provide every Delaware student with a world-class education — **130,610 futures await.**

Thankfully, we have significant assets, especially compared to other states. We are recognized as a national leader in the quality of our policies, the strength of our partnerships, and the pace of our implementation.

## A Coherent Strategy

As initially described in the Vision 2015 plan in 2006, then amplified and refined by Governor Markell's more comprehensive Education Action Plan in 2009, our reforms offer a coherent pathway for improving student achievement.

Start by investing in early learning to ensure all students are ready for kindergarten and success in elementary school. Create higher performance standards (since codified by the Common Core and related curriculum tools). Develop better ways to measure whether students are meeting the standards and making steady progress from grade to grade through high school. Recruit, develop, and empower talented principals to hire and lead teams of talented teachers. Use multiple measures to prepare, evaluate, and support these teachers so they are better able to help their students meet the standards and grow as professionals. Encourage innovation, especially in addressing the challenges of transforming chronically low-performing schools. And hold everyone accountable for steady progress, year by year.

Consider all the major steps we've taken since 2006 to implement these far-reaching recommendations. We've designed strategies and taken action. We've expanded our partnerships. We've raised our standards. We've provided stronger supports to current school leaders and teachers. We're more proactively recruiting new ones. We've established modern testing and data systems that provide just-in-time information that educators and parents need. And we've invested more strategically in our youngest and neediest students.

Few, if any states, have moved as quickly or done as much.

*"Students who are enabled and empowered as citizens and individuals allow teachers to serve as guides and interpreters, not deciders of what they can or cannot learn."*

*— Elizabeth Diaz (center of back row),  
Teacher, Pulaski Elementary School*



# Targeted initiatives are gaining traction.

## 2006–2009

- Vision 2015 coalition publishes plan
- Vision Network of 10 district and charter schools is formed and grows to 25 schools serving more than 20,000 students by 2009
- Gov. Markell and Education Secretary Lowery release 5-point “Plan to Strengthen Our Schools”
- Delaware launches Stars for Early Success to boost quality of early learning programs
- Teach for America launches in Delaware, providing more teachers for high-needs schools
- Governor-appointed Leadership for Education Achievement in Delaware (LEAD) Committee finds significant efficiencies in the education budget and recommends a needs-based funding formula

## 2010

- Delaware finishes 1st in federal Race to the Top (RTTT), earning \$119 million; districts and charter schools create detailed RTTT implementation plans
- State regulations are updated to require teachers to demonstrate student growth to be rated effective
- First four low-performing “Partnership Zone” schools are selected
- State begins using online assessment to measure student progress
- Evaluation finds 72 percent of Vision Network schools outpace state growth
- Statewide STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) Council and teacher residency are launched
- 150 centers participate in Stars, serving more than 10,000 early learners

## 2011

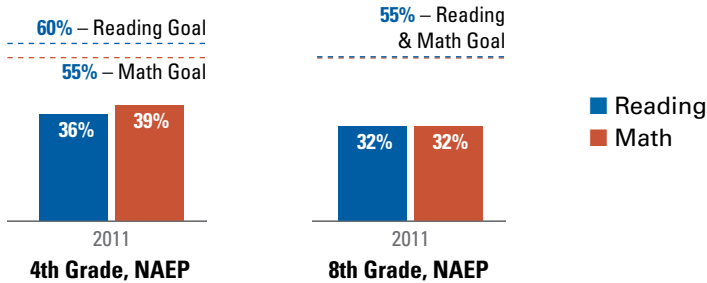
- State invests additional \$22 million in early childhood education
- All schools offer more data coaching, training, and time for teachers to support students
- Three of four principals receive new leadership support through development coaches and other initiatives
- Students are supported to dramatically increase SAT and Advanced Placement participation
- State recruits and develops new teachers and leaders to serve in highest-need communities
- State funds new Mandarin and Spanish language immersion programs in early grades
- Delaware wins \$50 million federal Early Learning Challenge grant
- Grants are provided to districts to support parent and community engagement
- First four Partnership Zone schools show gains; six more are selected

## 2012

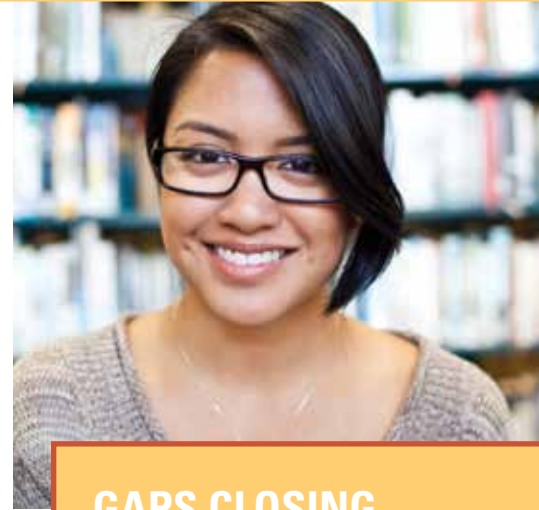
- Statewide training begins for new, higher Common Core State Standards
- State approves new regulations to strengthen public charter school quality
- Stronger teacher evaluation system is implemented statewide for the first time
- State launches online Educate Insight data portal to support instructional decision making
- Through Early Learning Challenge grant, providers are better supported, new Early Learning Survey is launched, and K–12 alignment is tightened
- 250 centers participate in Stars, with more than 300 early learning programs expected to participate by the end of the year
- Teachers start receiving financial bonuses if highly effective at teaching in high-needs schools
- Vision Network grows to 28 public charter and district schools

# But we still have a long way to go.

## LESS THAN 40% OF OUR 4TH AND 8TH GRADERS MEET NATIONAL STANDARDS IN READING AND MATH ...



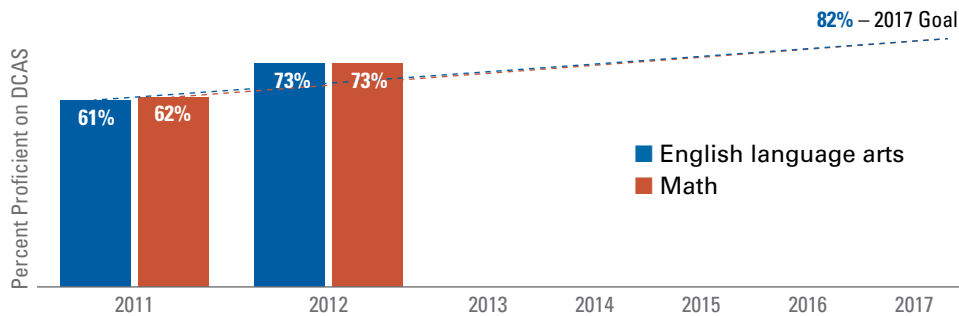
When the United States is losing ground internationally — and Delaware is middle of the pack within the United States, according to the National Assessment of Educational Progress — we need to accelerate our progress.



## GAPS CLOSING, BUT REMAIN HIGH

While we should celebrate that achievement gaps — for both low-income and minority students — have been narrowed in the past school year, thousands of students still struggle. Among low-income students, for example, 25 percent fewer students are proficient than their higher-income peers.

## BUT OUR STATE SCORES SHOW ENCOURAGING GAINS



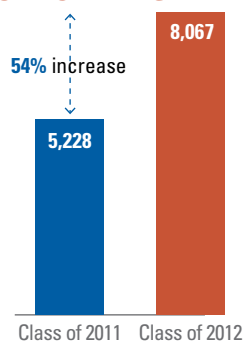
Across almost every subgroup of students, the state saw double-digit gains from fall to spring of last year, exceeding expectations. This equates to about 10,000 more students becoming proficient in English between 2011 and 2012 — 9,000 more in math. And if we maintain this pace, we'll stay on track to meet our 2017 goal of 82 percent proficiency.

## ONLY 1 IN 5 STUDENTS ARE COLLEGE AND CAREER READY ...

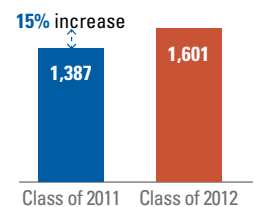
Based on SAT scores, only 1 in 5 students in the class of 2012 was college and career ready. That's more than 6,000 students last year who could've been better prepared for success in life. We need to do better.

## BUT WE'RE INCREASING OPPORTUNITIES

More students are taking the SAT — nearly 3,000 additional students in the class of 2012 took it last year. We're creating a more college-focused atmosphere, and we're expanding opportunity to a more diverse group of students.



More students are meeting the benchmark of college and career readiness — the number of students grew by 15 percent in the last school year.



# VISION 2015



**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.

## THE VISION 2015 IMPLEMENTATION TEAM

*Chair:* Ernest Dianastasis, Managing Director, CAI  
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  
Mark Murphy, Secretary, Delaware Department of Education

Daniel Rich, Chair, Delaware Early Childhood Council  
Marvin N. Schoenhals, Chairman, WSFS Bank  
John H. Taylor, Jr., Executive Director, Delaware Public Policy Institute  
Howard Weinberg, Executive Director, Delaware State Education Association  
*Ex officio:* Nancy Brickhouse, Interim Provost, University of Delaware

## WITH APPRECIATION TO:

AAA Mid-Atlantic	Delaware Department of Education	Peninsula Capital Advisors, LLC
Artesian Water	Delaware General Assembly	PNC Foundation
AstraZeneca	Delmarva Power	Rodel Foundation of Delaware
Bank of America	Dover Downs Hotel & Casino	The Schell Trust, Ltd.
Barclays Bank Delaware	DuPont	University of Delaware
Bayhealth Medical Center	Glenmede Trust Company, N.A.	U.S. Department of Education
The Buccini/Pollin Group	Hercules Incorporated (Ashland, Inc.)	Valero Energy
CAI	Highmark Delaware	Verizon Delaware, Inc.
Chesapeake Utilities Corporation	The Longwood Foundation	The Wallace Foundation
Christiana Health System	M&T Bank	W.L. Gore and Associates
Citizens Bank	JPMorgan Chase Foundation	WSFS Foundation
Colonial Parking, Inc.	Nemours/Alfred I DuPont Hospital for Children	
Delaware Community Foundation		

More information at [www.vision2015delaware.org](http://www.vision2015delaware.org)

