



# MOVING THE VISION FORWARD

## 2016 ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT



STUDENT  
SUCCESS  
— 2025 —

VISION  
COALITION  
OF DELAWARE

# Moving the Vision Forward



Last fall, at Delaware Tech's Terry Campus in Dover, two young Delaware students officially launched *Student Success 2025*. Halim Hamroun of Newark High School and Genesis Lyons of Kuumba Academy were just two voices among many who contributed ideas and imagination to Delaware's ambitious 10-year plan that continues the journey toward excellence in public education.

In all, more than 4,000 Delawareans lent their ideas to help our state build on the success we've achieved over the last decade.

***Student Success 2025* acknowledges that we have more to do. This is just year one of the plan.** In assessing the work during the past year for this report, we believe **we are on the right track**; that higher academic standards, personalized learning experiences, family and community engagement, and talented, passionate educators are all key ingredients in helping our students achieve a lifetime of success.

Although we have seen progress for students from early learning through postsecondary education, we haven't witnessed the type of progress we hoped for in some areas—including early literacy, access to excellent teachers, and youth unemployment. Delaware's more than 70-year-old school funding system—a major part of *Student Success 2025*—remains outdated and holds back the state's evolving student population. Major infrastructure needs stand in the way of student-owned, tech-enabled learning. Data also tell us that we are underserving minority and low-income students, as well as students with disabilities.

As our state and country transition to new leadership, we are poised for further gains. A new federal law—the Every Student Succeeds Act—will give states more autonomy and responsibility to make positive change. And all communities will have a voice in this change.

The Vision Coalition remains dedicated to forging positive change where progress is needed. We are resolute on the path ahead: making the “North Star” we created with the community available and achievable for all students. The 47 recommendations in ***Student Success 2025 set the course, and we are as committed as we’ve ever been to reaching our destination.*** By doing more of what’s working, collaborating across communities, and rethinking our definition of success, we are confident that we will follow through on what we—and thousands of other Delawareans—started.

— The Vision Coalition of Delaware Leadership Team



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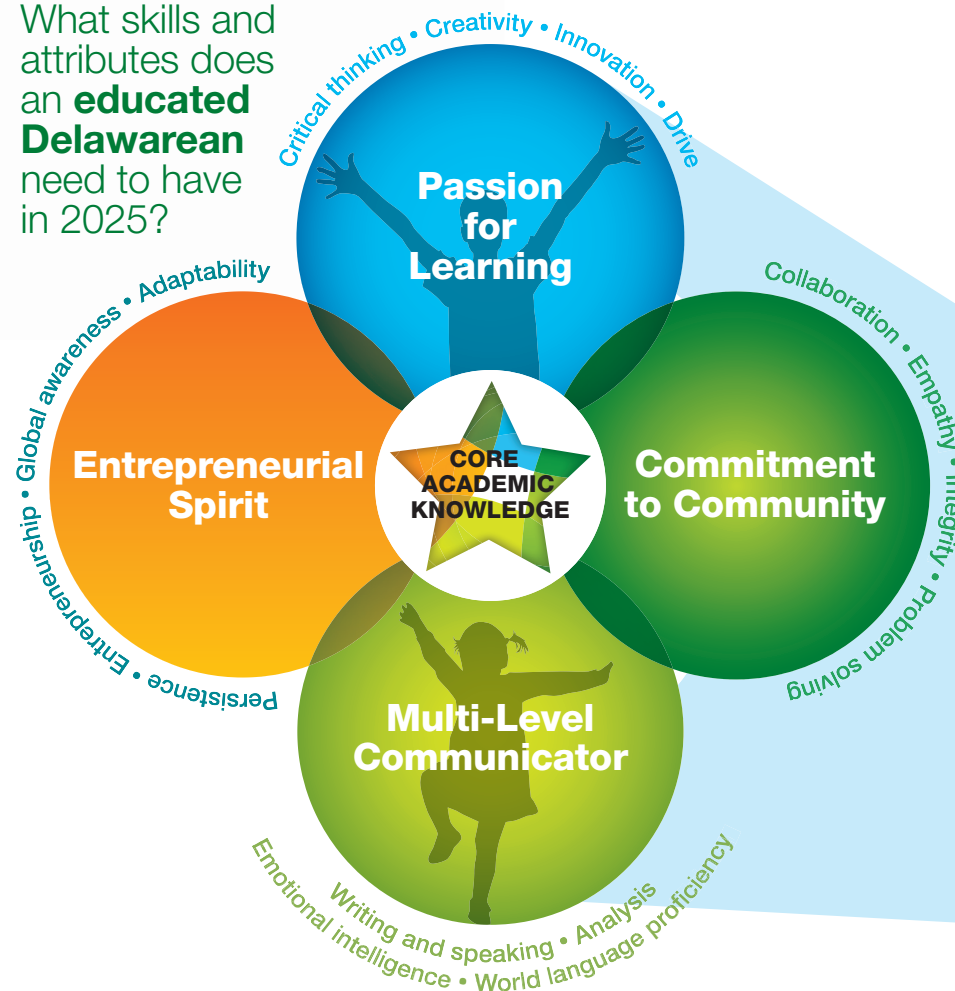
# The North Star

**We live in a rapidly changing world with higher expectations—and greater opportunities.** In our country, more than 75 percent of parents say it is very important for their children to get a college degree, and economists estimate that by 2025, 65 percent of the jobs in our economy will require education beyond high school—whether it's a two- or four-year degree, or more. Unfortunately, the majority of students in our nation—even those who graduate from high school—are not prepared to succeed in college or beyond the classroom.

**It's clear that to help our students meet the high demands of our changing world, our schools need to change, too—and Delaware is leading the way in this effort.** Delaware has worked hard to support teachers in improving their practice and students in achieving at higher levels. Delaware, like many other states, now has higher, college-ready standards, so all students are prepared for college and careers. And Delaware saw the largest increase in graduation rate of any state in the country between 2013 and 2014.

In Delaware, we know that to tackle the challenges of tomorrow, we need to empower our students to achieve more today. This is what the North Star is about. It shows what students need to know, be, and do to live a lifetime of success. Put simply, the North Star represents the ultimate destination for our students.

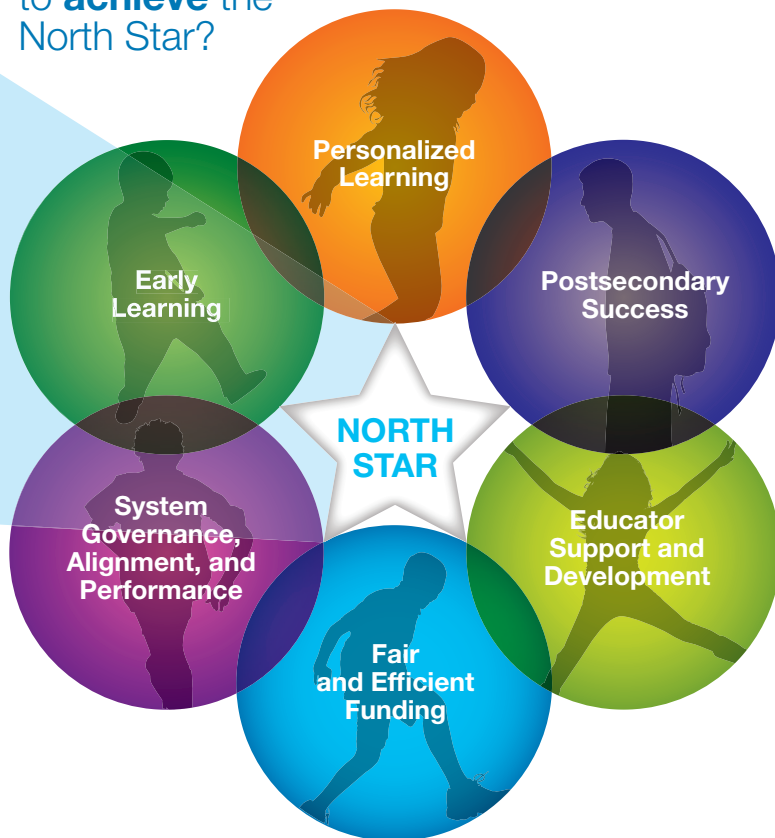
What skills and attributes does an **educated Delawarean** need to have in 2025?



More than 4,000 Delawareans contributed to this vision. At its center is core academic knowledge, the foundation of any educational experience. Its outer rings depict the skills and attributes that an educated Delawarean will need to have in the year 2025. Our Delaware neighbors, colleagues, and students foresee that communication, problem-solving, and creativity will be critical for the next generation. They imagine a well-rounded student who's driven, empathetic, and globally aware.

# Six Core Areas of Student Success and Progress Underway

What will it take to **achieve** the North Star?



To reach the North Star, *Student Success 2025* put forth recommendations that revolve around six core areas. With continued focus on early learning, personalized learning, postsecondary success, educator support and development, fair and efficient funding, and system governance, alignment, and performance—we are redefining the system to support greater student achievement.

The commitment to building on progress is stronger than ever as evidenced by the implementation of the recommendations in *Student Success 2025*. The following pages outline a few examples of progress underway in each of the six core areas.



## Early Learning

### Big Momentum for Essential Learning Stages

#### Year 1 Progress:

- \$9.4 million added to state budget to help families access high quality programs, to assist programs in improving quality, to aid communities in addressing needs, and for early childhood mental health consultation.
- T.E.A.C.H. scholarship program enrolled more than 200 early learning teachers to educate and retain early childhood practitioners, positively impacting outcomes for the children in their care.
- 72 percent of early learning centers enrolled in Delaware Stars program (up from 11 percent in 2009) aimed at increasing access to high-quality care for all of Delaware's children, especially those from low-income families.



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## Personalized Learning

### Blended, Student-Directed Learning on the Rise

#### Year 1 Progress:

- BRINC Consortium—district leaders and teachers collaborating on blended learning and technology strategies—grew to nine districts, covering more than 60 percent of Delaware students.
- 3,000 students enrolled in language immersion programs in grades K-4 in 22 schools this fall.
- 30 districts and charters—which serve 108,000 students, approximately 80 percent of the state's public school students—have access to Schoology, the state-supported learning management system, in 2016-17. The digital platform connects students, educators, families, and content to drive collaboration and personalized learning.





## Postsecondary Success

### Early Career and College Experience Continues to Prosper

#### Year 1 Progress:

- Delaware Pathways continued to grow, with more than 2,400 Delaware students enrolled in a career pathway in the 2015-16 school year, where they gain relevant academic and technical skills, earn college credit and industry recognized credentials, and get work experience.
- Course offerings and student enrollment are expected to expand mightily with more than 5,000 students enrolled in 10 state model pathways across 29 high schools in 2016-17.
- The number of students taking dual enrollment college courses nearly tripled, from 800 dual-enrollment courses taken in 2014 to 2,700 in 2015-16.
- SPARC platform connected more than 8,000 middle and high school students to career exploration opportunities with 76 companies and 192 career coaches.



## Educator Support and Development

### Higher Standards Plus New Opportunities Drive Improvement

#### Year 1 Progress:

- State funding will support educator stipends for National Board Certification and pilot teacher-leadership roles.
- Three principal prep programs—FLEX, Principal Preparation Program at the University of Delaware, and Lead for Delaware—launched to provide more intensive practical support and experience to aspiring school leaders.
- The Delaware teacher preparation report cards and the Educator Preparation Performance Assessment released, placing greater emphasis on strengthening teacher prep programs and their graduate requirements.
- 13 charter schools and two districts began piloting alternative teacher evaluation systems that maintain student performance as a key measure of effectiveness, provide meaningful differentiation, and utilize feedback from multiple sources.







## Fair and Efficient Funding

### Promising Energy but Little Action toward Equitable, Flexible Funding

#### Year 1 Progress:

- Urgency continued to grow for a student-centered funding system in the state legislature, the Education Funding Improvement Commission (EFIC), and the Wilmington Education Improvement Commission (WEIC).
- Delaware Expenditure Review Committee identified several options to counteract key cost drivers in public education—ranging from improving asset management to increased shared services.



## System Governance, Alignment, and Performance

### Family and Community Engagement a Growing Focus

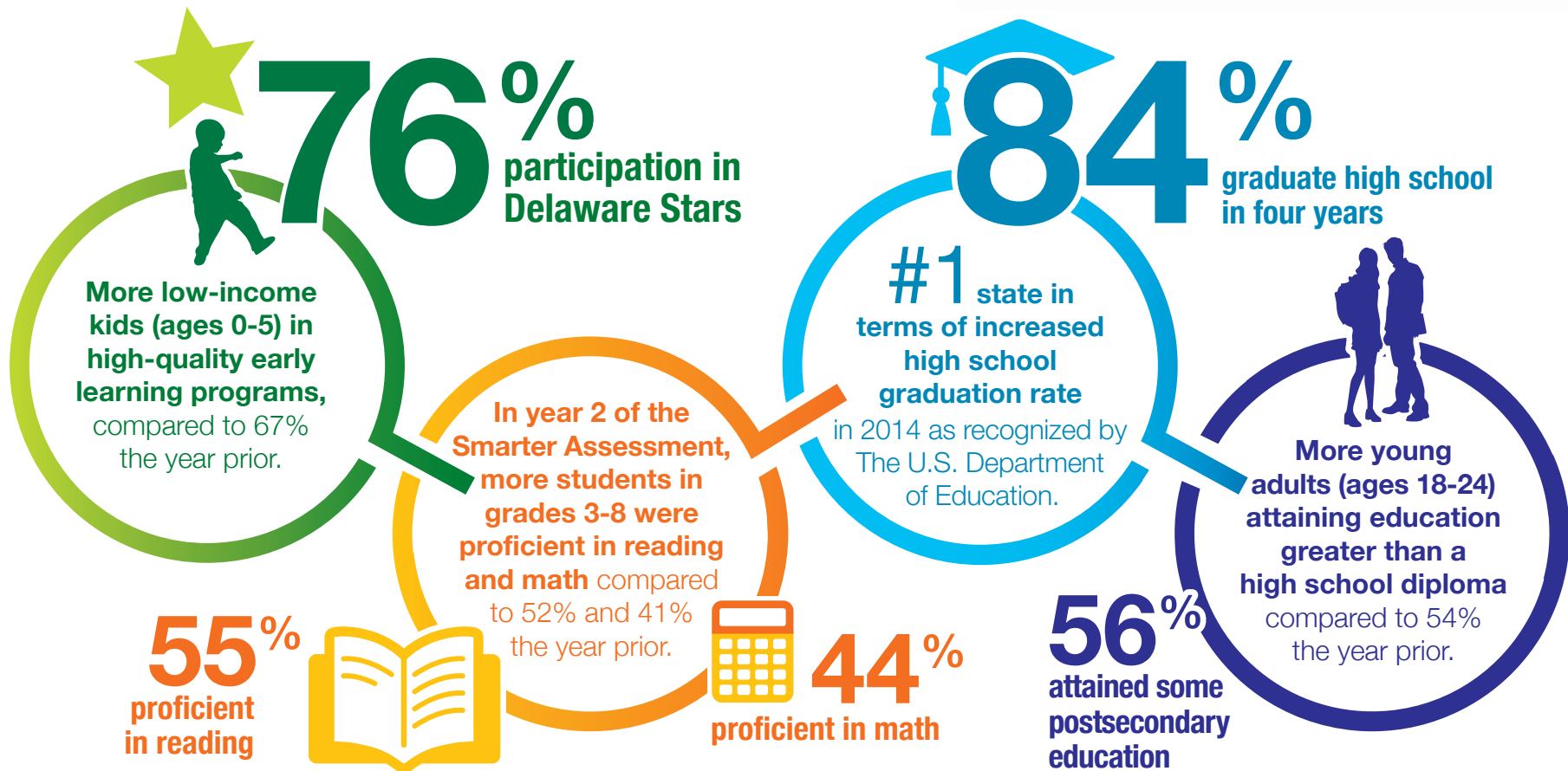
#### Year 1 Progress:

- A statewide assessment inventory resulted in an overall reduction of tests for students (reducing testing time on state assessments by 35-40 percent) while 17 districts and schools documented specific recommendations or plans for revising their assessment systems.
- The eSchoolPLUS Family App introduced by the Delaware Department of Education in April increases family access to school activities, notifications, classwork, report cards, and more.
- The 5Essentials survey was launched in 2016 to provide parents, teachers, and students with a consistent voice in improving their schools.
- The Wilmington Education Improvement Commission (WEIC) will continue to pursue state approval of redistricting and additional funding for low-income students, English language learners, and special education students. WEIC committees continue to develop proposals for coordination of cross-sector resources to support students in poverty and schools with high concentrations of students in poverty, and for greater collaboration between and among district and charter schools.
- Under the Every Student Succeeds Act, Delaware began stakeholder engagement and planning for a state accountability system that is aligned with *Student Success 2025*.



# More Students Succeeding

One year into *Student Success 2025*, **Delaware is showing important progress from pre-K through postsecondary.**



# What's Next?

A few short-term priorities will allow Delaware to make progress in the following areas.

## Deepen the state's investment in our earliest learners

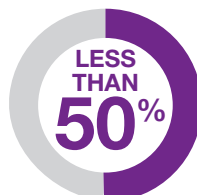
THE FIRST FEW YEARS OF A CHILD'S LIFE ARE CRITICAL. THERE IS A \$4-\$9 RETURN FOR EVERY DOLLAR SPENT ON QUALITY EARLY EDUCATION.



4-year-olds in state funded pre-K

### Recommendation:

Expand pre-K for 3- and 4-year-olds

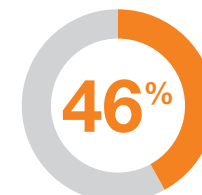


Early learning professionals with a bachelor's degree or higher



### Recommendation:

Require higher levels of education for early learning professionals and increase their compensation



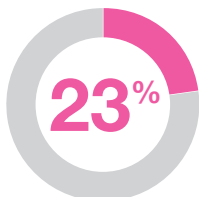
3rd graders not proficient in reading

### Recommendation:

Adopt policies to increase reading by 3rd grade such as strengthening teacher training and preparation, literacy screenings and interventions

## Strengthen the quality of educators, particularly in highest need schools

THE QUALITY OF A CHILD'S TEACHER AND SCHOOL LEADERS ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT IN-SCHOOL FACTORS TO THEIR EDUCATION.



Teachers with four or fewer years of experience

### Recommendation:

Strengthen teacher and leader professional learning, including pre-service and in-service



One-year teacher turnover rate for high-need schools

### Recommendations:

Provide support from highly-effective educators for low-performing schools

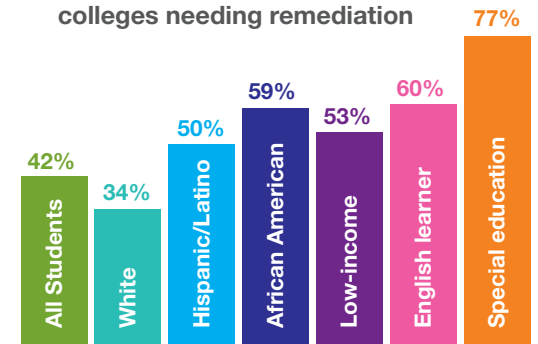


Strengthen wraparound supports and associated funding based on family needs (health, social work/ counseling, language acquisition, and basic needs)

## Expand opportunities for young people to succeed in college and career

**OUR STUDENTS DESERVE MORE OPPORTUNITIES TO OBTAIN CERTIFICATIONS AND DEGREES BEYOND HIGH SCHOOL.**

**Delaware public high school graduates attending Delaware colleges needing remediation**



### **Recommendations:**

Increase career exposure opportunities for middle and high school students

Improve the state's college access strategies by building on SEED and Inspire scholarships

Increase college counseling and support for high school students, including expanding the online SPARC career platform and Delaware student career pathways

## Update Delaware's school funding system to be more equitable

**RESOURCES DO NOT FOLLOW STUDENTS BASED ON THEIR NEEDS.**



Delaware does not provide additional resources to English learners or low-income students

### **Recommendation:**

Provide additional funds for students with high needs and ensure funding follows students

## Continue to inspire innovation statewide

**DELAWARE IS EMBRACING THE TECHNOLOGY NECESSARY TO BETTER SERVE STUDENTS, BUT WE STILL HAVE WORK TO DO.**



~50,000 Delaware students are classified as **low-income**, and they are **less likely to be proficient on statewide assessments or graduate high school**

### **Recommendations:**

Increase individual support for students through the use of technology, new teacher assignment models, and adjusting the pace and style of learning to meet their needs

Encourage the expansion and cross-fertilization of new educational approaches that are demonstrating promise, like the BRINC consortium of districts focused on blended learning



Digital ready schools

### **Recommendation:**

Deepen investment in broadband infrastructure



Helping all Delaware students succeed will require support and initiative from the entire community. We hope that the progress outlined in this report resonates with you and that you will join efforts in making these recommendations a reality for our students.

**Visit [www.visioncoalitionde.org](http://www.visioncoalitionde.org) to learn more and:**

- Make your voice heard and share your ideas
- Get involved in a specific project
- Subscribe to the Vision Coalition monthly email
- Move *Student Success 2025* forward
- Access a complete list of sources for this report



[www.visioncoalitionde.org](http://www.visioncoalitionde.org)