



STUDENT SUCCESS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SEPTEMBER 2015

VISION
COALITION
OF DELAWARE

Calling for Change

An education that prepares every Delaware child for success in 2025. Today's students will enter a world after high school that is increasingly interconnected and complex. The next generation of adults will face new challenges in the global economy, including significant advancements in technology and increased global competition.

Student Success 2025 imagines a landscape where equitable opportunities meet the needs of these students and where lifelong learners are equipped to adapt to changing times. **Every child in Delaware—regardless of zip code, economic means, or style and pace of learning—deserves to have options for his or her future and to be ready for whatever tomorrow holds.**

Building on a Foundation for Success

Ten years ago, educators, business and community leaders, and leading public officials led a charge to provide a world-class education to every student in our state.

Our alliance, known today as the Vision Coalition of Delaware, brought together the expertise necessary to undertake this pressing task of moving education forward.

Hailed as one of the most comprehensive and coherent education plans in the nation, Vision 2015 focused on nearly every aspect of our public education system to provide students with greater and fairer opportunities. We set out to shift structures, and we have. Nine years later, Delaware has moved on **more than 75 percent of the policy recommendations set forth in the Vision 2015 plan.** These include higher academic standards, stronger teacher and principal preparation, higher quality early learning, and greater access to higher education and careers.

Delaware is and should be proud; our student achievement has grown at the third-fastest rate in the U.S. over the past two decades (1990-2009). But we haven't yet achieved all that we hoped. And as the world continues to evolve, so must our thinking.

Advancements in Technology

Access to the internet grew by nearly 500% from 2001 to 2014

Rapid Pace of Change

Most employed adults use technologies that didn't exist 25 years ago as part of their jobs

Global Competition

Over the past decade, international peers have outpaced the U.S. in growth of adult citizens with a two-year, four-year, graduate, or professional degree



A Digital World

As of 2012, 2.5 quintillion bytes of data (1, followed by 18 zeroes) are created every day

Constrained Resources

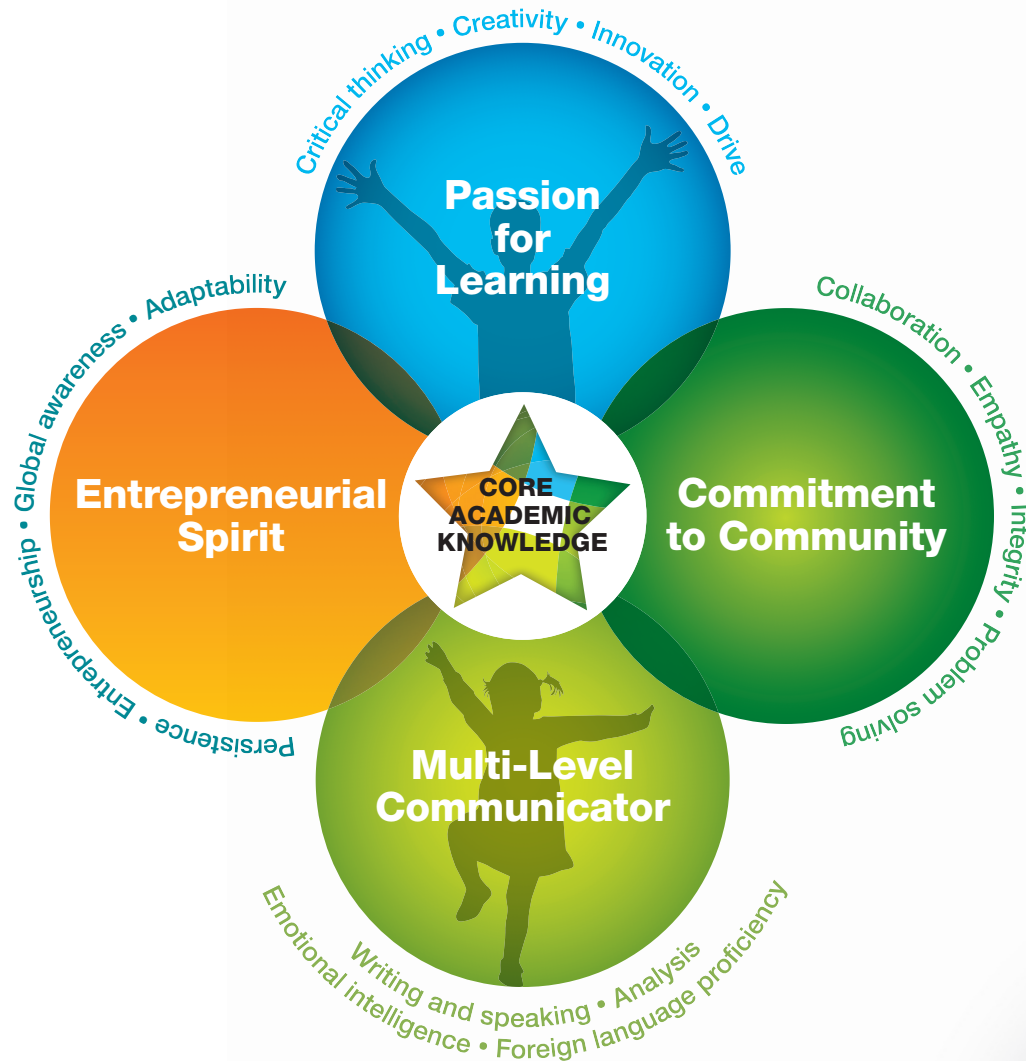
Delaware's K-12 state spending has plateaued since 2008

Changing Demographics

From 2005 to 2014, the proportion of students in Delaware who were racial/ethnic minorities grew from 44% to 52%, and the proportion of low-income students grew from 37% to 56%

A North Star for Our Students

The North Star guides our journey on the path to excellence. It shows what students need to know, be, and do to live a lifetime of success. With volumes of information available at our fingertips, the learning experience will no longer be passive—students will need to drive it. As the world evolves to become more complex and interconnected, children will need strong communication skills, adaptability, problem-solving ability, and empathy toward social and environmental challenges in our communities. Collectively, the skills found in the North Star—a distillation of comments shared by 4,000 Delawareans as well as several national and international contributors—will prepare students to be strong communicators, engaged citizens, successful in their careers, and lifelong learners.



The Student Experience in 2025

What will student learning look like in 10 years? Students will follow different paths to lead them to success—based on their own learning styles and interests, and bolstered by exposure to careers. Teachers and educators will still hold the entire system together—and remain critical guides on the path to success.

Leveraging Technology

Enormous leaps in innovation transform the learning experience. Increased digital access provides more students with opportunities from all over the world, while open-source knowledge exchanges drive and accelerate learning.

High-quality early learning

lays the foundation for skills like determination, sociability, communication, and early literacy and math skills.

Students learn and earn credit at community organizations like art museums, dance studios, and more.

CULTURE

Student Needs Drive Learning

Students can work at their own pace, moving to the next lesson when they achieve mastery. Personalized learning shifts the classroom focus onto students' unique needs, while related learning opportunities outside school walls broaden their horizons.

Real world work experiences while still in high school provide students with new insights and career exploration.

Language immersion

programs equip students for a global community.



COMMUNITY


Wrap-around services provide students enrichment, a safe place to learn, and health services.

Flexible and Seamless Transitions

Students are supported to flexibly move from one level of subject mastery to another based on their abilities and interests. Connections made between early childhood learning and kindergarten—through high school, college, and careers—allow for more cohesive learning opportunities.



Career opportunities are now within reach if students are ready to join the workforce.



Students earn college credits before completing high school.

Students may pursue advanced coursework, one-year certification, or a two- or four-year degree, as well as additional education throughout their careers.



Mentors and tutors provide individual attention, advocacy, and life skills development.

Family Support and Engagement

In-person and tech-based approaches build stronger connections and communication between schools and families. Student-led parent-teacher conferences empower families with ownership of the educational experience.



CERTIFICATION

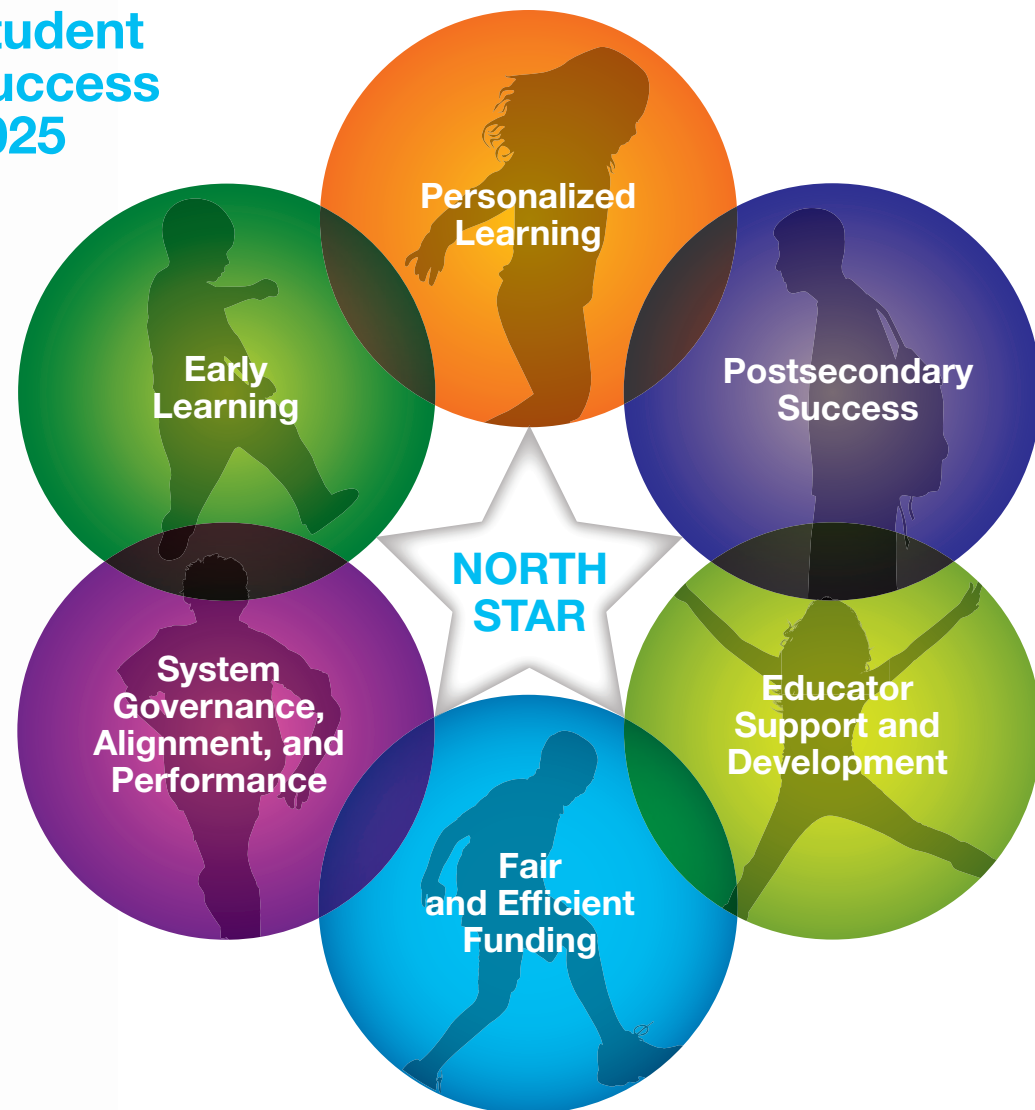
Student Success 2025: What It Will Take

With the North Star lighting the way, the recommendations for student success on the pages that follow revolve around six core areas.

Three areas deal directly with the student experience: quality early learning for all children, a personalized educational experience, and postsecondary success that includes work and training beyond high school. The remaining three areas—educator support and development, funding, and governance—act as vital supports that enable students to reach success.

For the full, detailed list of recommendations, read Student Success 2025.

Core Areas to Achieve **Student Success 2025**





Early Learning

Expand Access and Quality of Supports for Families

1. Increase access to evidence-based home visiting services.
2. Strengthen use of comprehensive health screenings and provide interventions.
3. Increase quality across all early learning programs for children birth to five by raising standards for high-quality early learning education.
4. Establish and incrementally expand voluntary, full-day, high-quality prekindergarten.

Deepen Investment in Teacher Quality

5. Support early learning professionals to reach higher expectations.
6. Strengthen professional development and career paths and provide higher quality professional development opportunities.
7. Create a seamless academic experience for students from early learning through third grade by adopting and implementing a statewide framework for aligning standards, assessments, and professional development.
8. Develop an aligned state governance structure to enable unified and efficient decision-making as well as new and sustainable sources of funding.



Personalized Learning

Shift Policies and Programs to be Student-Centered

1. Set and uphold high expectations for all students across academic skills and social-intellectual behaviors.
2. Create a statewide network of community organizations, employers, and education institutions that are approved to provide extended learning opportunities (ELOs) to students for credit.
3. Support the holistic development of children in high-need communities.

Support and Encourage Innovation

4. Provide flexibility and funding to encourage and support schools to provide more personalized learning experiences.
5. Build capacity to evaluate and scale innovative best practices statewide.

Invest in Infrastructure to Support Blended Learning

6. Create technology-enabled tools that monitor student progress from preschool to career, providing students and parents with a menu of opportunities to achieve mastery.
7. Invest in increasing state broadband capacity and student access to internet devices.



Postsecondary Success

Connect Education, Workforce, and Community Resources

1. Support school redesign that integrates K-12 schools with postsecondary education institutions and employers.
2. Provide structures for highly effective teachers to co-develop curriculum with employers.
3. Provide all students with early exposure to workforce and higher education experiences.
4. Increase alignment among K-12, higher education, and the workforce by connecting data systems and aligning K-12 graduation requirements with postsecondary entry requirements.
5. Encourage industry associations to develop certification programs, training centers, and apprenticeship programs for high school students.

Enhance Student Supports and Access

6. Create learning pathways anchored in key industries and linked to a range of academic career options.
7. Increase in-person and technology-enhanced counseling supports.
8. Develop digital, individual student portfolios that document student mastery of both “soft” and “hard” skills required for graduation.
9. Build existing scholarships to assist Delaware students in attending four-year, two-year, and certificate programs from institutions of higher education in Delaware.



Educator Support and Development

Empower Leadership

1. Develop a selective statewide principal recruitment and selection process.
2. Provide intensive leadership training for high-potential school leaders.

Improve Initial Educator Training

3. Ensure all new teachers are “learner-ready, day one” and prepared to meet the needs of all students.
4. Build closer connections between teacher preparation programs and K-12 schools.

Strengthen Professional Learning

5. Ensure that all teachers receive individualized support in their specific growth areas.
6. Support an evaluation system that uses student performance as a key measure of effectiveness, provides meaningful differentiation of performance, and utilizes feedback from multiple sources.
7. Support new models of teacher collaboration and development within and across schools.

Build Strong Policy Framework for the Profession

8. Design and implement exciting educator career pathways.
9. Encourage districts to implement mutual consent policies.
10. Ensure all students, particularly those in high-need schools, have access to highly effective educators.



Fair and Efficient Funding

Ensure Funding Responds to Individual Student Needs

1. Increase funding system equity by factoring student needs into funding allocations.

Increase Equity and Flexibility

2. Conduct property reassessments on a consistent, rolling basis.
3. Allocate a larger portion of district/school funding in flexible funds.

Build More Transparent Systems

4. Create incentives at the local and state levels to increase efficiency.



System Governance, Alignment, and Performance

Align Governance, Performance, and Student Success

1. Establish a redefined system of support and accountability anchored around the North Star measuring performance consistently across the system.
2. Develop aligned school, district, and state-level scorecards that track annual growth and performance across excellence, equity, and efficiency measures.

Strengthen System Alignment, Support, and Collaboration

3. Develop a state strategy for supporting and managing the Delaware school system's portfolio of schools.
4. Build capacity of an intermediary organization to enable collaboration between early learning organizations, the K-12 system, higher education, and the workforce.
5. Increase funding allocated to programs focused on statewide collaboration among schools and districts.
6. Encourage charter and district school boards statewide to find more ways to share services and create more efficiencies.
7. Align school and district enrollment options with student needs.

Deepen Family and Community Engagement

8. Create incentives for the development of student and family engagement models, and encourage the use of two-way communication strategies.
9. Encourage employers to allow employees to take time to participate in family engagement activities.

Measuring Success

Good information remains as important as ever in guiding our decisions. Moving forward, we also need to continue developing additional measures consistent with the North Star.

Today

Student Engagement

78% of Delaware students are **consistently engaged in school**.

Academic Success

In math, Delaware fourth and eighth graders rank **middle of the pack**—23 states have a score above Delaware fourth graders and 30 states are above Delaware eighth graders according to the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).

In reading, 12 states have a score above Delaware fourth graders and 30 states are above Delaware eighth graders.

School Safety

91% of fifth graders, 80% of eighth graders, and 81% of 11th graders in Delaware feel **safe at school**.

College Readiness

Only 22% of the graduating class in Delaware is **meeting or exceeding** the college readiness benchmark of at least 1550 on the SAT.

Youth Unemployment

12% of young adults (ages 20-24) in Delaware are **unemployed**.

College Completion

Only 54% of Delawareans ages 18-24 have **attained education greater than a high school diploma**, including some college—a two-year, four-year, or advanced degree.

Global Performance

Researchers estimate **Delaware ranks 21st** (out of 34 countries) in reading, 28th in science, and 31st in math on the PISA.

By 2025

95% of students will be **consistently engaged**.

Delaware's aspiration is to be top 10 in the country across all levels. 52% of fourth graders and 43% of eighth graders will be **proficient or advanced in math**.

Delaware's aspiration is to be top 10 in the country across all levels. 48% of fourth graders and 43% of eighth graders will be **proficient or advanced in reading**.

100% of students will feel **safe at school**.

Delaware will double the percentage of the graduating class **meeting or exceeding** the college readiness benchmark on the SAT to 50%.

Delaware will **cut the unemployment rate** for young adults (ages 20-24) in half to 6%.

65% will attain education **beyond high school**.

Delaware's aspiration is to be **top 10 globally** in reading, science, and math.

Get Involved

Your support is needed to help deliver on the promise of Student Success. We invite you to find the core area or issue of Student Success 2025 that resonates most strongly for you, and look for ways you can contribute.

Join the Vision Coalition in reimagining the future of learning, and to help make Student Success 2025 a reality:



✓ **Voice your support** by calling, writing, and engaging online.

Contact your legislators, local government leaders, school board members, superintendents, and school leaders to let them know you support this effort.

✓ **Vote** for candidates that will support education. Ask elected officials what they are doing to support public schools. Encourage others to vote for local school board candidates, not just state elected officials.

✓ **Share** the plan with your family, neighbors, colleagues, and networks. We have heard from many of you already, but we know there are many more Delawareans who have a contribution to make.

✓ **Participate** in your child's school or in a school in your community, or engage with a community group, PTA, and programs that support our public schools. Get involved.

✓ **Support students** by volunteering to mentor a child. Read with your children or others. Provide internship opportunities at your workplace.

✓ **Stay updated and engaged** with www.visioncoalitionde.org for more information about Student Success 2025 and current activities and events, along with links where you can share your ideas and sign up for electronic updates.

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The Vision Coalition Leadership Team would like to thank all members of the Steering Committee and Working Groups. For the full list of contributors, please visit www.visioncoalitionde.org. For a full list of footnotes and citations, see the full Student Success 2025 report.

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