



## Delaware 2012 Annual Performance Report Summary

**Lead Agency:** Delaware Office of Early Learning

**Participating State Agencies:** Delaware Department of Education, Department of Health and Social Services, and Department for Children, Youth, and their Families

**Amount of Grant:** \$49,878,774

### **Focused Investment Areas Addressed:**

(C)(1) Developing and using statewide, high-quality Early Learning and Development Standards.  
(C)(3) Identifying and addressing the health, behavioral, and developmental needs of Children with High Needs to improve school readiness.

(D)(1) Developing a Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework and a progression of credentials.

(D)(2) Supporting Early Childhood Educators in improving their knowledge, skills, and abilities.

(E)(1) Understanding the status of children's learning and development at kindergarten entry.

### **Highlights of 2012 Accomplishments (excerpted from Executive Summary):**

In 2012, Delaware made progress in all four of its Early Learning Challenge goals,

#### **Goal 1: Expand comprehensive screening and follow-up for young children**

- **Health providers engaged to increase developmental screening using a validated screening tool:** The Delaware Challenge increased physician participation in developmental screening by engaging 20 new practices in developmental screening using PEDS (Parents' Evaluation of Developmental Status). Nemours (a private health provider Challenge partner) has engaged 7 of 10 physician practices in using PEDS;
- **Developmental screening supports developed for programs in Stars/QRIS:** Ages and Stages Questionnaire (including the social emotional screen) was identified as the validated screening instrument for the Challenge for Stars programs.
- **Outreach to increase links to services and follow-up services:** Help Me Grow (birth–5 initiative) Call Center has more staff and is getting more calls. Health Ambassadors are conducting outreach to link families of young children to needed services;
- **Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Doubled Capacity:** Nine full-time equivalency licensed behavioral health consultants provide child- and program-specific consultation and training for early educators across the state, increasing educator's skills in effectively interacting with young children and managing challenging behaviors;
- **Clinical training increased access to treatment for young children and families:** 45 community therapists have been trained to use Parent-Child Interaction Therapy

(PCIT) with fidelity to increase access for young children and their families to this evidence-based treatment.

**Goal 2: Expand Stars and move children with high needs into Stars**

- **Stars programs increased in Delaware.** 322 programs are now participating in the Stars QRIS (exceeding that target by 45%);
- **More children with high needs participated in Stars programs:** 60% of children with high needs are now participating in Stars/QRIS-rated programs
- **Innovative strategies supporting Stars developed:** Requests for Proposal were developed to implement three new programs to support Stars: CORE Awards (Compensation, Retention and Education) for early childhood educators, ELLI (Early Learning Leadership Initiative) to strengthen early learning directors, and the Infrastructure Fund to provide financial assistance for improvement to the physical plant or to acquire technology, encouraging public schools and public charters to participate in Stars;
- **QRIS evaluation planning advanced:** Stakeholder input was provided to inform the refinement of the evaluation questions which will result in an RFP for the Stars external evaluation for release early in 2013.

**Goal 3: Build connections between early learning and the K-12 schools**

- **Early Learner Survey implemented successfully:** 20% of Delaware's Kindergarten teachers conducting the Delaware Early Learner Survey with more than 1,000 children to observe and document their developing skills and abilities. Teachers and other school partners will enhance the survey instrument for use in Year Two as Delaware continues its phased in approach to the Early Learner Survey;
- **Local Delaware Readiness Teams are being formed across the state:** A managing partner was identified to guide implementation and conduct outreach to generate application development for this new place-based initiative to improve linkages between early childhood to early elementary (Ready Families + Ready Schools + Ready Early Care and Education Programs + Ready Communities = Ready Children);
- **Work with high schools:** Work began in year one to enhance the alignment of high school early childhood curricula with the Delaware Early Learning Foundations, Workforce Competencies and career lattice, ultimately providing students with Delaware-specific content knowledge;

**Goal 4: Create a sustainable system with strong parent and community engagement and advocacy**

- **Challenge participating state agencies formed a new Early Learning Leadership Team**
- **Delaware Early Childhood Council created new committees which align with Challenge goals:** the Council established four new committees (Whole Child Health and Development, Quality Early Learning, Birth to 8 Alignment, and Early Childhood Systems), which align respectively with the four Challenge grant goals;
- **A parent and community engagement plan:** Challenge partners developed the plan which now guides and supports engagement events and initiatives, maximizing Delaware's potential to develop strong stakeholder engagement and advocacy;

- **Delaware early childhood e-news:** This electronic news bulletin was created in year one and is distributed monthly to nearly 2,500 early childhood providers, community partners, agency staff and advocates throughout the state to provide regular updates on the activities under the Challenge grant, along with other relevant information.