## The Delaware Elementary Science Initiative (DE ESI)

| Initiated: | 1995 |
| Grade Levels: | K-5 |
| Location: | Delaware (statewide: all 19 school districts) |
| Primary Partners: | DuPont, AstraZeneca, Agilent Technologies |
| Number Affected: | 3000 K-5 teachers; >200,000 professional development hours. |

### Project Purpose

**Goals:** To ensure that today’s students in Delaware achieve the level of competency in science required to become tomorrow’s knowledge intensity employees and informed consumers of science-based products and services.

**Primary Activities:** School District Strategic Planning; K-5 Teacher Professional Development; Targeted Curriculum Development; Statewide Materials Center; Technical Support for Implementation and for Assessment; Legislative Interface.

### Project Summary

The DE ESI is a conceptual framework for implementing systemic reform of K-8 science education in Delaware’s public schools. (The framework traces its roots to 1972 when DuPont partnered with the NSF in the pilot of the Delaware Model, a “systems-oriented” model for science education reform.) The framework provides an integrated, collaborative approach for implementing inquiry-based science instruction and hands-on science materials; for improving K-5 teachers’ science content knowledge and pedagogical skills; and for aligning assessment with instruction.

### Project Accomplishments/ Results

- **1995:** Created the Delaware Science Coalition (DSC) to plan, pilot, and coordinate statewide implementation of the DE Science Standards.
- **1995:** Founded the Delaware Foundation for Science & Mathematics Education to engage business stakeholders in science education reform.
- **1996:** Instituted Science Resources Center to house, distribute, and refurbish materials.
- **1997:** Received $6.2 million NSF grant to institutionalize K-5 science reform statewide.
- **2002:** Reported 90% of 4th graders, 74% of 6th graders met or exceeded grade-level standards on DSTP statewide assessment.
- **Awards:** 1997: Superstars in Education Award (DE State Chamber of Commerce) 1998: Best in Class Award (The Conference Board)

### Forward Plans

Presently extending DE ESI to grades 6-8. Seeking NSF MSP funding to address under-certified teachers (grades 6-8); to develop core curricula (grades 9-10); and to develop advanced curricula (STEM career pathway).