



DELAWARE READINESS TEAMS (DEL TEAMS)
Making a difference in your community
December, 2012

Join with other members of your community to support young children's school readiness!

The Delaware Office of Early Learning (OEL), in cooperation with its managing partner, the Delaware Early Childhood Center (DECC), is seeking applications for participation in its new place-based strategy, Delaware Readiness Teams (DEL TEAMS). Funded by the Early Learning Challenge Grant in partnership with private foundations and corporations, DEL TEAMS is a state-wide initiative that offers a unique opportunity for communities to build strong and reciprocal linkages between early learning and K-12 schools and to support young children's, birth through age 8, readiness for school and for life.

What are Delaware Readiness Teams (DEL TEAMS)?

Delaware Readiness Teams are an exciting way to bring together community leaders to use Delaware's School Readiness Equation as the foundation for creating or expanding systems of support for young children, birth to age 8, and their families.

$$\begin{aligned} & \textit{Ready Families} \\ & + \textit{Ready Schools} \\ & + \textit{Ready Early Care and Education Programs} \\ & + \textit{Ready Communities} \\ & = \textit{Ready Children} \end{aligned}$$

This equation promotes a multi-faceted community approach to readiness that includes children's health, learning and development, early learning programs' and schools' connections, and the provision of family resources and services as a model that best prepares children for school success. Through the completion of a community assessment and action plan, the Delaware Readiness Teams will engage in new strategies to align and coordinate programs and services.

What are the benefits of participating?

- DEL TEAMS will bring together partnerships of families, early childhood and K-12 educators, health care, human services, and civic leaders to make school readiness and the needs of young children a high priority.
- Both the K-12 schools and the early care and education programs will understand their community's strengths and needs to better design environments and instruction that support their students' readiness and success.

Who can participate?

The Delaware Readiness Team composition is critical for the success of the DEL TEAM. Each group must identify a diverse and comprehensive set of key stakeholders within the community whose work supports at-risk families and children, birth through age 8. DEL TEAM membership should include representatives from early care and education programs, elementary schools, health and social service agencies, home visiting programs, Head Start, Special Education (birth to age 3 Early Intervention and Part B 619, ages 3 to 5), before/after school programs, and community and business leaders. Family representatives are essential members whose voice will offer a unique perspective. Additional members that enhance the team's composition may come from child-focused organizations such as higher education, a philanthropic representative or a children's librarian. Health promotion and prevention programs will further enhance this composition.

Where are the Delaware Readiness Teams located?

All of Delaware's communities are invited to form Delaware Readiness Teams. Priority will be given to those DEL TEAMS that are being established in eight Priority Zones located throughout the state with a goal of launching as many as twenty DEL TEAMS in the three Delaware's counties. Each DEL Team will determine its own geographic boundaries, either within a portion of a Priority Zone or outside of those defined areas. The Priority Zones have been identified through the mapping of multiple data sources including research from the United Way, Delaware Department of Education and Delaware Department of Health and Social Services. They are areas with high populations of at-risk children and their families and are being selected because of the numerous risk factors within these Zones that confront children's success.

What are the available resources?

Delaware Readiness Team facilitators will be available throughout the life of the grant to offer technical assistance, resources, and professional development to support each DEL TEAM's operational efforts.

Funding is available to initiate DEL TEAMS within communities in the first year. Subsequent years' funding requests will require a small school district contribution. This contribution is the beginning step toward sustainability, encouraging the DEL TEAM to consider and identify strategies for maintaining momentum and operation after the life of the grant.

How do I learn more about the Delaware Readiness Teams?

The Delaware Early Childhood Center (DECC) will host county informational sessions that will further describe the DEL TEAM initiative and answer questions about this important place-based strategy for early learning. Locations are as follows:

January 14	James Williams State Service Center, Dover, 2:00-4:00
January 16	Floyd Hudson State Service Center, Newark, 3:00-5:00
January 17	Woodlawn Public Library, Wilmington, 2:00-4:00
January 22	Georgetown State Service Center, Georgetown, 2:00-4:00
February 25	James Williams State Service Center, Dover, 2:00-4:00
February 26	Georgetown State Service Center, Georgetown, 2:00-4:00
February 27	Woodlawn Public Library, Wilmington, 4:00-6:00
February 28	Floyd Hudson State Service Center, Newark, 2:00-4:00

Please register for the January events by Thursday, January 10 and the February events by February 22, 2013 by contacting Amanda Walker at 302-398-8945, x103.

How do I apply?

Interested stakeholders are encouraged to gather prospective team representatives to submit a Letter of Interest by February 15, 2013. The Letter of Interest, while not binding or required, will inform the Delaware Early Childhood Center (DECC) and the Office of Early Learning of potential statewide interest. A sample letter is included in the Delaware Readiness Application packet. Short Community Applications will be submitted to DECC by April 8, 2013. Notification of acceptance, funding resources and technical assistance will be made by April 19, 2013.

Who can I contact for additional information?

Additional Delaware Readiness Team information, guidance in developing DEL TEAM composition or for completing the Letter of Interest and Application is available through the Delaware Early Childhood Center (DECC). Please contact Sherlynn Aurelio, Delaware Readiness Team Project Manager: saurelio@lf.k12.de.us, 302-228-5660.



Thank you to our funding partners and supporters.