

Delaware Schools Campaign – Request for Information 2012



**State of Delaware
Department of Education**

Delaware Schools Campaign

Request for Information

RFI 2013-08

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1. Introduction

1.1. Background

The Delaware public school system has made measurable improvements in student outcomes over the past decade. Delaware is ranked third in the nation in improving math, reading and science achievement from 1992 to 2011. The strategic plan of 2009 strengthened collaboration between educators, parents, community members, funders and supporters. In 2010, Delaware was recognized by the federal government as having the best statewide plan to further strengthen its public schools through the national “Race to the Top” competition. Delaware is now near the midpoint of implementing its four-year plan to become one of the best performing school systems in the country.

Both Delaware’s traditional public schools and charter schools offer Delawareans a wide array of high-quality choices and unique offerings. Delaware has elementary schools with Chinese and Spanish language immersion programs beginning in kindergarten and high schools with rigorous international baccalaureate curriculum, cutting edge programs in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) and award-winning programs in the arts.

Right now Delaware is adopting the common core standards, using data with increasing sophistication to improve student success and making unprecedented investments in early childhood education. Delaware schools are poised to become national and international exemplars.

Delaware has been recognized repeatedly on the national level for its innovation and measurable successes by those in the field of education, however, the quality of Delaware public schools is not consistently well know within and around Delaware.

The Delaware public schools campaign was created to ensure that these great strengths and momentum are better known, particularly among populations that traditionally choose other education options. The campaign will develop and implement ways to promote our schools’ strengths, based on effective practices in Delaware and across the country.

Most importantly, the campaign will energize our communities, publicize the opportunities available to Delaware children, and encourage businesses to locate and grow in Delaware.

1.2. Delaware Schools Campaign Objective

The objective of the Delaware Schools Campaign is to ensure that the Delaware public school system’s strengths and momentum are better know by enhancing and promoting the value of our schools.

1.3. Purpose of Request for Information

The State of Delaware is in the process of communicating to stakeholders the objective and initial thinking regarding the Delaware Schools Campaign and soliciting their feedback.

The purpose of the RFI is to obtain information about how to achieve this objective.

Specifically; 1) what information should we be sharing on our schools? 2) Who should we be sharing that information with? 3) How should we be sharing that information? 4) How will we measure our success in reaching our objective?

We are seeking the expertise of the vendor community in order to understand possible internal or external approaches to determine what to communicate; what tools, techniques, methods and mediums of communication we should use; and what method of analysis should be applied to determine our effectiveness in achieving this objective.

1.4. Intent of Request for Information (RFI)

The intent of this RFI is to elicit the advice and best analysis of knowledgeable persons in the vendor community, not to select a proposed solution or a vendor. Subsequently, and incorporating knowledge gained from the response to this RFI, the State may issue a Request for Proposal (RFP). The collective information provided by vendors will be used to develop alternatives for consideration and to estimate costs related to acquisition of a proposed solution.

It must be clearly understood that this RFI is being used as a vehicle to obtain information from experts about possible implementation methods and potential suppliers of implementation services. This RFI should not be interpreted as a contract (implicit, explicit, or implied), nor does it imply any form of an agreement to candidate vendors. This RFI does not create vested contract rights. It is merely solicited for informational purposes. In addition, no inference should be made that the State will adopt or implement in the future any recommendations proposed by the vendors responding to this RFI. The State may, however, use responses to this RFI to build one or more RFPs.

While vendor qualification information may be provided in response to this RFI, only vendor information submitted in response to any eventual RFP will be used to make the vendor selection.

No cost associated with responding to this RFI may be charged to the State of Delaware for any reason.

2. Delaware Schools Campaign Implementation Approach

The purpose of this section is to provide an overview of the factors that are being considered by the State in the approach to and implementation of the Delaware Schools Campaign to ensure that the campaign is aligned with the needs of the State.

2.1. Statement of Factors

The State is seeking information on the implementation of the Delaware Schools Campaign that will be 1) linked to the overall goals of Delaware’s Education plan and Race to the Top objectives 2) be authentic to, and inclusive of the various and diverse strengths of Delaware schools, and 3) provide in part or in whole a sustainable product and/or model that can be maintained to ensure the objective continues to be met in the future.

- Stakeholder Involvement

Delaware’s plan is based on a clear vision and theory of action. At the foundation of the plan is collaboration between educators, communities and all Delawareans. The State understands that communicating the strength of our schools has the potential to also increase community investment and involvement in schools, increase respect for educators, increase educator job satisfaction, increase parent and community participation, and increase students’ investment in their own achievement. The increase in these things contributes to attracting and retaining talented educators. The involvement of parents, principals, superintendents, teachers, students, community leaders, businesses leaders, and policy makers is important to the success of this effort.

- Sustainability

The Delaware Schools Campaign is envisioned as a focused effort for improving communication and a public information campaign. However, the lasting effects and long-term impact of the Delaware Schools Campaign are important to all of our stakeholders. The usability, adaptability and sustainability of the deliverables of the Delaware Schools Campaign are important. How the Delaware Schools Campaign can be integrated into, or create new systems and routines for the Delaware Department of Education, school districts, and school routines are factors the state is considering.

- Media, Medium and Technical Approach

In order for campaign materials to remain relevant after the close of the Delaware Schools Campaign, the format, medium, template or tool kit must be able to remain relevant and accurate. Working ideas such as a digital PR tool kit, common template FAQ document, website improvements on the DDOE level or on the district or school level must be compatible with existing technical environments and systems. The medium of communication; e.g. cable television, social media, news media or other medium may be different for diverse communities in our State, and various target audiences. The methods we use to communicate the good things that are happening in Delaware public schools needs to reach various audiences within and beyond our state borders. A comprehensive

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approach that reaches various target audiences such as realtors, HR directors, mortgage brokers, as well as businesses, early childhood providers, parents, students and teachers should be undertaken. An approach that understands both Delaware’s demographic diversity, and the diversity of our audiences is important.

In addition to Department of Education standards, all systems must also adhere to State technology and communication standards. More information can be found here. <http://dti.delaware.gov/information/standards-policies.shtml>.

- Diverse Delaware School Strengths

The campaign’s objective to make better known the Delaware public school systems strengths and momentum should encompass the broad and diverse assets of Delaware public schools. Currently, the DDOE website is the primary source for state-sponsored information on Delaware schools. Individual districts and schools have their own online and printed materials, but those materials vary widely. Improving the usability and accessibility of existing data is not enough. A more holistic approach is needed. All the things that make Delaware Schools unique, such as specialized offerings within Delaware’s traditional public schools, a strong charter school network with a broad array of options, STEM learning within and around schools, CTE programs, after-school programs and sports activities, special education programs, and supportive school communities should also be promoted.

- Student Learning

A dynamic campaign approach that includes student learning; imparting media, marketing or technical skills to Delaware students would be valuable. Students are authentic voices and ambassadors of their schools. The Delaware Schools Campaign is an opportunity to celebrate and promote Delaware schools as well as teach to and learn from our students.

- Measures of Success

The State understands that communicating a message and changing opinions and resulting behaviors are two separate endeavors. The state considers a plan to measure the success of the campaign as an integral part of the implementation of the campaign.

3. Request for Information

The Request for Information outlines the information that respondents are requested to submit in their response to this RFI. Please use this format. Additional instructions for submission follow in section 4. Vendor Logistics.

3.1. Respondent's Organization and Primary Contact

Please complete the following information regarding your organization's corporate headquarters, local office, and primary contact for any questions pertaining to your organization's response to this RFI.

ORGANIZATION HEADQUARTERS INFORMATION:

Company Name:

Address:

City, State & Zip:

Company Size: (Total Number of Employees)

REGIONAL OR LOCAL OFFICE INFORMATION:

Address:

City, State & Zip:

Primary Contact:

Phone: Fax:

E-mail:

PRIMARY CONTACT INFORMATION RFI:

Name: Title:

Address:

City, State & Zip:

Phone: Fax:

E-mail:

3.2. Plans, Approach and Measures of Success

1. What information should we be sharing on Delaware Public Schools? What is unique about Delaware Public Schools? What key messages should all Delaware education stakeholders share?
2. How should we be sharing that information immediately and on an on-going basis? What mediums should we use? How should we share this information within and outside of Delaware?
3. How do we reach different target audiences/stakeholder groups ?
4. Should the information we share to different target audiences/ stakeholders be the same or different?

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5. How can existing channels of communication currently delivering information about Delaware schools be improved? What new channels could be used? Are there existing channels of communication that are sharing other public information that the Delaware Schools Campaign should consider?
6. Are there effective practices in other countries or states that you think the Delaware Schools Campaign should emulate and initiate? What makes them stand out?
7. Describe the technologies or media tools you would use. Is there anything about this media outlet or technology that would present a challenge in Delaware? What technical difficulties may the Delaware Schools Campaign encounter? How could they be avoided?
8. Based on your review of the objective of the Delaware Schools Campaign, what are the major challenges you think the campaign will face? How could these be overcome?
9. Just as important as the campaign materials or message is the delivery and presentation of the message by individuals who speak about our schools. A positive customer service experience when entering a school, the endorsement of a parent, or advice from a real estate agent about neighborhood schools are interactions that affect public perception of Delaware Schools. How would your organization improve how School and District personnel, parents, relocation specialists, and HR Directors and others communicate information about Delaware Public Schools?
10. An effective Delaware Schools Campaign may change, create or strengthen existing systems, routines or communication channels within and between DDOE, Districts, Schools, and the community. Please provide an overview of how your organization would approach integrating the Delaware Schools Campaign into existing systems and structures. How would your organization capitalize on existing resources or strength existing capacity? How would this approach provide the greatest benefit to Delaware and Delaware Public Schools?
11. How can the Delaware Schools campaign measure its success? What base line data collection is needed, if any? What available statistical information, if any, should be referenced to direct the efforts of the campaign? What data, if any, should be tracked and analyzed to evaluate the success of the Delaware Schools Campaign? Should surveys, focus groups, or other market research tools play a role in directing the campaign or measuring its' success?
12. Does your organization have a track record of successful project implementation in the in the K-12 environment? In public communication campaigns? In Delaware? Does your organization have a track record with any particular stakeholder group; schools, parents, early learning providers, HR Directors? Please describe your organization's background in this area.

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13. Based on your review of the objective of the Campaign, what do you feel is a reasonable time frame, from kick-off through implementation? How should the campaign implementation align with the school year? Are there events within or outside Delaware that the campaign should consider participating in or collaborating with in reaching it's objective?
14. Please provide a pricing model or cost information. Please include a general overview of the cost of a campaign that meets the objective both initially and any ongoing support costs if applicable. What are your assumptions that support this estimate? Considering a cost benefit analysis, how would you prioritize different initiatives within your recommended approach?
15. Please give any additional information you feel is relevant and not covered above.

3.3. Request for Proposals

Based on the results of this RFI the State will determine whether to issue an RFP for some, all or none of the aspects of the Delaware Schools Campaign.

4. Vendor Logistics

4.1. Timeline for Response Submissions

Please submit one hard copy and one electronic copy of your response by **December 7, 2012**. Your response must be received at the addresses below by **3:00 PM EST**. The electronic version of your response should be emailed to Laurel Lichty; laurel.lichty@doe.k12.de.us. Please direct the hard copy response to Emily Falcon at the below address. Include the reference **“2013-08 – RFI – Delaware Schools Campaign”** on the mailing.

The hard copy response should be sent to:

Emily Falcon
Delaware Department of Education
401 Federal Street, Suite 2
Dover, Delaware 19901

4.2. Questions and Response Delivery

Please submit any questions or requests for clarification of this RFI electronically by posing your questions on the DDOE website <http://www.doe.k12.de.us/rfplisting/>. Responses to questions will be posted online. No questions will be answered after Friday **November 30, 2012**. Please do not contact other State of Delaware or Department of Education staff. A copy of the questions and responses will be available at <http://bids.delaware.gov>

4.3. Response Format

Please prepare and submit one hard and one electronic copy of your response using Microsoft Office software. To facilitate a timely and comprehensive analysis of all responses submitted, please utilize the format and numbering presented in this RFI, with the questions repeated and followed by your response. Responses should be prepared simply and economically, providing a straightforward and concise narrative. Supplemental materials may be provided, but only those directed specifically at the issues contained in this RFI should be submitted.

4.4. Vendor Presentations

The State may elect to schedule meetings with vendors responding to this RFI to receive demonstrations of referenced systems, as well as to solicit additional information and clarification of the information presented. The decision to schedule meetings will be made following review of all RFI responses.

4.5. Proprietary Material

Any information contained in any response to this RFI that the vendor believes is proprietary must be clearly designated as such. Responses declaring the entire RFI response or an entire section proprietary will be neither accepted nor honored and will be rejected. If, after opening all bids in response to a possible subsequent RFP, a request is made to view any response to this RFI, the State of Delaware will comply with that request pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act. To the extent any information contained in a response to this RFI is marked as proprietary, such information will not be made available to the requestor until the affected vendor has been given an opportunity to provide an appropriate response, however, the State reserves the right under FOIA to disclose any information submitted.

The vendor should clearly identify any materials, which constitute valuable formulae, designs, drawings, or research data or any materials otherwise claimed to be to be confidential trade secrets, along with a citation to the applicable statutory provisions supporting such a claim for confidentiality. Failure to so label materials as such, or failure to respond within ten days of notice of a request for access to materials submitted pursuant to this RFI, may be deemed a waiver by the vendor of any claim that such materials are, in fact, confidential. The State's sole responsibility shall be limited to maintaining the above data in a secure area and to notify any vendor of any request(s) for disclosure as soon as practicable from date of receipt of any such request.