



FOR SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS EDUCATION  
"Encouraging excellence in science and math education"

January 31, 2017

To the Joint Legislative Oversight and Sunset Committee:

Since its inception in 1995, Delaware Foundation for Science and Mathematics Education (DFSME) has been essential in the orchestration of effective systemic reform in science and math education in Delaware's public school grades K through 10.

DFSME began and still exists to bring together K-12 education, higher education, state and local government and businesses. The State Board of Education (SBE) has been represented on DFSME's board of directors from the onset. We share with SBE a common focus on ensuring educational success for every student in Delaware, and we work with the State Board in bringing together the many working parts needed to have a measurable impact on improving science and math education in Delaware. Our partnership facilitated the success of the Smithsonian LASER program to the extent that Delaware saw the largest increase in student performance in science of all states from 1995 to 2005.

DFSME advocates adoption of world-class standards; enables the piloting, evaluation, adaptation and implementation of innovative and effective STEM programs in Delaware schools, and works to improve the performance of all Delaware students so that they all graduate from high school ready for careers, college, and success in the global economy. Our interaction with SBE provides crucial input in determining which programs will have maximum impact. In addition, the partnership between DFSME, SBE and the Delaware STEM Council saw the introduction of a state-centralized information source of STEM programs, activities, legislation and opinions. As well, the collaboration produced the recognition of excellence in STEM teaching through the founding of the annual STEM Education Awards and Symposium.

DFSME is known for advocating a broad definition of STEM that is understood by students, parents, teachers, and businesses. Through our partnerships with agencies such as SBE as well as other organizations and business, we ensure that teachers have the training and skills to present STEM in a knowledgeable, engaging and inspiring way and that their professional development is both coordinated and ongoing. We communicate the many excellent programs that currently exist in Delaware and encourage the coordination between those who run such programs and those who seek such programs so that systemic change becomes possible, and to improve and better define the sustainable impact of high-quality STEM education.

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