

## Overview of Middle Grades Pilot

- Building on the nationally recognized career pathways initiative at the high school level, Delaware practitioners and policy makers agreed: We needed to “start earlier.”
- Delaware is leading the nation again by rethinking middle grades (grades five through eight) from an equity- and student-centered lens in preparing young people for the road ahead.
- Part of the Delaware Pathways initiative, this programming will help middle schoolers identify areas of interest, build bridges to high school, and drive their journey as they select schools, pathways, and future opportunities.

*The goal of rethinking middle grades is to ensure every student enters high school having found success in career education, academic, and social-emotional programming in middle grades that inspires their identity and a path to postsecondary success.*

**Exploration Pilots and Student Impact.** This work has reached **5,500 middle school students so far through 10 pilots across Delaware**. These pilots include equitable, strong supports and programming for middle grade students where they can explore, learn, and meaningfully connect their passions to their community, careers, and postsecondary paths. The aspiration is to take this statewide, to 30,000 students, over time.

**Increasing Equitable Opportunities through Early Exploration.** Led by a steering committee of diverse partners in communities, schools, industries, and organizations across Delaware, this work focuses on creating equitable, strong supports and programming for middle grade students to meaningfully connect exploration, learning, and a positive self-image to occupations and their community.

The steering committee and other partners across the state have built foundational resources to support this work. These resources include: an equity framework, exploration standards for middle grades, and a profile of a high school ready student.



*"I think definitely middle school is where it starts. You have to start there. Because I know high school is all about careers."*

-Yelitza Ortiz-Uscanga, Delaware student and co-designer of the Profile of a High School Ready Student

**For more information:** Please go to [this blog](#) and the Delaware Career Pathways site [here](#).