

Framework for 21st Century Learning



Member Organizations

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- American Association of School Librarians
- Apple
- BellSouth Foundation
- Cable in the Classroom
- Cisco Systems, Inc.
- Corporation for Public Broadcasting
- Dell Inc.
- EF Education
- Educational Testing Service
- Ford Motor Company Fund
- Intel Foundation
- JA Worldwide
- LeapFrog SchoolHouse
- McGraw-Hill Education
- Microsoft Corporation
- National Education Association
- Oracle Education Foundation
- Pearson Education
- Riverdeep Incorporated
- SAP
- SAS
- Texas Instruments Incorporated
- Thomson GAlE
- Verizon

The Partnership for 21st Century Skills has developed a unified, collective vision for 21st century learning that can be used to strengthen American education.

1 Core subjects. The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, which reauthorizes the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, identifies the core subjects as English, reading or language arts; mathematics; science; foreign languages; civics; government; economics; arts; history; and geography.

2 21st century content. Several significant, emerging content areas are critical to success in communities and workplaces. These content areas typically are not emphasized in schools today:

- Global awareness
- Financial, economic, business and entrepreneurial literacy
- Civic literacy
- Health and wellness awareness

3 Learning and thinking skills. As much as students need to learn academic content, they also need to know how to keep learning — and make effective and innovative use of what they know — throughout their lives. Learning and thinking skills are comprised of:

- Critical-thinking and problem-solving skills
- Communication skills
- Creativity and innovation skills
- Collaboration skills
- Contextual learning skills
- Information and media literacy skills

4 ICT literacy. Information and communications technology (ICT) literacy is the ability to use technology to develop 21st century content knowledge and skills, in the context of learning core subjects. Students must be able to use technology to learn content and skills — so that they know *how* to learn, think critically, solve problems, use information, communicate, innovate and collaborate.

5 Life skills. Good teachers have always incorporated life skills into their pedagogy. The challenge today is to incorporate these essential skills into schools deliberately, strategically and broadly. Life skills include:

- Leadership
- Ethics
- Accountability
- Adaptability
- Personal productivity
- Personal responsibility
- People skills
- Self-direction
- Social responsibility

6 21st century assessments. Authentic 21st century assessments are the essential foundation of a 21st century education. Assessments must measure all five results that matter — core subjects; 21st century content; learning and thinking skills; ICT literacy; and life skills.

To be effective, sustainable and affordable, assessments must use modern technologies to increase efficiency and timeliness. Standardized tests alone can measure only a few of the important skills and knowledge students should learn. A balance of assessments, including high-quality standardized testing along with effective classroom assessments, offers students a powerful way to master the content and skills central to success.

