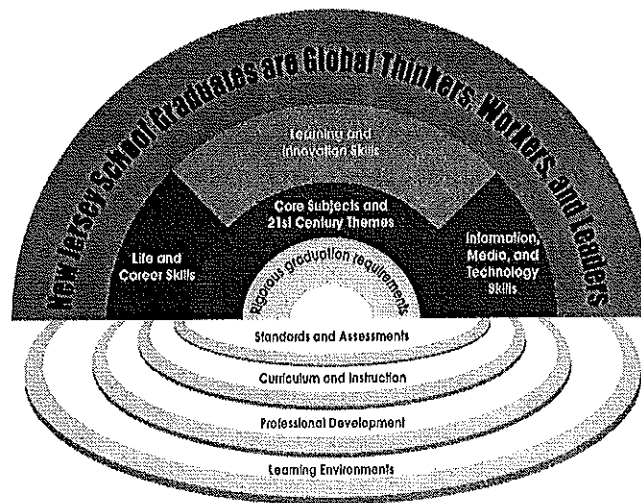


New Jersey's Education Plan: Preparing Global Thinkers, Workers and Leaders

Framework Description

The Partnership for 21st Century Skills has developed a unified, collective vision for 21st century learning that can be used to strengthen New Jersey education. The key elements of 21st century learning are represented in the graphic and descriptions below. The graphic represents both 21st century skills student outcomes (as represented by the arches of the rainbow) and 21st century skills support systems (as represented by the pools at the bottom). The outcome for students will be the achievement of a New Jersey diploma that rigorously represents the ability to function as a global thinker, worker and leader.



21ST CENTURY STUDENT OUTCOMES:

The elements described in this section as "21st century student outcomes" (represented by the rainbow) are the skills, knowledge and expertise students should master to succeed in work and life in the 21st century.

1. Core Subjects and 21st Century Themes

In addition to the nine New Jersey Core Curriculum Content areas, we believe schools must move beyond a focus on basic competency in core subjects to promoting understanding of academic content at much higher levels by weaving 21st century interdisciplinary themes into core subjects:

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

2. Learning and Innovation Skills
 - Creativity and Innovation Skills
 - Critical Thinking and Problem Solving Skills
 - Communication and Collaboration Skills
3. Information, Media and Technology Skills
 - Information Literacy
 - Media Literacy
 - ICT Literacy
4. Life and Career Skills
 - Flexibility & Adaptability
 - Initiative & Self-Direction
 - Social & Cross-Cultural Skills
 - Productivity & Accountability
 - Leadership & Responsibility

21ST CENTURY SUPPORT SYSTEMS:

The elements described below are the critical systems necessary to ensure student mastery of 21st century skills. 21st century standards, assessments, curriculum, instruction, professional development and learning environments must be aligned to produce a support system that produces 21st century outcomes for today's students.

1. 21st Century Standards
 - Focuses on 21st century skills, content knowledge and expertise.
 - Builds understanding across and among core subjects as well as 21st century interdisciplinary themes
 - Emphasizes deep understanding rather than shallow knowledge
 - Engages students with the real world data, tools, and experts they will encounter in college, on the job, and in life--students learn best when actively engaged in solving meaningful problems
 - Allows for multiple measures of mastery
2. Assessment of 21st Century Skills
 - Supports a balance of assessments, including high-quality standardized testing along with effective classroom formative and summative assessments
 - Emphasizes useful feedback on student performance that is embedded into everyday learning
 - Requires a balance of technology-enhanced, formative and summative assessments that measure student mastery of 21st century skills
 - Enables development of portfolios of student work that demonstrate mastery of 21st century skills to educators and prospective employers
 - Enables a balanced portfolio of measures to assess the educational system's effectiveness at reaching high levels of student competency in 21st century skills
3. 21st Century Curriculum and Instruction

- Teaches 21st century skills discretely in the context of core subjects and 21st century interdisciplinary themes
- Focuses on providing opportunities for applying 21st century skills across content areas and for a competency-based approach to learning
- Enables innovative learning methods that integrate the use of supportive technologies, inquiry- and problem-based approaches and higher order thinking skills
- Encourages the integration of community resources beyond school walls

4. 21st Century Professional Development

- Highlights ways teachers can seize opportunities for integrating 21st century skills, tools and teaching strategies into their classroom practice — and help them identify what activities they can replace/de-emphasize.
- Balances direct instruction with project-oriented teaching methods
- Illustrates how a deeper understanding of subject matter can actually enhance problem-solving, critical thinking, and other 21st century skills.
- Enables 21st century professional learning communities for teachers that models the kinds of classroom learning that best promotes 21st century skills for students
- Cultivates teachers' ability to identify students' particular learning styles, intelligences, strengths and weaknesses
- Helps teachers develop their abilities to use various strategies (such as formative assessments) to reach diverse students and to create environments that support differentiated teaching and learning
- Supports the continuous evaluation of students' 21st century skills development
- Encourages knowledge sharing among communities of practitioners, using face-to-face, virtual and blended communications
- Uses a scaleable and sustainable model of professional development

5. 21st Century Learning Environments

- Creates learning practices, human support and physical environments that will support the teaching and learning of 21st century skill outcomes
- Supports professional learning communities that enable educators to collaborate, share best practices and integrate 21st century skills into classroom practice
- Enables students to learn in relevant, real world 21st century contexts (e.g., through project-based or other applied work)
- Allows equitable access to quality learning tools, technologies and resources
- Provides 21st century architectural and interior designs for group, team and individual learning.
- Supports expanded community and international involvement in learning, both face-to-face and online

For more information, visit the Partnership's website at www.21stcenturyskills.org