

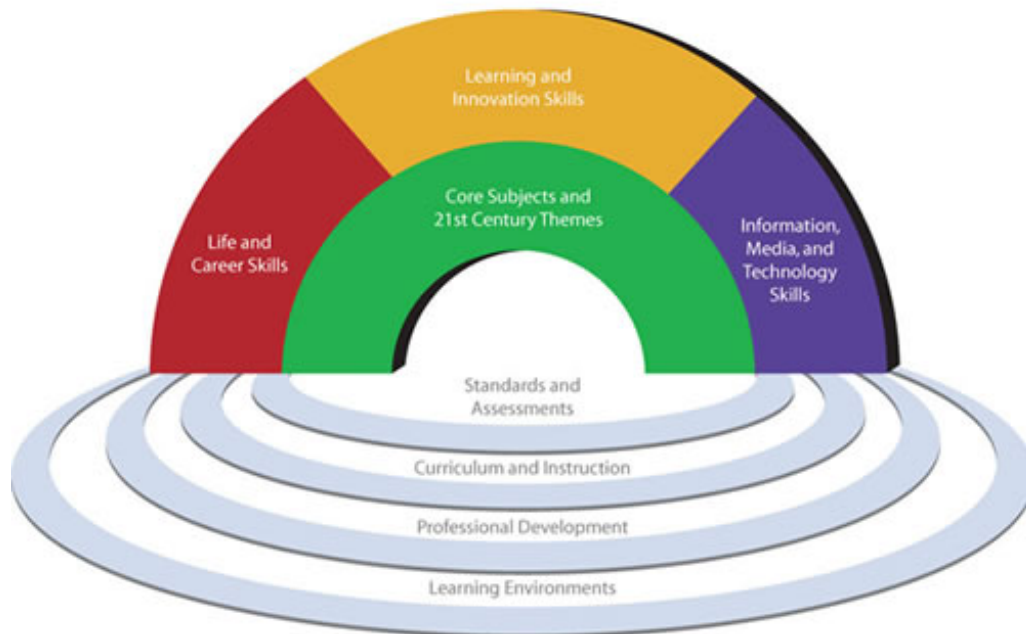
The 21st Century Skills

History

The Partnership for 21st Century Skills has emerged as the leading advocacy organization focused on infusing 21st century skills into education. *This national organization brings together the business community, education leaders, and policymakers to define a powerful vision for 21st century education to ensure every child's success as citizens and workers in the 21st century.* The Partnership encourages schools, districts and states to advocate for the infusion of 21st century skills into education and provides tools and resources to help facilitate and drive change.

Vision

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



Description of 21st Century Skills:

Learning and Innovation Skills

Learning and innovation skills increasingly are being recognized as the skills that separate students who are prepared for increasingly complex life and work environments in the 21st century, and those who are not. A focus on creativity, critical thinking, communication and collaboration is essential to prepare students for the future.

- **Creativity and Innovation Skills**
 - Demonstrating originality and inventiveness in work
 - Developing, implementing and communicating new ideas to others
 - Being open and responsive to new and diverse perspectives
 - Acting on creative ideas to make a tangible and useful contribution to the domain in which the innovation occurs
- **Critical Thinking and Problem Solving Skills**
 - Exercising sound reasoning in understanding
 - Making complex choices and decisions
 - Understanding the interconnections among systems
 - Identifying and asking significant questions that clarify various points of view and lead to better

solutions

- Framing, analyzing and synthesizing information in order to solve problems and answer questions
- **Communication and Collaboration Skills**
 - Articulating thoughts and ideas clearly and effectively through speaking and writing
 - Demonstrating ability to work effectively with diverse teams
 - Exercising flexibility and willingness to be helpful in making necessary compromises to accomplish a common goal
 - Assuming shared responsibility for collaborative work

Life and Career Skills

Today's life and work environments require far more than thinking skills and content knowledge. The ability to navigate the complex life and work environments in the globally competitive information age requires students to pay rigorous attention to developing adequate life and career skills.

- **Initiative & Self-Direction**
 - Monitoring one's own understanding and learning needs
 - Going beyond basic mastery of skills and/or curriculum to explore and expand one's own learning and opportunities to gain expertise
 - Demonstrating initiative to advance skill levels towards a professional level
 - Defining, prioritizing and completing tasks without direct oversight
 - Utilizing time efficiently and managing workload
 - Demonstrating commitment to learning as a lifelong process
- **Social & Cross-Cultural Skills**
 - Working appropriately and productively with others
 - Leveraging the collective intelligence of groups when appropriate
 - Bridging cultural differences and using differing perspectives to increase innovation and the quality of work
- **Productivity & Accountability**
 - Setting and meeting high standards and goals for delivering quality work on time
 - Demonstrating diligence and a positive work ethic
- **Professionalism**
 - Using interpersonal and problem-solving skills to influence and guide others toward a goal
 - Leveraging strengths of others to accomplish a common goal
 - Demonstrating integrity and ethical behavior
 - Acting responsibly with the interests of the larger community in mind

Fundamental Job Skills

Not all effective work skills are specific to the 21st Century. Employers continue to seek workers who exhibit a commitment to the following fundamental job skills:

- **Attendance & Timeliness**
 - Coming to work for each scheduled shift on time
- **Payroll Processes**
 - Understanding and complying with all processes related to payroll to reduce errors and/or effort required. Examples include: Filling out time sheets accurately, and obtaining needed signatures for payroll processing
- **Preparedness**
 - Arriving to work and preparing for the job in advance of the start of the work shift.
 - Staying up-to-date on work-related information needed to perform job duties as efficiently and effectively as possible
- **Uniform Compliance**
 - Wearing the appropriate uniform and equipment as required of the job, and maintaining appropriate grooming for the workplace