

FACTS

About the Need for Integrating 21st Century Skills into Curriculum

Success in all realms of today's workplace requires that employees have mastered not only basic skills such as reading, writing, and numeracy, but that they also possess technology and learning skills such as problem solving and critical thinking.

Integrating such 21st Century Skills into our curriculum along with basic skills, and assessing their impact, is critical:

- According to a 1999 **Departments of Commerce and Labor** report, "21st Century Skills for 21st Century Jobs," 21st Century jobs require new ways of looking at things, including: flexibility, multi-tasking, self-management, big picture thinking, and high worker autonomy."
- A 2000 study from the **American Youth Policy Forum** stated that the key to success in the 21st century school is utilizing all the resources in a community, including transitional experiences to prepare for next stages of life, life-long learning skills, civic mindedness and technology skills.
- A 2002 **National Academy Foundation** study claims that strong learning communities involve active learning with project based learning experiences, technology integrated into the classroom and coursework, career awareness with work-based learning, and industry contacts and regular student assessment to evaluate learning styles.
- The **Teens and Technology Roundtable 2001** conference drew the following conclusion about Technology: "Technology helps teens to become more active participants in our global society. The Internet serves as a forum for teens to get their voices heard. It gives them the outlet to explore themselves, and define themselves, as well as be introduced to other people from different backgrounds and cultures. The Internet spawns the Global Citizen."
- A September 23, 2003 **Newsweek** article showed that technology sector jobs were not just for people with technology backgrounds. "They want M.B.A. degrees or degrees in library science or cognitive science," remarked one job hunter. "Many companies report the same trend: asking tech workers to broaden their generalist skills."
- In an introduction letter for a **Cable in the Classroom** report, Shirley Igo, president of the National PTA stated, "National PTA recognizes the importance of media literacy as an essential life skill in the 21st century...not only can we accentuate the positive effects of media, but critical viewing skills can also mitigate the negative impact of media on children and youth."
- A report in 2000 by Barbara Mc Combs at the **University of Denver Research Institute** validates the need for using technology to support learning. It also promotes learner-center principles. She says "We need research-validated principles to guide the design, including the design of effective uses of education technology to support learners and enhance learning."