

21st Century Skills in North Carolina

PARTNERSHIP FOR
21ST CENTURY SKILLS

CENTER FOR 21ST CENTURY SKILLS

In 2005, Governor Mike Easley launched the nation's first Center for 21st Century Skills. The Center is focused on improving North Carolina's education system to ensure that students graduate with the skills needed for success in the global economy. The Center is located in the North Carolina Business Committee for Education.



CENTER FOR 21ST CENTURY SKILLS

THE BUSINESS OF EDUCATION
IN NORTH CAROLINA

The Center is a public-private partnership that works actively with business leaders, educators and policymakers to create new curricula, new assessments, and new ways to align classroom teaching and learning outcomes with 21st century workforce readiness skills.

The Center is bringing together current innovative reform efforts as well as implementing new ones to develop meaningful assessments and curricula that reflect the knowledge necessary for success in the 21st century. The Center is also working to improve and expand professional development for educators that focus on 21st century skills.

NORTH CAROLINA BUSINESS COMMITTEE FOR EDUCATION



The North Carolina Business Committee for Education (NCBCE) represents North Carolina's leading corporations and businesses focused on the link between education and economic growth. Created in 1983 and located in the office of the Governor, NCBCE is a catalyst for systemic change and continuous improvement in public education. NCBCE acts as an advocate, resource and business voice in public education to ensure that North Carolina students are prepared for employment and lifelong learning. www.ncbce.org

21ST CENTURY SKILLS INITIATIVES

I Learn and Earn/Early College High Schools

As a part of Gov. Easley's high school reform initiative, Learn and Earn High Schools give students an opportunity to attend high school on community college and university campuses to earn both a high school diploma and two years of college transfer credit and/or an associate's degree in just five years of study. Students who are first-generation college goers and those identified as at risk of dropping out of high school receive acceptance priority. School staff is trained to use project-based instruction within the framework of a professional learning community, fostering 21st century skills. There are currently more than 30 Learn and Earn High Schools in operation, with more sites planned to open in the next two years.

2 The NC Graduation Project - A 21st Century Assessment

The North Carolina Graduation Project provides students the opportunity to demonstrate their ability to apply what they learn in a 21st century context. All North Carolina public school students currently in ninth grade will be required to produce a four-part assessment that showcases their 21st century content knowledge and skills. The project, to be completed in the final year of high school, will include a paper, a reflective portfolio, a product, and a presentation.

3 Innovative School Redesign Improved Teaching and Learning Conditions Study

The “Innovative School Redesign Improved Teaching and Learning Conditions” study uses data to demonstrate the effect of innovation on teaching and learning conditions.

In 2002, Gov. Easley implemented that nation’s first “Teacher Working Conditions Survey.” The TWC Survey was administered every two years to ask North Carolina teachers what they need to succeed. During the third administration of the survey, 75,000 responses were collected and used to contrast innovative 21st century high schools with the data from conventional comprehensive high schools as an outcome measure for innovation. A full report as well as a 2-page executive summary has been distributed as evidence in support of school redesign to incorporate 21st century curricula and context into our high schools. www.northcarolinatwc.org

4 21st Century Skills Policy

The North Carolina State Board of Education adopted policy to bring the infusion of 21st century skills to scale across the state. The P21 framework was used to rewrite state mission and goals. Regional community meetings were held around the state to broaden public understanding of the skills and to gain traction for the effort.

The guiding mission of the North Carolina State Board of Education is that every public school student will graduate from high school globally competitive for work and postsecondary education and prepared for life in the 21st century. http://www.ncpublicschools.org/state_board/annualrpt/02-04

5 Middle School Literacy Coaches

The purpose of the middle school literacy coaches is to embed on-site professional development as a best practice into the middle school culture. On-site school improvement team members (of teachers, parents, students, etc.) select a teacher-coach to assist lead teachers in the school in delivering the instruction today’s students need to be 21st century learners. The literacy coach positions are allocated to the middle schools with the lowest average scores on the eighth grade state reading assessment. The North Carolina Teacher Academy has provided year-long training for the middle school coaches to help them embed 21st century skills in their schools thereby improving student achievement.

THE PARTNERSHIP FOR 21ST CENTURY SKILLS

The Partnership for 21st Century Skills is the leading advocacy organization focused on infusing 21st century skills into education. The 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.