

Iowa Core 21st Century Skills

Manson Northwest Webster agrees with the Department of Education in that all students must graduate with the 21st century skills necessary for a productive and satisfying life in a global knowledge-based environment. Descriptions of the new global reality are plentiful, and the need for new, 21st century skills in an increasingly complex environment is well documented. Authors cite (1) the globalization of economics; (2) the explosion of scientific and technological knowledge; (3) the increasingly international dimensions of the issues we face, (i.e. global warming and pandemic diseases); and (4) changing demographics as the major trends that have resulted in a future world much different from the one that many of us faced when we graduated from high school (Friedman, 2005 and Stewart, 2007). The trends are very clear that all students will need essential 21st century skills to lead satisfying lives in this current reality.

Descriptions of what constitute essential 21st century skills are plentiful as well. In the 2007 legislative session, the Iowa Legislature established the Iowa 21st century skills framework as

- (1) employability skills
- (2) financial literacy
- (3) health literacy
- (4) technology literacy
- (5) civic literacy

The development of the Iowa 21st century essential concepts and skills was a collaborative process engaging the expertise of educators, business, and industry representatives. Sources used for this work included the Framework for 21st Century Learning, from the Partnership for 21st Century Skills, enGauge, and the 1991 SCANS report, What Work Requires of Schools. The committee surveyed the literature and endeavored to bring together the common elements of these frameworks. The members outlined the concepts, dispositions and habits of mind believed essential for success in the 21st century.

More information about the Iowa Core 21st Century Skills may be found on the Department of Education's Iowa Core 21st Century Skills homepage.

http://educateiowa.gov/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=2332&Itemid=4344