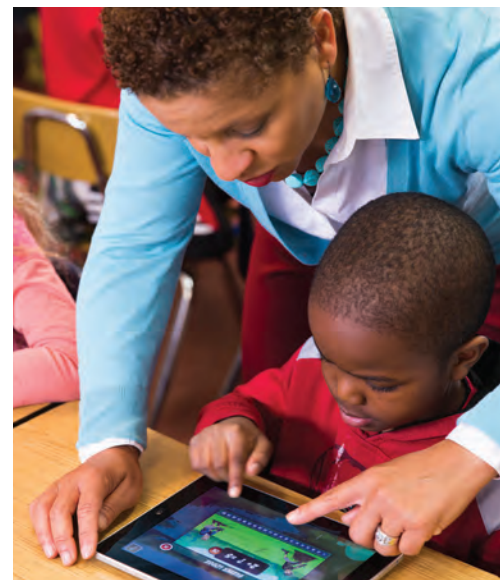


Reimagining Citizenship for the 21st Century

A Call to Action for Policymakers and Educators



PARTNERSHIP FOR
21ST CENTURY SKILLS

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About the Partnership for 21st Century Skills

The Partnership for 21st Century Skills (P21) is a national organization that advocates for 21st century readiness for every student.

As the United States continues to compete in a global economy that demands innovation, P21 and its members provide tools and resources to help the U.S. education system keep up by fusing the 3Rs (core academic subjects and 21st century themes) and 4Cs (critical thinking and problem solving, communication, collaboration, and creativity and innovation).

While leading districts and schools are already doing this, P21 advocates for local, state and federal policies that support this approach for every school.

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Executive Summary

THE WAYS IN WHICH AMERICANS, as citizens, engage in their communities, their country and the world are changing and expanding. The challenges of being a responsible, effective citizen are more diverse, nuanced and complex than in the past.

Sustaining our democracy, strengthening economic competitiveness and meeting local, state, national and global challenges demands a broader vision of citizenship for the 21st century.



Classroom in Ponderosa in Santa Clara, CA, © Merve Lopus, Common Sense Media

For more than a decade, the Partnership for 21st Century Skills (P21) has advocated for 21st century readiness for every student.

We collaborate with employers, educators, parents, policymakers and community leaders to identify and build consensus on what it takes to flourish in school, workplaces, communities and personal life. Our Framework for 21st Century Learning resonates broadly—and many states, districts and schools are incorporating 21st century skills into their practices to support college, career, and citizenship readiness.

At every turn, 21st century readiness applies equally to citizenship.

Like the demands of school and work, the demands of civic life are constantly escalating. Every American now lives, learns and works in a global society. The civic challenges of our day are significant and complex.

At the same time, the ways in which Americans engage in the world are changing and expanding. We lead active lives online, where we can immerse ourselves in vast amounts of information from sources around the world. Anyone with a mobile device can learn, debate, educate, advocate and organize on the go around causes that inspire them. The issues that move people range far and wide, from national and international efforts to ease suffering from poverty, disaster or disease, to a local proposal to install a traffic signal at an intersection.

Citizenship today means more than understanding the roles of government and voting in elections. It means making sense of local, national, and global events, trends and information, and acting safely, responsibly and ethically in online forums. Citizenship requires a wide range of knowledge, 21st century skills and experiences for effective and productive participation in the democratic process, community life, education and workplaces.

These new realities of citizenship are not broadly reflected in the expectations set for students. For generations, passing the torch of citizenship to young Americans has been a pivotal charge for schools. However, in recent years, as schools confront countless other mandates, the civic mission of U.S. education has slipped in priority.

We must act now—deliberately and purposefully—to empower all students to participate fully as citizens.

Revitalizing citizenship education is long overdue. Just as preparing all students for the 21st century workplace is critical to our economic competitiveness, equipping all young people to be savvy, productive citizens in a complex, interdependent, digital world is crucial to the vibrancy and sustainability of our democracy. Progress toward American ideals—and the betterment of life at home and in the world—is a constant quest that depends on the will and participation of the many, not just the few.

This report offers a research-based vision of 21st century citizenship—and strategies for reaching this vision—that takes into account the new demands and opportunities of citizenship as it is unfolding today.

A Vision of 21st Century Citizenship

The same trends that are changing and expanding K–12, postsecondary and workplace requirements are every bit as relevant to the realm of citizenship:

THREE TRENDS PRESENT NEW DEMANDS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR CITIZENS

- 1 Significant and increasingly complex challenges require much more than traditional civics knowledge from the body politic.** To make informed judgments and contribute productively at the local, regional, national and international levels—as voters *and* as citizen advocates—Americans today must grapple with issues ranging from economic and geopolitical, to social and cultural, to scientific, environmental and health concerns.
- 2 An increasingly international, interdependent and diverse world has fundamentally altered our civic, economic and social lives.** This environment rewards people with global competencies, such as the ability to make local-to-global connections, recognize divergent perspectives, think critically and creatively to solve global challenges, and collaborate respectfully in different types of social forums.
- 3 A tightly connected, digital world empowers people** to access unlimited information, join communities around shared purposes, contribute creative ideas to solve problems, and amplify their voices and impact.

Integral to each of these trends are deeper ways in which 21st century citizens can become involved in civic life—and in the citizenship aspects of their work and personal lives as well. A complex, interdependent, digital world is making citizenship a highly participatory endeavor. Effective citizenship is informed, engaged and active.

THREE DIMENSIONS OF CITIZENSHIP AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This report presents a vision of citizenship that encompasses informed, engaged and active practices in three dimensions of citizenship—civic, global and digital—and three recommended actions:

- 1 Prepare all students to participate effectively as citizens.** Equality is a core, unwavering principle of U.S. citizenship. All students deserve to acquire the knowledge and skills that empower them to be informed, engaged and active citizens.
- 2 Reimagine citizenship from a global perspective.** The concept of citizenship readiness must be expanded and enriched to reflect global forces, challenges and opportunities in both the public and private sectors.
- 3 Focus on digital citizenship.** The context of citizenship readiness must be broadened and deepened to reflect the prevalence of the digital space. Students move seamlessly between online and offline activities. The artificial distinctions between them are obsolete.

“Like the ocean at low tide, even the most nominal gestures toward civic education have begun to recede from the K–12 curriculum.”

— National Task Force on Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement (2012)

A Definition of 21st Century Citizenship

A 21ST CENTURY CITIZEN IS:

- Informed, engaged and active
- Literate in civics
- Proficient in core academic subjects and interdisciplinary knowledge, such as environmental literacy; financial, economic, business and entrepreneurial literacy; and health literacy
- Empowered with global competencies and 21st century skills
- Capable of participating safely, intelligently, productively and responsibly in the digital world

Achieving Citizenship Readiness with 21st Century Skills

The P21 Framework for 21st Century Learning has informed the national movement toward college and career readiness. Now, we hope to inspire a national commitment to 21st century citizenship and the role that the Framework for 21st Century Learning can play in citizenship readiness for all students.

Citizenship readiness is of equal importance to college and career readiness.

Already, 19 P21 Leadership States are using the Framework to fuse the 3Rs (core academic subjects) and the 4Cs (critical thinking and problem solving, communication, collaboration, and creativity and innovation) within their standards, assessments and professional development programs. The Common Core State Standards that most states are implementing integrate the 4Cs as well and foster the deeper learning that prepares students to apply the content they learn.

Now, policymakers, educators and citizenship advocates can leverage the P21 Framework as a powerful strategy for improving citizenship programs and educating capable citizens. The Framework is well aligned with the demands of citizenship in our time. Moreover, proficiency in 21st century skills describes the attributes of world-ready citizens.

This report marks the beginning of a concerted effort to more clearly define what it takes to be an effective, productive citizen in today's world. We intend to further our focus on citizenship in the 21st century with practical guidance and tools for educators, administrators, policymakers, and community and beyond-school practitioners.

We believe that responsibility for educating citizens should be broadly shared. We urge policymakers, education leaders, and citizenship advocates in the public and private sectors to work with us to make robust citizenship education a national priority.

PROMISING PRACTICES IN 21ST CENTURY CITIZENSHIP

“That Could Be Your Sister” and “Radio Rookies” take on sexual cyberbullying.

Radio Rookies is a New York Public Radio initiative that provides teenagers with the tools and training to create radio stories about themselves, their communities and the world.

Through this initiative, young women in the Big Apple are engaging with their peers—nationwide and around the world—in frank discussions about how to avoid “nightmare scenarios” in which photos and videos are used to make private lives very public online.

On Facebook, That Could Be Your Sister is a community of young people coming together to report images and videos, and share stories and advice, on this topic. Online chats and town hall meetings help these advocates extend their reach.

A Vision of 21st Century Citizenship

WHAT DOES IT MEAN to be an American citizen in the 21st century? Legally, a “citizen” is a member of our free society, possessing rights and privileges conveyed by the U.S. Constitution and government, and subject to corresponding duties.

Our vision of 21st century citizenship honors and embraces that fundamental, official definition of citizenship. At the same time, we argue that citizenship as it is and will continue to be practiced is broader than civic rights, privileges and duties.



Destination Imagination team building composting bins in Ecuador. © Destination Imagination

The Changing and Expanding Nature of Citizenship

A quarter of a century ago, most people kept up with the news from local print newspapers, followed a few network television or radio broadcast stations, and conducted their civic and political activities in town hall-style gatherings.

Today, news comes from multiple sources—from broadcast, cable and digital media to talk shows, social media, viral messaging and crowdsourcing. The flow of information can be overwhelming. Discerning trusted from suspect sources, and fact from fiction, is a constant challenge. News can be selected to meet individual needs and values, and thus contribute to polarization and rancor in civic discourse.

Similarly, most civic and political activities today take shape online. Organizers and advocates use digital strategies and tools to advance their causes. People who belong to civic, political or social groups can live across town, across the nation, or across the planet. Likewise, people can organize globally and work in concert around shared passions or agendas.

THREE TRENDS PRESENT NEW DEMANDS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR CITIZENS

1 Significant and complex challenges require much more than traditional civics knowledge and voting from the body politic. To make informed judgments and contribute to solving local, regional and national problems, citizens today need to be able to tap information, discern the nuances of multiple points of view and communicate their own positions to effect change—using tools that didn’t exist even a few years ago. In a dramatically different world, civic literacy is an essential foundation, but it is no longer sufficient for citizenship readiness.

Consider just one complicated issue of our time: the debate on the Keystone oil pipeline. Politics aside, the debate over the transcontinental, multi-state and multi-regional project spans geopolitical, economic, workforce, energy, environmental, cultural and health concerns.

To wade through the pros and cons, form reasoned opinions, and engage in civil discourse and decision making in a debate like this, citizens need to apply solid disciplinary and interdisciplinary knowledge and skills to local, regional, and national civic and political challenges.

2 An increasingly international, interdependent and diverse world rewards people with global competencies and understanding, such as the ability to make local-to-global connections, recognize divergent perspectives, think critically and creatively about global challenges, and collaborate respectfully in heterogeneous forums.

Globalization, accelerated by advances in technology, has fundamentally altered our civic, economic and social lives. Communities and workplaces are much more diverse, in terms of language, culture, heritage and more—and that diversity creates a mosaic of ways of looking at and living in the world. Multinational companies serve international markets and operate globally, often customizing products and services for different markets. Local events in any corner of the world can ripple in a flash into international repercussions.

Global citizenship is an element of citizenship readiness that requires a global skill set, including social and cross-cultural skills, proficiency in languages other than English, and an understanding of economic and political forces that affect societies.



The United States suffers from a civic empowerment gap that is as large—and potentially destructive—as the overall academic achievement gap.”

— Guardian of Democracy: The Civic Mission of Schools

3 A tightly connected, digital world

empowers people to access unlimited information, join communities around shared purposes, contribute creative ideas to solve problems, and amplify their voices and impact.

The Internet has changed how we connect. Digital interactions are routine in daily life, and 21st century citizens are expected to interact seamlessly across the digital space. The ways in which people learn about issues and participate in the democratic process as well as other civic, economic and social endeavors are changing. The increased use of mobile devices is accelerating this change, enabling citizen reporting and the organizing and crowdsourcing of information, ideas and activities.

Digital citizenship is a required element of citizenship readiness. Helping students understand their rights and responsibilities online, recognize the benefits and risks, and realize the personal and ethical implications of their actions in the digital space empowers them to be smart and effective participants in the digital world.

Social Media Shapes Youth Participation in Politics, Social Issues and Causes

In a survey for the MacArthur Foundation Research Network on Participatory Politics, 41% of youths aged 15 to 25 reported they had participated in a new political group online, written or disseminated a blog about a political issue, forwarded a political video to their social network, or taken part in a poetry slam during the past year. “Unlike traditional political activity, participatory politics are interactive, peer-based, and not guided by traditional institutions like political parties or newspaper editors”—and they rely on social media (Kahne & Middaugh, 2012).

This survey also found that young people who frequently engage in nonpolitical communities driven by their interests are five times as likely to engage in participatory politics as young people who are less frequently engaged. Online communities seem to foster social capital and spur civic engagement, just as in-person gatherings such as town hall meetings did for previous generations.

In another survey, 66% of parents of high school students reported that mobile devices and apps help their children connect around social issues and causes (Grunwald Associates LLC, 2013).

PROMISING PRACTICES IN 21ST CENTURY CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

Project Citizen moves students from classroom civics to problem solving.

Fifth graders at W.J. Quarles Elementary School in Long Beach, MS, identified obesity as a problem in their community and state. In a curriculum from Project Citizen, a program of the Center for Civic Education, these students researched obesity statistics and policies at the local, state and national levels, and learned that exercise and healthy eating can help prevent obesity. With this understanding, they engaged in solving the problem. They proposed solutions, such as tougher cafeteria rules, a policy for healthy snacks and organized physical education for recess at school. For their community, they proposed a citywide plan to install sidewalks, bike lanes or trails so they could walk or bike to school. They surveyed city residents and found broad support for their ideas. They developed a plan of action, circulated petitions, created a PowerPoint® presentation and bumper stickers to advocate for their proposal. They made a presentation at a city aldermen’s meeting, and gathered letters of support from civic leaders locally and at the state level. Today, the city’s comprehensive master plan requires sidewalks for all new developments.

<http://new.civiced.org/pc-program/resources/resource-center/public-policy-on-display>

Global Competencies in the Workplace

Global competencies are in demand—and workers with these skills earn substantial income premiums.

To illustrate: “a purchasing manager in a [U.S.] manufacturing multinational might be tasked with buying the best value inputs from anywhere in the world to supply factories in Asia. To do that job well, she would need advanced skills in a host of information technologies, the ability to coordinate the activities of colleagues and business partners in a global network, and very likely have a formal education in foreign languages—a scarce skill set, but one in increasing demand from employers” (McKinsey & Company, 2009).

A Model for 21st Century Citizenship

The trends that are changing and expanding the nature of citizenship present both significant challenges and tremendous opportunities for citizens who are prepared to participate. We believe that 21st century citizenship readiness encompasses three distinct dimensions and three research-based practices:

THREE DIMENSIONS OF 21ST CENTURY CITIZENSHIP

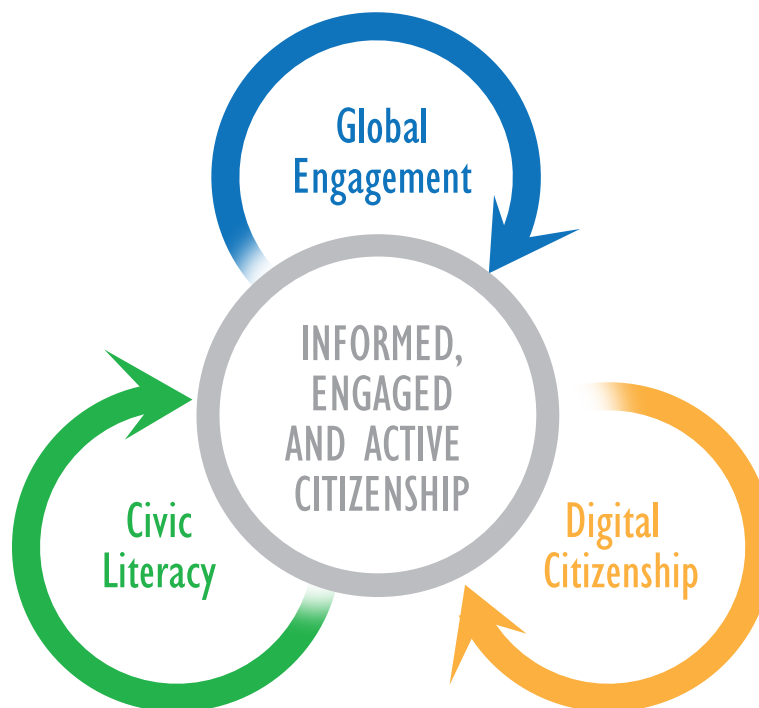
- 1** Civic literacy encompasses knowledge of government and the role of citizens—as well as the motivation, disposition and skills for civic participation:
 - Understanding of government processes and the local and global implications of civic issues
 - Knowing how to exercise the rights and obligations of citizenship at the local, state and national levels
 - Staying informed
 - Participating effectively in civic life
- 2** Global citizenship encompasses global competencies required to contribute in a varied society and make sense of significant, global issues:
 - Understanding other nations and cultures
 - Proficiency in language(s) other than English
 - Communication, collaboration, social and cross-cultural skills for cooperative interactions in diverse groups and contexts
 - Disciplinary knowledge in subjects such as history, geography, politics, economics and science
 - Interdisciplinary knowledge, such as environmental literacy; financial, economic, business and entrepreneurial literacy; and health literacy
 - The ability to investigate the world, recognize perspectives, communicate ideas, take creative action, and apply disciplinary and interdisciplinary expertise (Mansilla & Jackson, 2011)
- 3** Digital citizenship encompasses the knowledge and skills to use technology appropriately to navigate the digital world, manage the risks and take advantage of the participatory opportunities it offers. A “holistic and positive approach” (Cable in the Classroom, 2013) includes:
 - Understanding how to stay safe and secure online
 - Knowing how to find, evaluate, manage and create digital content (also known as digital literacy, or information, media and technology skills)
 - Understanding how to participate intelligently and ethically as a responsible citizen in online communities
 - Understanding the rights and responsibilities of a digital citizen

THREE PRACTICES OF 21ST CENTURY CITIZENS

Three research-based practices characterize civic involvement (see, e.g., Torney-Purta & Vermeer, 2004; Torney-Purta et al., 2001):

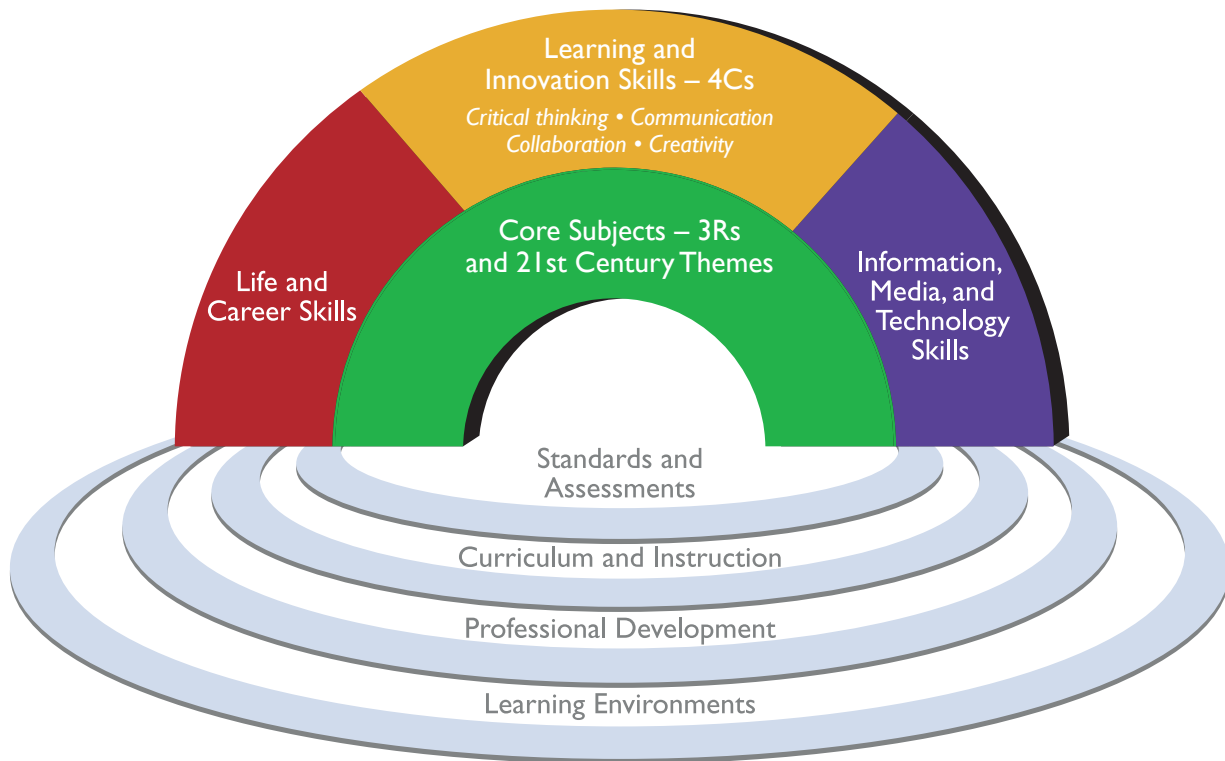
- **Understanding**—the application of knowledge and skills to inform and guide participation in civic life.
- **Engagement**—the motivation, disposition and willingness to exercise the rights of citizenship and get involved in civic activities.
- **Action**—the ways in which citizens can participate and contribute positively to their communities and the world—locally, nationally, internationally and digitally.

The three dimensions and three practices are integrally connected. People can apply civic literacy, global citizenship and digital citizenship, and the practices of understanding, engagement, and action, to a single civic issue or activity. It's important to recognize and value all of the elements of 21st century citizenship—and to prepare all students to learn and practice them.



A “3 by 3” Model for 21st Century Citizenship

P21 Framework for 21st Century Learning



Achieving Citizenship Readiness with 21st Century Skills

The P21 Framework for 21st Century Learning has informed the national movement toward college and career readiness. We believe the Framework for 21st Century Learning can play a strategic role in educating all students for citizenship readiness as well. The Hewlett Foundation's vision for "Deeper Learning that delivers the skills and knowledge students will need to succeed in a world that is changing at an unprecedented pace" also underscores the need to equip students for citizenship in a rapidly evolving world.

This vision resonates broadly—and many states, districts and schools are now incorporating 21st century skills into their practices to support college and career readiness. As of October 2013, 19 P21 Leadership States are using the Framework to fuse the 3Rs (core academic subjects) and the 4Cs (critical thinking and problem solving, communication, collaboration, and creativity and innovation) within their standards, assessments and professional development programs. The Common Core State Standards that most states are implementing already integrate the 4Cs. The Deeper Learning network of 500 schools also supports critical thinking, problem solving, communication and collaboration as pathways to effective citizenship.

Now, policymakers, educators and citizenship advocates can leverage the Framework as well as a powerful strategy for improving citizenship programs and educating capable citizens. The 4Cs, and all of the 21st century themes and skills articulated in the Framework, are well aligned with the demands of citizenship in our time, as shown in the table below. The Framework for 21st Century Learning can serve as a strategy for achieving citizenship readiness. Moreover, proficiency in 21st century skills encapsulate the attributes of world-ready citizens.

Alignment Between 21st Century Citizenship and the Framework for 21st Century Learning

Demands of 21st Century Citizenship (Local, State, National, Global)	Competencies in the Framework for 21st Century Learning
Understanding the functions, levels and processes of government	Civic literacy
Exercising the rights and responsibilities of citizenship	
Making thoughtful personal economic choices and understanding how they that may impact society	Financial, economic, business and entrepreneurial literacy
Understanding global health issues and working to improving personal and societal health	Health literacy
Appreciating and learning from other cultures, languages and nations	Global awareness
Committing to individual and collective action to address environmental challenges	Environmental literacy
Generating new ideas that help benefit communities	Creativity and innovation
Knowing how to make difficult decisions and solve problems in innovative ways	Critical thinking and problem solving
Communicating with others effectively	Communication
Engaging with others in a spirit of compromise to accomplish common goals	Collaboration
Accessing and evaluating information effectively	Information literacy
Creating and using media as a tool for sharing ideas and working with others to solve problems	Media literacy
Using digital technologies to accomplish civic priorities	ICT (information, communication and technology) literacy
Adapting and changing to find solutions	Flexibility and adaptability
Taking the initiative to identify, explore and contribute to solving challenges	Initiative and self-direction
Leveraging social and cultural differences as a civic asset	Social and cross-cultural skills
Meeting goals in the face of obstacles	Productivity and accountability
Inspiring others towards a shared vision for the common good	Leadership and responsibility

RESEARCH PERSPECTIVES

Positive Benefits of Civics Education

- Studying civics boosts civic knowledge and skills, which in turn encourages and facilitates civic action, including voting and participating in civic activities. High-quality civics education teaches the importance of community, promoting a positive school climate. Civics education also can serve as “an important antidote” to factors cited by students who drop out of school, such as disengagement in “boring and irrelevant” classroom learning, a lack of experiential learning, and limited connections between academic learning and life outside of school (Gould et al., 2011).
- High-quality classroom instruction, discussion of current events and controversial issues, service learning, extracurricular activities, participation in school governance, and simulations of the democratic process are proven practices that can ignite civic learning and students’ interest and participation in civic affairs in school and beyond (Gould et al., 2011).

... And Sobering Realities

- More than one in three 12th-grade students (36%) scored “below basic” on the 2010 National Assessment of Educational Progress in civics; 27% could not list two privileges of U.S. citizenship. Students who reported studying civics or government in high school scored 15 points higher on average than students who did not (National Center for Education Statistics, 2011).
- Poor, non-white students are less likely to have access to civics learning, essentially disenfranchising and disempowering them from civic engagement (Gould et al., 2011).

Global Citizenship

- Young adults (ages 18–24) overwhelmingly report an interest in, or professional need for global literacy in their lives today; 86% say they agree that a solid foundation in world history and events is crucial to coming up with solutions to the problems in the world today. Nearly six in 10 say they would be better employees if they had a better understanding of world cultures, and 80% believe that jobs are becoming increasingly international in nature. Yet few students say their middle and high school education helped them understand global issues that affect their lives today, and many say their instruction was very U.S.-centric and exposure to the rest of the world was limited (World Savvy, 2012).
- For younger Americans (aged 18–35), real-world problem solving to develop solutions in their community and in the world is the significant driver of higher work quality—in terms of their perceived success, voice in decision making and value in their workplaces. But fewer than one-third of younger Americans (29%) reported that they often used their learning for real-world problem solving in their last year of school (Gallup, 2013).
- High-performing nations on the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) “truly have a global orientation. Policymakers consistently benchmark their systems against international standards, teachers and principals are encouraged to learn about the world, students learn a great deal more about the world than in the US and all are expected to learn a second language from an early age” (Jackson, 2010).

Fostering Civic Literacy and Global and Digital Citizenship

“Challenge based learning” is proving effective in building 21st century skills, engaging students in learning and helping students master content. Challenge based learning is “a multidisciplinary approach to education that encourages students to leverage the technology they use in their daily lives to solve real-world problems.”

All challenges give students opportunities to “think globally, act locally.” Students start with a “big idea ... with far-reaching significance,” such as “biodiversity, strife, sustainability, or resilience,” then focus collaboratively on how they can act locally to solve the challenge. A study of challenge based learning in K–12, undergraduate and international settings found that, overwhelmingly, students enjoyed feeling that they were “making a difference” in their schools and communities.

Moreover, 90% of teachers reported significant student improvement in 12 key skill areas: leadership, media literacy, collaboration, flexibility, adaptability, responsibility, creativity, problem solving, critical thinking, communication, innovation and initiative. 80% of teachers reported that six additional skill areas improved as well: productivity, accountability, information literacy, social skills, self direction and global awareness (Johnson & Adams, 2011).

PROMISING PRACTICES IN 21ST CENTURY CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

Digital literacy and citizenship instruction is “the bike safety for the modern age.”

For the first time in 2013, all 55,000 K–12 students in the San Francisco Unified School District participated in Digital Media Safety Instruction Day to learn how to navigate the challenges of the digital world, think critically and interact responsibly with technology. The event, offered in partnership with Common Sense Media and the District Attorney’s Office, featured a 45-minute lesson from Common Sense Media’s Digital Literacy and Citizenship classroom curriculum.

Digital citizenship education is “bike safety for the modern age” that is, ideally, not an add-on but “an essential component of a well-rounded curriculum,” according to Common Sense Media (Herron, 2013). Among other educational resources, Common Sense Media offers Digital Passport, a suite of web-based games and videos that engage 3rd–5th graders in critical skills related to digital safety, respect and community, with collaborative classroom activities that reinforce online lessons. Students earn badges toward a Digital Passport as they demonstrate the skills of smart digital citizens.

“[San Francisco Unified School District] students—like students nationwide—are using the immense power of the Internet and mobile technologies to explore, connect, create and learn in ways never before imagined. But issues that emerge—from cyberbullying to privacy concerns to uncertainty about which information to trust online—require new, 21st-century skills.”

—San Francisco Unified School District

<http://www.commonsensemedia.org/educators/blog/san-francisco-gets-serious-about-digital-citizenship-education>

Digital Citizenship

- The Internet has opened up a vast world of information for students, yet their digital literacy skills have yet to catch up, according to a survey of Advance Placement and National Writing Project teachers by the Pew Research Center’s Internet & American Life Project. A majority of teachers surveyed (71%) rate their academically advanced students as fair or poor in their ability to recognize bias in online content, assess the quality and accuracy of information they find online (61%), and use multiple sources to effectively support an argument (59%). Not surprisingly, then, 91% of teachers agree or somewhat agree that courses and content focusing on digital literacy should be incorporated into every school’s curriculum (Purcell et al., 2012).
- 28% of younger Americans (ages 18–24) rely exclusively on digital platforms, including cell phones and social networks, to get their news. Fully 29% of Americans in this age group reported that they get no news, either from traditional or digital platforms, in a typical day (Kohut et al., 2012).
- 84% of young people (ages 15 to 25) say they and their friends would benefit from learning more about how to tell if online information is trustworthy (Kahne & Middaugh, 2012).
- 86% of younger Americans (aged 18–35) reported that they often used computers or technology to complete an assignment in their last year in school. But only 14% that they often worked with others through videoconferencing, online discussion boards or online collaboration tools, “indicating that students are not developing the type of advanced technology skills that would be used later in the workplace” (Gallup, 2013).



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A Definition of 21st Century Citizenship

A 21ST CENTURY CITIZEN IS:

- Informed, engaged and active
- Literate in civics
- Proficient in core academic subjects and interdisciplinary knowledge, such environmental literacy; financial, economic, business and entrepreneurial literacy; and health literacy
- Empowered with global competencies and 21st century skills
- Capable of participating safely, intelligently, productively and responsibly in the digital world

PROMISING PRACTICES IN 21ST CENTURY CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

Students connect with international peers to “think global, act local.”

Students at Ashland High School in Oregon participated in a year-long leadership program, Global Citizen Corps, an international movement of young people who connect globally and act locally to address challenges of poverty, hunger, climate change, education, global health, human rights and conflict.

The Ashland students meet weekly to plan, organize and participate in events throughout the year, raising awareness and funds to combat hunger, assist refugees and battle cancer, among other causes. They gain skills in leadership, teamwork, program design and management, civic engagement and community mobilization, using technology, digital media and social media tools (Eastman, 2013).

Destination Imagination spurs students to take on “grass roots,” service learning challenges. Every year, more than 200,000 students around the world participate in Destination Imagination’s Challenge Program, an international tournament in which teams of students learn to take risks, focus and frame challenges while incorporating STEM (science, technology, engineering and math), the arts and service learning. In the process, they learn the creative process, from imagination to innovation, along with skills such as patience, flexibility, persistence, ethics, respect for others and their ideas, and the collaborative problem solving process—a skill set that supports 21st century citizenship.

Recommendations for Policymakers and Educators

CITIZENSHIP READINESS is as vital to our nation's future as college and career readiness—and it must be purposefully cultivated.

As former U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, founder of iCivics, has eloquently observed, "The better educated our citizens are, the better equipped they will be to preserve the system of government we have. And we have to start with the education of our nation's young people. Knowledge about our government is not handed down through the gene pool. Every generation has to learn it, and we have some work to do."



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National Leaders

- Amend all programs and references to college and career readiness to include 21st century citizenship ready.
- Develop an inter-agency task force across US cabinet Departments to explore and provide US students and teachers greater means to interact with peers domestically and around the globe on civic issues.
- Work together across content areas (global awareness, civics, digital and media literacy) to promote a broadened vision of citizenship and campaign to promote this vision for all students.
- Support in and beyond school programs that support students' engagement in local, state, national, and global concerns.
- Support programs for meaningful service learning that promotes civic engagement, whether in local communities, online, or at the national or global level.

State Leaders

- Collaborate across state lines on best policies and practices on developing 21st century learning strategies.
- Include citizenship learning in assessment and credentialing of schools and school districts.
- Strengthen pre-service and licensure /accreditation to include preparation in expanded vision of citizenship.
- Support professional development for expanded vision of citizenship.
- Explore ways to use exemplary programs in global awareness, digital literacy and civic and community engagement to develop dynamic new approaches to citizenship learning.
- Encourage and support teachers' professional development, in citizenship, including facilitating exchanges, partnerships and internships with people around the state, country and globe.

Local Leaders

- Integrate citizenship into the school or district's mission statement.
- Explore ways to utilize citizenship for cross disciplinary themes and project learning and to expand learning beyond school's walls.
- Provide extracurricular/after school activities that support service learning, community involvement, digital literacy and global awareness.
- Make the expanded definition of citizenship a professional development goal for educators.
- Educate and empower parents so they can enable their children to be digital and media literate, and competent in their civic and global engagement.

Parents

- Inquire about what local programs are available to provide students opportunities for service learning and civic participation.
- Encourage your school to make 21st century citizenship part of its core mission.
- Encourage students to be civic savvy by helping them be safe and responsible online, and aware of the civic and global issues around them. Find out what your school is doing, and how they can support your efforts.
- Seek out beyond school activities in your community that encourage effective citizenship and service learning opportunities for students.

The following organizations have signed on to support these recommendations:

**Campaign for the Civic Mission of Schools • Education Commission of the States
National Center for Learning and Civic Engagement • National Council for the Social Studies
New Global Citizens • World Savvy**

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Glossary

Global Citizenship

When we discuss the global aspects of 21st century citizenship, we envisioned the definition of global competence offered by the Asia Society and the Council of Chief State School Officers:

A globally competent student can: investigate the world, weigh perspectives, communicate ideas, take action, and apply disciplinary and interdisciplinary expertise.

<http://asiasociety.org/education/partnership-global-learning/making-case/global-competence-prepare-youth-engage-world>

http://www.ccsso.org/Documents/GlobalCompetence-04_21_11%20%282%29.pdf

We also encompass a similar definition from the National Education Association:

Global competence refers to the acquisition of in-depth knowledge and understanding of international issues, an appreciation of and ability to learn and work with people from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds, proficiency in a foreign language, and skills to function.

http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/HE/PB28A_Global_Competence11.pdf

Digital Citizenship/Digital Literacy

When we discuss digital citizenship or digital literacy, we include the ability to think critically, behave safely, and participate responsibly in our digital world. That includes online responsibility including: Protecting yourself and others by learning about internet safety and security; Respecting yourself and respecting others by practicing digital ethics, rights and responsibilities; Educating yourself and connecting with others with critical thinking and digital literacy. Cable in the Classroom provides further discussion here:

<http://www.ciconline.org/DigitalCitizenship>

We would also include in this definition how you conduct your civic life online, which in today's world, clearly overlaps with overall effective civic participation. Participating effectively and responsibly in our democracy and political processes online is a key component of 21st century citizenship. More discussion of this is offered by the Center for Communication & Civic Engagement

<http://ccce.com.washington.edu/projects/civicLearning.html>

21st Century Civic Learning

When we discuss 21st century civic learning we encompass all the definitions cited above, as well as the full discipline of civics education.

According to the Campaign for the Civic Mission of Schools: "Civic education should help young people acquire and learn to use the skills, knowledge, and attitudes that will prepare them to be competent and responsible citizens throughout their lives. Competent and responsible citizens:

- 1** Are informed and thoughtful; have a grasp and an appreciation of history and the fundamental processes of American democracy; have an understanding and awareness of public and community issues; and have the ability to obtain information, think critically, and enter into dialogue among others with different perspectives.
- 2** Participate in their communities through membership in or contributions to organizations working to address an array of cultural, social, political, and religious interests and beliefs.
- 3** Act politically by having the skills, knowledge, and commitment needed to accomplish public purposes, such as group problem solving, public speaking, petitioning and protesting, and voting.
- 4** Have moral and civic virtues such as concern for the rights and welfare of others, social responsibility, tolerance and respect, and belief in the capacity to make a difference."

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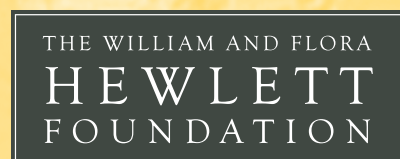
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- **Rock the Vote**
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