

# RE-THINKING SCHOOLS FOR THE 21<sup>st</sup> CENTURY

*"In a 21st Century World where jobs can be shipped wherever there's an Internet connection, where a child born in Dallas is now competing with a child born in New Delhi, where your best job qualification is not what you do but what you know... education is not longer just a pathway to opportunity and success, it's a prerequisite to success."*

(President Barack Obama, March 2009).

*"The next generation is not being adequately prepared for the jobs it will inherit. High school and college graduates are showing deficiencies in both basic and applied skills, and a real lack of preparedness for today's world of work. Workforce entrants are caught between an educational system that teaches—and measures—one set of skills and a rapidly evolving workplace that demands another."*

(The Conference Board, August 2009).

Cultivating the 21st Century skills model, tools and teaching strategies in the classroom.

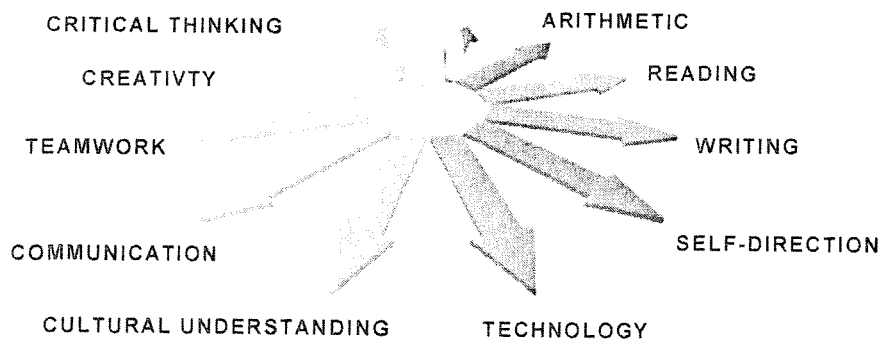
## THE CHALLENGE

We live in a global, high velocity and volatile world. We deal with a daily information overload. It is critical for all of us, especially our educators and children, to develop the knowledge, skills and dispositions to succeed at work, at school and at home. To succeed in this Century, our children must be able to access, process and enhance knowledge. Information accumulation is not enough. They must be able to apply skills such as critical thinking and problem solving, collaboration, communication, creativity and innovation in a rigorous, relevant and results rich curriculum that takes advantage of ever new technology tools that enrich their learning.

## THE CONSORTIUM

*Illinois21* is a consortium committed to the infusion of 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills and content for all K-12 Illinois students. The consortium will initiate advocacy, infrastructure creation and model programs that enable all K-12 Illinois schools to participate in this collaborative change effort.

While it is *advocating* for the infusion of 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills into rigorous, relevant and results-driven content, the Consortium will encourage the *design and development of an infrastructure* to foster the systematic and systemic integration of the 4C's - critical thinking and problem solving, creative thinking and innovation, collaboration and communication - with the 3R's - rigor, relevance and results - across the curriculum so that these skills are embodied in innovative *model programs* that are scalable, sustainable and beneficial to all Illinois K-12 students. By collaborating with foundations, business, partners, the educational community and the public, Illinois21 will lead in influencing and providing resources for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning agenda in Illinois.



*Committed to the infusion of 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills and content for all K-12 Illinois students.*

Learn more at [www.ilc21.org](http://www.ilc21.org)

# OPEN A WORLD OF OPPORTUNITY

*Increase students' readiness to close achievement gaps, prepare for their new workplaces and compete in the global economy.*

CRITICAL THINKING

CREATIVITY

TEAMWORK

TECHNOLOGY

CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING

COMMUNICATION

TECHNOLOGY

SELF-DIRECTION

READING

WRITING

ARITHMETIC

## A New Time

In the 19<sup>th</sup> Century agrarian society, students attended school for 9 months and learned their numbers, how to write a letter and how to read a recipe. Practical skills for the one room school house.

In the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, the 3R skill requirements advanced to prepare youngsters to work in the factory with the new assembly line. More memory was required as history, science and advanced math were added.

In the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, technology and the information revolution has increased the need for new skills in the new work places of the global economy. For the nation to compete in this new economy, our students need new skills and new content for a new time. For these, students need to learn more, deeper and faster. Their teachers need to learn new models of teaching that can engage all students in more rigorous, relevant and results driven curricula. 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Century approaches are no longer working.

## Project Based Learning and Technology

Evidence is mounting at innovative schools that project based learning integrated with technology more effectively prepares students to learn a wider and deeper range of skills. These include not only the basics, but also the 4Cs. In addition, with proper preparation, teachers can increase students' effectiveness in using these same skills to learn "how to learn" better.

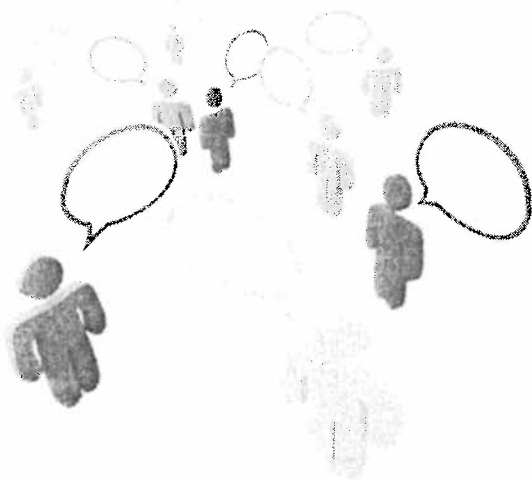


## Harnessing Technology in Teaching

Just as autoworkers have learned to use robotics, surgeons have mastered the laser, and engineers have adopted computer modeled simulations, teachers need the chance to welcome technology into their tool kits. Due to limited funds, professional development in schools has been greatly restricted. Best practices for technology-rich instruction have suffered and the number of teachers who can connect technology with a powerful instructional tool such as project-based learning is limited.

## The Think Quest Solution

Think Quest is an innovative and proven solution to provide Illinois students, teachers and schools with a very special chance to prepare to live, learn and work in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. The Oracle Foundation is making possible a multi-year, rigorous professional development program to benefit 150 Illinois Teachers and 2500 students in the first year. These students will take away new technology skills that enable them to complete projects that enrich their learning not just for taking a memorized quiz, but for thinking critically and problem solving in the standards-aligned curriculum and for a life time of work in a 21<sup>st</sup> Century career.



Illinois 21:  
Consortium for 21<sup>st</sup>  
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