

STANDARDS FOR THE 21ST CENTURY LEARNER

Common Beliefs:

Reading is a window to the world.

Reading is a foundational skill for learning, personal growth, and enjoyment. The degree to which students can read and understand text in all formats (e.g. picture, video, print) and all contexts is a key indicator of success in school and in life. As a lifelong learning skill, reading goes beyond decoding and comprehension to interpretation and development of new understandings.

Inquiry provides a framework for learning.

To become independent learners, students must gain not only the skills but also the disposition to use those skills, along with an understanding of their own responsibilities and self-assessment strategies. Combined, these four elements build a learner who can thrive in a complex information environment.

Ethical behavior in the use of information must be taught.

In this increasingly global world of information, students must be taught to seek diverse perspectives, gather and use information ethically, and use social tools responsible and safely.

Technology skills are crucial for future employment needs.

Today's students need to develop information skills that will enable them to use technology as an important tool for learning, both now and in the future.

Equitable access is a key component for education.

All children deserve equitable access to books and reading, to information, and to information technology in an environment that is safe and conducive to learning.

The definition of information literacy has become more complex as resources and technologies have changed.

Information literacy has progressed from the simple definition of using reference resources to find information. Multiple literacies, including digital, visual, textual, and technological, have now joined information literacy as crucial skills for this century.

The continuing expansion of information demands that all individuals acquire the thinking skills that will enable them to learn on their own.

The amount of information available to our learners necessitates that each individual acquire the skills to select, evaluate, and use information appropriately and effectively.

Learning has a social context.

Learning is enhanced by opportunities to share and learn with others. Students need to develop skills in sharing knowledge and learning with others, both in face-to-face situations and through technology.

School libraries are essential to the development of learning skills.

School libraries provide equitable physical and intellectual access to the resources and tools required for learning in a warm, stimulating, and safe environment. School librarians collaborate with others to provide instruction, learning strategies, and practice in using the essential learning skills needed in the 21st century.