

21st Century Skills

Dear Parents & Guardians:

The world around us is advancing rapidly, and it's essential that our children's classrooms and teachers keep pace with these pervasive technological innovations.

The phrase "21st Century Skills" has entered the lexicon to represent the types of tools and approaches that our kids will need to succeed in both school and in life. A mixture of technological proficiency and knowledge of how to use these tools to best advantage, 21st Century Skills are increasingly vital components and yet it is widely recognized that more needs to be done to renew the educational landscape, as you'll see throughout this Toolkit.

A survey conducted by Harris Interactive on behalf of the American Society for Quality found that adults do not believe K-12 U.S. schools are teaching the following 21st Century Skills successfully:

- **Organizational skills (prioritizing and managing time effectively) – 51%**
- **Communications skills (listening and speaking) – 49%**
- **Problem-solving and reasoning – 48%**
- **Creativity (providing innovative solutions to everyday problems) – 48%**
- **Teamwork and collaboration – 39%**
- **Science and technology – 36%**

Thirty-four percent of adults who believe students need improvement in their skills point to a lack of vision by school leaders, and 23 percent feel that teachers don't have the right qualifications.

There is no doubt that many factors contribute to this dilemma, but it's important that we all work together to try to solve it. We hope you find the information provided in this Toolkit to be helpful as a resource and a roadmap to the issues, problems and solutions involved in providing every student access to 21st Century Skills.

Sincerely,

Leonor Sebastia
Regional Vice President
Mountain Region