

Superintendent Message 10/19/09

The state of Ohio will soon become the 14th state to join the Partnership for 21st Century Skills. The Partnership has been working with states and communities since 2002 to assist them with the demands and expectations of the 21st century. Based upon this work, the Partnership believes there are seven (7) strategies for a successful statewide 21st Century Skills Initiative: 1) High-profile leadership; 2) Broad consensus and a shared vision; 3) Ongoing professional development in 21st century skills; 4) Standards and curriculum aligned with 21st century skills; 5) 21st century assessments; 6) An effective communications strategy; 7) An aggressive implementation strategy.

In preparation for an aggressive infusion of 21st century discussion and expectations for all Ohio schools; Wayne Local Schools will be sending an administrative team on October 20th to Xavier University. We will participate with other southwest Ohio and northern Kentucky school districts for a comprehensive look at 21st century needs and a discussion of how those needs fit into current teaching and learning.

A glimpse into the future tells us that Wayne Local Schools will be challenged to prepare students for 21st century jobs and skills that do not exist yet. We will have to be adaptive and constantly re-evaluate our programs. Wayne Local already has a pillar of excellence that states: “We will provide a meaningful, rigorous, and adaptive curriculum for each student, including: intellectual skills in written and spoken communication, mathematics, science, technology, social studies, problem-solving, and the tools for application of knowledge.” This pillar supports 21st century skills as an area of focus and establishes a sound foundation.

It is a given that core academic subjects such as reading, writing, science, math, languages, social studies, and the arts remain the foundation of a comprehensive education and are more important than ever. The next steps will likely be to provide our students authentic and challenging work; increased and varied educational opportunities; personal growth; better understanding the global economy and resource scarcity; conflict resolution and problem solving. Our students will need to be taught how to apply their knowledge to solve real-world problems.

It is an exciting time and it will be our goal to embrace the challenges that lie ahead.

Patrick Dubbs, Superintendent