

**AASL Board of Directors**

**2004 ALA Annual Meeting  
Chicago, IL  
June 23-29, 2005**

**Topic:** Partnership for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills (P21) – State Support

**Background:** As part of their implementation strategy, P21 is focusing on developing partnerships with 2-6 key states. Mobilizing the affiliate in those states may represent an opportunity to raise the visibility of the SLMS and the SLMP in those states. It also may provide the opportunity for the affiliate to be a key player in their respective state.

The first partnership state is North Carolina. Based on advance information from P21 Board discussions, the AASL Executive Director was able to notify the state affiliate prior to the public announcement. The president-elect of the state organization attended and represented both the affiliate and AASL. The presence of this representative from the affiliate was noted at the announcement and in the P21 press release.

The launch of this first state partnership has created a key question for AASL:

To what extent should AASL support the efforts of state affiliate organizations in state-based 21<sup>st</sup> century skills initiatives?

President Dawn Vaughn will conduct an exploration of this issue using the Mega Issue format that was introduced at Midwinter, 2004:

1. Identify the mega issue question.
2. Prepare background information.
3. Conduct dialogue in informing the issue.\*
4. Conduct dialogue on identifying choices.
5. Conduct dialogue on evaluating choices.
6. Determine areas of consensus or information needed to reach a decision in the future.
7. Identify actions, intent and accountability.

8. Craft a motion.
9. Deliberate on the motion.

\*What do we know about our members/ prospective members/ customers – needs, wants, and preferences, that is relevant to this decision?

\*What do we know about the current realities and evolving dynamics of our members marketplace/ industry/ profession, that is relevant to this discussion?

\*What do we know about the “capacity” and “strategic position” of our organization that is relevant to this decision?

\*What are the ethical implications of our choices?

(Detailed information on this process may be found in the 2004-2005 or the 2005-2006 Board Orientation Handbook.)

**Action Required:** Exploration

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## **DESCRIPTION OF CONSIDERATION P21 STATE LEADERSHIP**

### **Background on the Partnership for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills:**

For today's students, mastery of the "3-Rs" (reading, writing, arithmetic) won't be enough to succeed in the 21st century. Learning skills are essential. Twenty first century skills are not simply the skills students need to utilize technology, but the more complicated skills needed to thrive as citizens and workers in a world with functionalities enabled by technology.

The Partnership for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills has emerged as the leading advocacy organization transforming teaching and learning in the 21st century. The Partnership brings together the business community, education leaders, and policymakers to define a powerful vision for 21<sup>st</sup> century education and provide tools and resources to help facilitate and drive change. Its members understand that a well-prepared, 21<sup>st</sup> century workforce is essential to maintaining economic viability and business competitiveness. The members include: AASL, AFT, Agilent, Apple, Bell South, Cable in the Classroom, Cisco, Corporation for Public Broadcasting, Dell, Educational Testing Services, Ford Motor Company Fund, Intel, Junior Achievement, Microsoft, National Education Association, Oracle, SAP, Texas Instruments, Time Warner Foundation and Verizon.

In its first two years the Partnership has taken real action - issuing two reports, a self assessment guide, an online tool and ICT Literacy maps – in an effort to promote a powerful vision for 21<sup>st</sup> century education.

- ***Learning for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*** articulates a collective vision for learning in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.
- ***Milestones for Improving Learning and Education (MILE) Guide for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills*** is a self-assessment tool that assists schools, districts and states in determining their school or district's progress in defining, teaching and assessing 21st Century Skills
- ***Route 21: An Interactive Guide to 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning*** is a Web-based tool that assists education stakeholders in supporting and promoting achievement of ICT Literacy and 21<sup>st</sup> century skills. As a result, users can develop and implement a plan to support a successful 21<sup>st</sup> century learning environment.
- ***The Road to 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning: A Policymakers' Guide to 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills*** assists state education leaders in crafting visionary education policies. The report offers specific guidance to help create a 21<sup>st</sup> century learning environment, as well as policy recommendations.
- ***ICT Literacy Maps*** are a series of matrices that illustrate the intersection between ICT Literacy and core academic subjects including Geography, Math, English and Science. The maps enable all education stakeholders to gain concrete examples of how ICT Literacy can be integrated into core subjects.

In this, its third year, the Partnership is focused on three initiatives to transform teaching, learning, and assessment in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

- Working with select states to implement the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills framework in partnership with state policymakers, educators and business leaders.
- Promoting the integration of 21<sup>st</sup> century skills into national and state standards.
- Evaluating the state of 21<sup>st</sup> century assessment and develop a better understanding of what 21<sup>st</sup> century assessment tools exist and what are needed.

### **State Initiatives - Description:**

The Partnership seeks to create examples of what can happen when a state is able to align its vision, focus and resources to create a new model for 21<sup>st</sup> education. Participation by states in collaborative projects with the Partnership would position the state as being uniquely equipped to meet the needs of its citizens, communities and businesses.

The Partnership's goal is to launch and monitor our general framework in select states. The Partnership will not direct these initiatives; rather work with state-based coalitions and policy leaders to help build a state-wide agenda, coalition, and implementation plan. We recognize that strategies and vehicles for achieving these goals may vary among states.

### **State Initiatives - Strategy:**

The Partnership (P21) will work with a small number of states to create a well-aligned system where standards/assessments and classroom practice support development of 21st century skills.

**Elements of the 21st century skills strategy might include:**

- Updating state education standards
- Creating effective 8<sup>th</sup> grade technology literacy requirements
- Developing or enhancing professional development programs that model 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills and ensure that educators receive consistent professional development and are equipped to provide 21<sup>st</sup> century skills
- Working with teacher education institutions to incorporate 21st century education into their programs.
- Creating a robust and active coalition of business, teacher organizations and other educational organizations, non-profits, parents, and community organizations on behalf of 21st century education.
- Ensuring that teacher education licensing includes 21st century skills competency in teacher education program accreditation criteria.
- Supporting governmental leaders at all levels to educate them on the meaning of 21st century skills and their importance to the future well being of the state.
- Ensuring that budgets at the state and local level allow for financial support of 21st century approaches, advances in 21st century education and the support of educators who are equipped to implement 21<sup>st</sup> century skill strategies.
- Reviewing existing technological infrastructure to ensure it is equipped to support 21st century education, and determine necessary investments to build/maintain this infrastructure to continue to support 21<sup>st</sup> century skills.
- Developing a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning certification for schools that identifies and acknowledges schools that have made significant progress towards providing a 21<sup>st</sup> century education.

***Expectations of States***

In order to be successful in this school improvement effort, adoption states need to plan for appropriate resources for their 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills initiatives including budget, staff and physical infrastructure. States interested in working with the Partnership on this initiative should commit to the following:

- **Establish a State Based Advisory Committee (Leadership Team) which serves as a central point of contact for the Partnership - and a vehicle for collecting proofs of concept**

Participating states needs to support and staff a broad based advisory committee, consisting of representatives from education organizations, the business community, government, and civic leaders who would oversee the project. This committee would continuously collaborate, and ensure that schools were constantly evolving, just as the world around them is. The

committee would use the Partnership's "Mile Guide for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills" both as its planning instrument and tool for assessing progress.

Funding would be required for suggested quarterly meetings and for staff support to the committee.

- **Establish a professional development strategy to enhance the capacity of teachers across the state.**

Through the establishment of a 21<sup>st</sup> century skill professional development center, or other work with teacher education institutions and teacher organizations, the state would develop and implement a strong and comprehensive program of professional development so that educators in the state are equipped to meet the challenges of effective teaching & learning in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The professional development program could include online programs and support and align with the goals and standards for education in the state.

- **Undertake Standards Setting/Assessment Alignment**

The State Department of Public Instruction/Department of Education would review existing education standards to ensure they incorporate 21<sup>st</sup> century skills. As new standards are developed, these skills would be integrated into them. Assessments would then be aligned to these standards.

- **Communication of Proofs of Concept**

Participating states must commit to evaluating, tracking and documenting key learning's, outcomes and approaches to 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning goals as a result of this effort. They must have a system to assess the state's progress in attaining state wide 21st century education and communicating the results to the Partnership for broad publication.

### **Expectations of the Partnership:**

- **P21 Participation on State Leadership Board**

The Partnership will identify one board member to serve on the State Based Advisory Committee, to represent the partnership and provide support and guidance to the state.

- **Access to P21 Member Resources, Programs and Materials**

P21 member organizations each have resources, programs and materials that align with the outcomes listed above. Member states will have access to a list of these opportunities to determine a fit to their needs. P21 will serve as a conduit to these resources.

- **P21 Point of Contact – a liaison to monitor and communicate work to a national audience**

The partnership will provide a P21 staff liaison for the state that will be responsible for working with the state to ensure they make alignment to the P21 framework and that progress is made in achieving agreed goals. The liaison would act purely in a monitoring role, and not as an in state program/project manager.
- **P21 Best Practice Sharing**

The Partnership, where appropriate, will facilitate group training/development efforts to help build the capacity of the participating states. These training/development activities will be run with multiple states participating – in order to share and build networks – and will be provided on a cost recovery basis, where the state participants pay the costs incurred in running the events. Where possible these sessions will be run in conjunction with the Partnership’s national summits.
- **National Recognition of Adoption States as early leaders in this effort**

The Partnership will promote participating states’ efforts through recognition on the P21 web site, in press releases and in P21 presentations.