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Curriculum Map

Statement of Purpose

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Statement of Purpose: Infusion of Twenty-First Century Skills.

Education needs to change. The world is rapidly changing whether we like it or not. Technology, Globalization, and the opening of previously closed markets has rapidly moved the United States into a new age. For that last century we have experienced rapid economic growth and little competition from the rest of the world when it comes to manufacturing and innovation. Times have changed, and to be college and career ready today, student learning must go beyond mastery of core subjects and include 21st century knowledge and skills like critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and technology literacy. For many years students could follow the formula that if you went to college and got a degree you could get a good job. Now those rules have changed. You also need those 21st century skills to succeed.

For the american education system to successfully prepare our students for jobs in the future they need to focus on the needs of the learner. If you think back 10 years to what the world was like it was drastically different that what it is today. There are jobs managing social networks, web presence, programming mobile software apps, inventory management programming, nanotechnology, new medical technologies, electric car design, alternative energy engineering and so on. How were workers in this workforce educated for their jobs when they did not exist yet? The truth is that they did not receive the education they needed to be

successful at their particular specific job. They were trained how to learn and were able to incorporate new technologies and adapt to their new job title. Learners must be able to adapt and use background knowledge to master new technologies. Schools need to focus on communication and collaboration in order for their students to become better at learning. There needs to be a huge investment in professional development for teachers to learn how to teach in the 21st century. It may be hard to teach old dogs new tricks but the buy in needs to be there to help with this transformation.

The United States needs to fundamentally transform if they want to continue to be a world leader in innovation and economic output. Now more than ever schools and education in general must focus on creativity, communication, and innovation. There is no longer a value on mundane jobs that require little thought. Those jobs are easily outsourced to parts of the world that have much lower wages and benefits. U.S. Students also are performing poorly on assessments designed to address 21st century skills. Success in these assessments have demonstrated higher increases in GDP growth than countries that do not perform well, according to a series of studies by Stanford University researchers (Partnership for 21st Century Skills 2008). An unintended consequence of progress in closing national achievement gaps has been a lack of attention to the global achievement gap—and to the growing competitive demand for advanced skills.

Teaching 21st century skills are very valuable. In fact it likely is the key to a future of prosperity for our nation. We cannot continue to teach students in the same ways that we have been for 100 years. The world has changed. We are no longer preparing a majority of our students for a job in manufacturing because they just do not exist like the once did. We need to

make sure our students are able to adapt to the rapidly shifting job markets and be as prepared as they can be for the future.

The educational goal of teaching 21st century skills is to prepare our teachers to be innovative and comfortable to be able to teach problem and project based learning, communication and many internet and interactive tools. The more tools a student can add to their arsenal the better off they can be. Schools need to move their students into a rigorous and relevant educational system that will help this nation prosper well into the future.

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