Synopsis of CILC’s Workshop for 21st Century Skills, A Practical Approach

Presented by Charles Fadel and Bernie Trilling

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The workshop began with a four question exercise. Each of the 87 participants was asked to answer each of the following questions using the chat function of the webinar.

* What will the world be like in 20 years?
* What skills will children need to be successful?
* What were the conditions around your peek learning experiences?
* What would learning look like?

The workshop continued based on the answers to these questions. The focus on our learners of today and over the next 20 years will need to be personalized, with speedy access, include collaboration, be playful and include simulations for creative expression. The goal should be to teach students how to learn. As former Secretary of Education Richard Riley has said, "We are currently preparing students for jobs that don't yet exist, using technologies that haven't been invented, in order to solve problems that we don't even know are problems yet."

The goals of the Partnership for 21st Century Skills are to help teachers help students to be successful in the future. The skills needed are life and career, learning and innovation, and information, media, and technology skills. All of these are interwoven with core subjects and the themes of global awareness, financial, economic, business, entrepreneurial literacy, civic literacy, and health literacy.

Student need to know that what they are learning is relevant. The focus should be on “real world” application. Current practices have the content moving in a horizontal manner and is content centered. It needs to be more skills centered. Content is still important but this type of design is vertical and delves deeper into higher thinking skills.

Assessments should be changed to include more problem-based and authentic in the summative area. The teacher should move away from simple multiple choice and include questions that have multiple dimensions of the learner. Formative assessment should be used to shape instruction and be performance based. In other words, there should be less direct instruction, more project based learning, and assessments need to be correlated with these changes.

Professional development must occur in order to promote these changes. The focus needs to be on project based learning, inquiry, collaboration, identifying learning styles, differentiation, and the use of formative assessment.

The graphics they used in the presentation were amazing. The way they describe the 21st Century Model is by using a bicycle. The student is one wheel, the teacher is the other. The degree of incline that the bike moves is the degree of challenge. Guided instruction keeps the bike balanced. Depending on the degree of support from the school and community (tail wind) or lack of support (head wind) helps or hurts the bike from traveling to the destination of 21st Century skills.

**The 21st Century Learning Promise**

“I promise to do all I can to keep the spark of curiosity, creativity and learning alive in every child;

to help all children discover their talents, develop their passions, deepen their understanding, and apply all this to helping others, and to creating a better world for us all.”

**Conclusion**

The webinar was extremely informative for me as our school is embarking on a journey into this type of instruction. I attended a LoTi (Levels of Teacher Innovations) training class for two days prior to this webinar and Dr. Chris Moersch referenced these concepts. The 21st century is here and we need to change our schools into systems that reflect our students’ needs. I look forward to reading Charles Fadel’s and Bernie Trilling’s new book on 21st Century learning. It has been ordered, and I am anxiously waiting on it to come.