

Goal # 1

Upon the adoption of the Strategic Plan, Goal Committee #1 was established to determine a course of action that will insure that all students demonstrate the BCSD 21st Century Student Performance Indicators. After many hours of research and reflection the committee would like to propose the BCSD Board of Education consider the following document.

Currently the schools of today operate on an Industrial Age mind set. Thus they teach and value skills like punctuality, following orders, memorizing facts and procedures. The curriculum is content based, informational and compartmentalized. The student's job is to memorize facts and follow orders. Content is taught in a skill and drill manner.

Schools are just now moving into the Informational Age. The world has already made this shift but schools have been resistant to make the change. It is estimated that current students will average 10-14 career changes during their life time. Schools must change their approach to delivery if students are to be prepared for this future. Students must become experts in a four step problem solving method. They must be able to define problems, design solutions, develop the implementation of solutions and then debrief to take feedback and improve the delivery.

We must focus on creating engaged learning environments. We must develop learners who are technology savvy, strategic and collaborative. Teachers and students must use informational and communication technology to investigate authentic relevant

problems that parallel our curriculum content and topics. In the end we must show learners how to solve problems and make decisions. We call these skills, 21st Century Skills.

As the Blaine County School District moves to embrace the goal of infusing 21st Century Skills into the daily curriculum; it joins an ever increasing number of States that have established complete initiatives. These States have adopted a course of action that has been researched and determined to set a course so that each student will be prepared for a successful career in the work place. These skills will enable students to have the necessary background to flex with the changing times and stay on top of the demands of the 21st Century.

The process seems easy:

1. Adopt the skills
2. Design professional development that enables teachers to incorporate the skills into their curriculum.
3. Promote global themes that should run through core classes.
4. Establish learning environments that enable teachers and staff the time to actively reflect and develop those skills in their classrooms.
5. Set standards and assessments that measure the acquisition of those skills.

This process is a huge endeavor. It will take time, money, vision and most importantly commitment. This cannot be a haphazard approach. This will involve the re-writing of our current curriculum and a huge shift in our current practices. Content should be delivered in a manner that moves from the skills, drills and worksheets approach to a thematic, student centered project based learning methodology. Everyone

recognizes the need to establish a baseline of knowledge and skills in grades pre-K thru 3rd. But we must incorporate the need to be preparing students in critical thinking, problem solving and global awareness.

We will be asking teachers to teach traditional subjects in new ways that acknowledge our digital future. They must prepare students to be creative, collaborative, innovative problem solvers who can work in an ever changing technology driven market. The emphasis is on applying what is learned, solving problems, collaborating, and demonstrating the transfer of learning to new situations. We have no doubt that the students and staff can rise to this challenge. To ensure success the District must provide a focused commitment and adequate professional development.

The following draft provides direction in each area that we will need to address. It is meant to act as a guide for District Administration so that they can set the proper path that will lead us to becoming a “World Class” School District of the 21st Century.