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***A review of 21st century essential skills and state
graduation requirements***

Prepared for October 30, 2009 Meaningful High School Diploma Meeting

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Summary

The following two pages offer an executive summary of how states are incorporating 21st century skills into their graduation requirements. The essence of the research project is a [state by state breakdown](#) of the findings, with detailed hyperlinks and footnotes for further exploration.

Key Question

Which states are formally incorporating [21st century skills](#) into their graduation requirements?

Definition

What are [21st century skills](#)? In the simplest terms, these are the skills/knowledge that business/education leaders deem necessary for students to be successful in the 21st century world of work, education, and citizenship. Many districts allude to 21st century skills as synonymous with ‘essential skills.’ Essential skills include such components as: the ability to problem solve, think creatively, possess both global and civic awareness, and show literacy in technology, information, media, and personal finance.

Something to think about:

“For all the talk about 21st skills, trying to figure out what they really are is not easy. . . . The term is everywhere and used to describe pretty much every imaginable skill or attribute: soft skills, life skills, key skills, inter-personal skills, workforce skills, non-cognitive skills. . . . the list of . . . skills goes on and on.”¹

¹ E., Silva (2008). Online discussion of measuring skills for the 21st century. As cited in: Jerald, Craig d. “Defining a 21st century education.” The Center for Public Education” July 2009.

The Partnership for 21st Century Skills

[The Partnership for 21st Century Skills](#) is an organization promoting the assimilation of 21st century skills into state's K-12 standards and assessments. This organization has created a [framework of 21st century skills](#) (pdf). A breakdown of those skills is also available [here](#) (see page 23 in this report).

Several states have joined the P21 movement. As of this writing, the following states have joined with P21 to update their standards and assessments.

- [Arizona](#)
- [Illinois](#)
- [Iowa](#)
- [Kansas](#)
- [Louisiana](#)
- [Maine](#)
- [Massachusetts](#)
- [Nevada](#)
- [New Jersey](#)
- [North Carolina](#)
- [South Dakota](#)
- [West Virginia](#)
- [Wisconsin](#)

Table: States and 21st century skills graduation requirements

Financial Literacy	Economics ²	Technology	Communications	Culminating Project	High School and Beyond Plan
Missouri	Arizona	Alabama	Arkansas	Idaho	Hawaii
Nebraska	California	Arkansas	North Carolina	North Carolina	New Mexico
New Jersey	Florida	Georgia		Pennsylvania	Rhode Island
Ohio	Louisiana	Louisiana		Washington	Washington
Oklahoma	New Hampshire	Maine			
	New Mexico	Massachusetts ³			
	New York	Michigan			
	North Dakota	Mississippi			
	Oregon	Nebraska ⁴			
	South Carolina	New Hampshire			
	Utah	Nevada			
		Oklahoma			
		Oregon			
		South Carolina			
		Utah			
		Vermont			

² Many states may be incorporating personal finance into their economics course, though this is not specifically referenced on the websites.

³ Selected districts.

⁴ Selected districts.

Fast Facts

1. Many states assess 21st century skills in the context of core content areas (English, math, etc.). However, only a few states currently have assessments targeted to non-core content specific 21st century skills (again, these are not graduation requirements. Some examples include the following:
 - a. [Delaware](#) – Delaware Student Testing Program (wide array of 21st century skills, including information/media literacy, problem solving, critical thinking).
 - b. [Illinois](#) – Consumer Education Proficiency Test (financial literacy).
 - c. [Michigan](#) – Michigan Merit Exam (job skills related to reading/writing).
 - d. [North Carolina](#) – Computer Skills.
 - e. [West Virginia](#) – Westest 2 (21st century performance skills).
2. Almost every state has a schedule for standards/assessments revision. A vast majority of those states have adopted plans to create new standards/assessments that will ensure graduates leave equipped for the 21st century world of work and citizenship.

State by State Breakdown

A growing number of states are identifying essential skills (or 21st century skills) that all students should have upon graduation. A few states are incorporating these essentials skills into their assessments. The table below documents the effort of states in this regard.

State	Has the state officially identified 21 st century or essential skills as part of its academic standards?	Are 21 st century skills a component of the state's graduation requirement?
Alabama	Alabama revises its Course of Study standards regularly. The most recent revision includes some 21 st century skills. ⁵	Students in Alabama are required to pass the Alabama High School Graduation Exam to earn a diploma. That exam does contain some elements of 21 st century skills (inherent in the core content areas of biology, math, social studies, reading, and language). Alabama students must take a half credit in computer applications in order to earn a diploma. ⁶ The graduation requirements are here .
Alaska	Alaska's core standards include essential skills tied to the core content disciplines, as well as specific references to global and technological awareness. ⁷	Alaska's High School Qualifying Graduation Examination assesses skills in reading, writing, and math. Passing this exam is required for graduation. ⁸ Critical thinking and other process skills similar to the P21 are evident in the math portion of the assessment . No 21 st century skills coursework is required for graduation. ⁹ The Alaska graduation requirements are here ¹⁰ .

⁵ Interview with Kanetra Germany, Assessment Program Manager, Alabama Department of Education. Conducted 08.13.09.

⁶ [Alabama Graduation Requirements](#). Retrieved 08.19.09.

⁷ [Alaska's Standards](#). See pages 25, 37 for examples of skills similar to the [P21 skill set](#). Retrieved 08.06.09.

⁸ [Alaska – Earning a high school diploma](#). Retrieved 08.06.09.

⁹ [Alaska Graduation Requirements](#). Retrieved 08.19.09.

¹⁰ [Alaska Graduation Requirements](#). Retrieved 10.28.09.

<p>Arizona</p>	<p>Arizona has signed on to use P21 skills.¹¹</p>	<p>The state has four assessment objectives¹², one of which is to fund future assessments that specifically measure 21st century skills. Arizona’s primary assessment device, “AIMS,”¹³ incorporates some P21 skills. The classes assessed through the AIMS are listed in Arizona’s graduation requirements. No statewide assessment is required for graduation. No 21st century skill coursework beyond .5 credits in economics is required for graduation.¹⁴</p>
<p>Arkansas</p>	<p>Arkansas standards are based on curriculum frameworks that are reevaluated every six years. The standards are commonplace relative to other states, and the existing frameworks do not reflect 21st century skills beyond that which is inherent in the content.¹⁵</p>	<p>Arkansas students must pass the Grade 11 Literacy Examination and end of the course examinations in algebra I, geometry, and biology. All of the above tests align with state standards. No 21st century/essential skills are assessed beyond that which is included in the core content areas.¹⁶ There are districts in Arkansas that require students to take 1 credit in technology and earn a half credit in speech in order to receive a diploma.¹⁷</p>
<p>California</p>	<p>California's standards are updated regularly. However, there are no explicit 21st century/essential skills standards beyond the core content areas. The most recent standards adoption (health) does show some examples of 21st century skills (problem solving, cultural appreciation).¹⁸</p>	<p>Students must pass the California High School Exit Examination to graduate. The two components of the examination are English and math. No 21st century/essential skills are assessed beyond the core content areas.¹⁹ Students must take a half credit in economics in order to earn a diploma.²⁰</p>

¹¹ [Partnership for 21st Century Essential Skills](#). Retrieved 08.06.09.

¹² [Arizona Assessment](#). Retrieved 08.13.09.

Objective 1: Benchmark Arizona’s assessments and student achievement globally ensuring that 21st Century Skills are embedded.

Objective 2: Support research and evaluation of innovative assessment practices that are consistent with the vision of a 21st Century education.

Objective 3: Fund pilot projects with districts or schools, in partnership with higher education, to jumpstart innovative assessment practices that measure 21st Century Skills.

Objective 4: Build a shared, coherent and aligned vision of 21st Century Skills assessments among all stakeholders.

¹³ [Arizona Instrument to Measure Standards](#). Retrieved 08.13.09.

¹⁴ [Arizona Graduation Requirements](#). Retrieved 08.19.09.

¹⁵ [Arkansas Frameworks](#). Retrieved 08.06.09.

¹⁶ [Arkansas Testing](#). Retrieved 08.06.09.

¹⁷ [Arkansas Graduation Requirements](#). Retrieved 08.19.09.

¹⁸ [California Standards](#). Retrieved 08.06.09.

Colorado	<p>Colorado's standards center on core areas. Colorado is in the process of revising their standards to include 21st century skills.²¹ For example, the Colorado legislature recently required Colorado's State Board of Education to maintain a database of curriculum pertaining to financial literacy.²²</p>	<p>The Colorado Student Assessment Program currently measures reading, writing, math, and science. The assessment may target 21st century skills in the future. The assessment is not a graduation requirement. Each district is responsible for determining its own graduation requirement.²³</p>
Connecticut	<p>Connecticut's Common Core of Learning standards includes a technology sub group in addition to the core content areas.²⁴</p>	<p>Most districts require students to pass Connecticut's CAPT (Connecticut Achievement and Performance Test) for graduation. This test assesses reading, writing, math, and science. A few districts require a half credit in technology/information literacy for graduation, but this is not statewide.²⁵</p>
Delaware	<p>The Delaware Content Standards incorporate many 21st century skills, such as global and civic awareness, technology literacy, and more.²⁶</p>	<p>Delaware's graduating class of 2011 must earn one credit of computer literacy.²⁷ The Delaware Student Testing Program (for AYP) measures students' ability to meet Delaware Content Standards, but it is not a graduation requirement.²⁸ Delaware once required a half credit in computer literacy, but it has since dropped that requirement.²⁹</p>

¹⁹ [California Testing](#). Retrieved 08.06.09

²⁰ [California Graduation Requirements](#). Retrieved 08.19.09.

²¹ [Colorado Standards Revision Process](#). Retrieved 08.07.09.

²² [Colorado Financial Literacy Database](#). Retrieved 08.07.09.

²³ [Colorado 2008 Graduation Data](#). Retrieved 08.07.09.

²⁴ [Connecticut Standards](#). Retrieved 08.07.09.

²⁵ [Connecticut Graduation Requirements](#). Retrieved 08.07.09.

²⁶ [Delaware Content Standards](#). Retrieved 08.07.09.

²⁷ [Delaware Graduation Requirements](#). Retrieved 08.07.09.

²⁸ [Delaware Student Testing Program](#). Retrieved 08.07.09.

²⁹ [Delaware Graduation Requirements for the class of 2011 and beyond](#). Retrieved 08.19.09.

<p>Florida</p>	<p>Florida's standards, the Sunshine State's Standards (as they are called), are currently under review by the Florida State Board. In 2008, the Florida legislature requested that the current Sunshine State Standards be updated to Next Generation Sunshine State Standards. Language arts standards are subject to immediate revision.³⁰</p>	<p>Students must pass the communication and mathematics portion of the Florida High School Competency Test in order to graduate. A second test, the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test, while not a graduation requirement, does measure how students are meeting the Sunshine State Standards and will be updated to incorporate next generation standards.³¹ Students must take a half credit of economics to earn a diploma.³²</p>
<p>Georgia</p>	<p>The Georgia Performance Standards include references to multicultural education, but there are no other 21st century skills given special attention. The standards were last revised in 2006.</p>	<p>Students in high school must pass the Georgia High School Graduation Test. This test assesses students' core abilities in English, math, science, and social studies.³³ Georgia also has end of course exams in several areas. These exams account for a minimum of 15% of a student's course grade. These exams are designed to measure students' meeting standards.³⁴ One credit in technology is required for graduation.³⁵</p>
<p>Hawaii</p>	<p>The Hawaiian Standards System covers the core areas. The standards include benchmarks for a graduate's ability to communicate effectively, problem solve, and use technology.³⁶</p>	<p>The Hawaii state assessment system is designed to measure students' ability to meet standards.³⁷ This test is not a graduation requirement.³⁸ No 21st century skills course is required for graduation.³⁹</p>

³⁰ [Florida Sunshine State Standards](#). Retrieved 08.12.09.
³¹ [Florida Comprehensive Assessment Exam](#). Retrieved 08.12.09.
³² [Florida Graduation Requirements](#). Retrieved 08.19.09.
³³ [Georgia High School Graduation Test](#). Retrieved 08.12.09.
³⁴ [Georgia End of Course Exam](#). Retrieved 08.12.09.
³⁵ [Georgia Graduation Requirements](#). Retrieved 08.19.09.
³⁶ [Hawaii Standards](#). Retrieved 08.12.09.
³⁷ [Hawaii State Assessment System](#). Retrieved 08.12.09.
³⁸ [Hawaii Graduation Requirements](#). Retrieved 08.12.09.
³⁹ [Hawaii Graduation Requirements](#). Class of 2010. Retrieved 08.19.09.

Idaho	Idaho's Content Standards measure seven general avenues of learning. These were implemented in 2005. ⁴⁰	Students must pass the reading, language, and math portion of Idaho's Standards Achievement Test to graduate from high school. There is no reference to 21 st century skills on Idaho's assessments. ⁴¹ Idaho's most recent graduation requirements do not involve any specific 21 st century skills coursework. ⁴²
Illinois	Illinois has clearly defined standards that they wish to align to the P21 skills. The state should have revised standards that incorporate these skills by 2010. ⁴³	Illinois uses the Illinois Standards Achievement Test , an assessment incorporating multiple P21 skills . Students must also take the Illinois Consumer Education Proficiency Test , which assesses financial literacy and economic awareness. Other skills will be assessed at the district level. Illinois is looking at how other states incorporate P21 assessments, but the current plan is simply to encourage local districts to adopt those practices rather than revamp the state system. ⁴⁴ Illinois does not have a statewide assessment that is a requirement for graduation. ⁴⁵ Illinois does not require any specific 21 st century skills course as part of their graduation requirements. ⁴⁶
Indiana	Indiana's standards focus on four areas: math, English, science, and social studies. ⁴⁷ Indiana's vision is to further increase educational opportunities in math, science, and technology. ⁴⁸	Students in Indiana must pass End of the Course Assessments in order to graduate from high school. ⁴⁹ The Indiana Student Testing for Education Process is an annual exam designed to measure Indiana's standards, but it is not a graduation requirement. ⁵⁰ Indiana does not require any specific 21 st century skills/knowledge course for graduation. ⁵¹

⁴⁰ [Idaho Standards](#). Retrieved 08.12.09.

⁴¹ [Idaho Assessment FAQ](#). Retrieved 08.12.09

⁴² [Idaho Graduation Requirements](#). Retrieved 08.19.09.

⁴³ [Illinois Standards](#) Retrieved 08.05.09

⁴⁴ [Illinois Assessment](#). Retrieved 08.05.09

⁴⁵ [Illinois Graduation Requirements](#). Retrieved 08.06.09.

⁴⁶ [Illinois New Graduation Requirements](#). Retrieved 08.19.09.

⁴⁷ [Indiana's Standards](#). Retrieve 98-12-09.

⁴⁸ [Indiana – Vision for the future](#). Retrieved 08.12.09.

Iowa	Iowa adopted P21 skills into their core standards (in 2007). ⁵²	<p>Many P21 skills are already incorporated into Iowa's statewide assessments (the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills for grades 3-8 and the Iowa Tests of Educational Development for grades 11). The latter assessment is not a graduation requirement.⁵³ Iowa does not require specific 21st century skill coursework for graduation.⁵⁴</p> <p>Iowa plans to use end of the course assessments to measure other P21 skills, including health, civic, and financial literacy.⁵⁵</p>
Kansas	Kansas conducts periodic reviews of its standards and plans to incorporate the P21 skills . A recent addition included in the standards is Media Information and Technology literacy (2007). In the near future, Kansas hopes to integrate life and career skills, problem solving, and innovation skills. ⁵⁶	Kansas uses the OTL (Opportunity to Learn) Assessment in high school . Kansas has plans to incorporate an assessment of P21 skills in the OTL. There is a middle school component in the works (8 th grade technology literacy), as well as a technical skills assessment in the case of classes that offer certification accepted by post secondary institutions. ⁵⁷ The OTL assessment is not currently a graduation requirement. ⁵⁸ No specific 21 st century coursework is required for graduation. ⁵⁹

⁴⁹ [Indiana – EOCA](#). Retrieved 08-12-09.

⁵⁰ [Indiana STEP](#). Retrieved 08.12.09.

⁵¹ [Indiana Graduation Requirements](#). Retrieved 08.19.09.

⁵² [Iowa Standards](#). Retrieved 08.05.09

⁵³ [Iowa Graduation Requirements](#). Retrieved 08.06.09.

⁵⁴ [Iowa Graduation Requirements – Survey](#). Retrieved 08.18.09/

⁵⁵ [Iowa Assessment](#). Retrieved 08.05.09

⁵⁶ [Kansas Standards](#). Retrieved 08.05.09

⁵⁷ [Kansas Assessments](#). Retrieved 08.05.09

⁵⁸ [Kansas Graduation Requirements](#). Retrieved 08.06.09

⁵⁹ [Kansas Graduation Requirements – Coursework](#). Retrieved 08.18.09.

<p>Kentucky</p>	<p>In August of 2006, Kentucky adopted a core content area of Practical Living and Vocational Studies Standards. Included in this content is information about technology literacy, consumerism, mental health, and more.⁶⁰</p>	<p>The Kentucky Core Content Test assesses high school students in reading, writing, math, science, and social studies. The Practical living standards are not included.⁶¹ The class of 2012 must demonstrate a proficiency in technology to earn a high school diploma.⁶² However, the Kentucky Core Content Test is not a graduation requirement.⁶³ No specific 21st century coursework is required, though the health strands do allude to the benchmarks of consumer decisions and community service.⁶⁴</p>
<p>Louisiana</p>	<p>Louisiana recently committed to incorporating P21 skills to its existing standards.⁶⁵</p>	<p>Several of the P21 skills are assessed in classroom graduation requirements, as well as in the K-8 statewide assessment (Louisiana Educational Assessment Program) and in the high school assessment (Graduation Exit Exam). Students must pass the math and English and either science or social studies in the GEE to graduate.⁶⁶ Students must also take one credit in computers or computer literacy and a half credit in economics/free enterprise to earn a diploma.⁶⁷</p>

⁶⁰ [Kentucky's Core Content for Assessment](#). Retrieved 08.13.09.

⁶¹ [Kentucky's Core Content Test](#). Retrieved 08.13.09.

⁶² [Kentucky's Revised Graduation Requirements](#). Retrieved 08.13.09.

⁶³ [Kentucky's Graduation Requirement](#). Retrieved 08.13.09

⁶⁴ [Kentucky's Graduation Requirements and Strands](#). Retrieved 08.18.09.

⁶⁵ "21st century skills movement grows." Retrieved from [Eschool News](#) on Retrieved 08.05.09

⁶⁶ [Louisiana Department of Education](#) – Assessments. Retrieved 08.05.09

⁶⁷ [Louisiana Graduation Requirements](#). Retrieved 08.18.09.

Maine	Maine integrated many of the P21 skills into their core standards (2007-2009). ⁶⁸	<p>Maine has a statewide assessment for K-8 (Maine Education Assessment System) and uses the SAT (see link for explanation) for high school. Maine's prior system of assessment was put on moratorium in 2006, and several options are now under consideration. Under the pre-existing system, Maine assesses students on the core subjects, incorporating some of the P21 skills. Maine is currently looking for statewide assessments that "accurately identify mastery of the 21st century skills."⁶⁹</p> <p>Furthermore, pending graduation requirements will shift from the requirement of "years within [a] subject [to] the equivalent of a certain number of years based on the achievement of standards."⁷⁰ This shift will clearly demand the demonstration of a fair share of P21 skills, though certain P21 skills, such as being self-directed and creative, will remain only as desirable qualities, and are not part of the assessments mentioned above.⁷¹ Maine students must also take one credit of technology or demonstrate computer literacy in order to earn a high school diploma.⁷²</p>
Maryland	Maryland's standards are addressed in their Core Learning Goals . The goals center on four areas: English, algebra, government, and biology. English was the most recent goal updated (2004). ⁷³ There is no mention of essential skills beyond the core content areas.	The graduating class of 2009 was the first to be required to pass the Maryland High School Assessment in order to receive a diploma. Beyond 'data analysis,' no specific essential/21 st century skills are targeted (excluding the core content). ⁷⁴ No 21 st century skills classes are required for graduation. ⁷⁵

⁶⁸ [Maine Standards](#). Retrieved 08.05.09

⁶⁹ [Maine Assessments](#). Retrieved 08.05.09

⁷⁰ [Maine Standards](#). Retrieved 08.05.09

⁷¹ Ibid. Retrieved 08.05.09

⁷² [Maine Graduation Requirements](#). Retrieved 08.18.09.

⁷³ [Maryland's Core Learning Goals](#). Retrieved 08.13.09.

Massachusetts	Massachusetts will use the P21 skills as a yardstick to review their current standards. ⁷⁶	Massachusetts identifies “assessment of 21 st century skills as possibly the greatest challenge.” ⁷⁷ P21 skills are by default part of the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System , a K-12 system that measures the Massachusetts Standards (Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks). Students must pass the English and math portions of this examination to receive a diploma ⁷⁸ Although the incorporation of P21 skills are not on the MCAS , the state encourages schools to develop student portfolios reflecting their ability to meet 21 st century standards. Massachusetts also aims to create common assessments for schools to use, but no statewide assessment of P21 skills is in the works. ^{79 80} No specific 21 st century skills courses are required for graduation. ⁸¹
Michigan	In 2006, Michigan developed a new “ Merit Curriculum ” designed to adequately prepare students for 21 st century challenges. The Merit Curriculum largely focuses on core content areas, incorporating creative thinking, problem solving, and more.	The Michigan Merit Exam is designed to assess how students meet the Merit Curriculum . This includes assessments in ‘job skills’ associated with reading, writing, and finding information. The exam, however, is not a graduation requirement. ⁸² Michigan does require students to earn a half credit in an online course or similar educational experience. ⁸³

⁷⁴ [Maryland High School Assessment](#). Retrieved 08.13.09.

⁷⁵ [Maryland Graduation Requirements](#). Retrieved 08.16.09.

⁷⁶ [Massachusetts Standards](#). Retrieved 08.05.09.

⁷⁷ [Massachusetts Assessments](#). Retrieved 08.05.09.

⁷⁸ [Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System](#). Retrieved 08.05.09.

⁷⁹ [Massachusetts Assessments](#). Retrieved 08.05.09.

⁸⁰ Interview with Virginia Crocker, Assessment Coordinator. Massachusetts Department of Education. Interview conducted 08.06.09.

⁸¹ [Massachusetts Local Graduation Requirements](#): Retrieved 08.18.09.

⁸² [Michigan’s High School Graduation Requirements](#). Retrieved 08.13.09.

⁸³ [Michigan Merit Curriculum – Graduation Requirements](#). Retrieved 08.16.09.

Minnesota	Minnesota recently completed an overhaul of its science standards and plans on a 2009-2010 review of their English standards. Minnesota's curriculum standards now include the essential skills category of Information and Technology Literacy . ⁸⁴	Students must take a half credit in economics as part of the state's graduation requirements . Students are also required to pass state examinations in language arts, math, and science in order to graduate. Economics and technology literacy are not tested. ⁸⁵
Mississippi	Mississippi's standards framework received an overhaul in the last three years, but they do not incorporate explicit 21 st century skills beyond the core content areas. ⁸⁶	Students are required to pass four End of the Course exams in English, algebra, biology, and U.S. History in order to graduate. ⁸⁷ These exams incorporate no 21 st skills outside the core content areas. Students must also take a half credit in computer "application or discovery." ⁸⁸
Missouri	Missouri's Show Me Standards incorporate the core content areas. Missouri has also recently developed curriculum standards for a course in personal finance . ⁸⁹	Students take End of the Course exams in algebra, biology, and English. ⁹⁰ These, however, are not graduation requirements. Students must take personal finance or pass a test showing personal finance skills in order to graduate. ⁹¹
Montana	Montana is in the process of adding media and technology literacy and workplace competencies to its standards. ⁹²	Montana's graduation requirements do not yet include assessments for 21 st century skills. ⁹³ No 21 st century course work is required for a diploma. ⁹⁴

⁸⁴ [Minnesota's Curriculum Standards](#). Retrieved 08.13.09.

⁸⁵ [Minnesota's Graduation Requirements](#). Retrieved on 08.13.09.

⁸⁶ [Mississippi's Content Framework](#). Retrieved 08.14.09.

⁸⁷ [Mississippi's Subject Area Testing Program](#). Retrieved 08.14.09

⁸⁸ [Mississippi's Graduation Requirements](#). Retrieved 08.14.09.

⁸⁹ [Missouri's Show Me State Standards](#). Retrieved 08.14.09.

⁹⁰ [Missouri's End of Course Exams](#). Retrieved 08.14.09.

⁹¹ Interview with Dr. Andrea Wood. Director of Assessment. Conducted 08.14.09

⁹² [Montana's Standards Review Cycle](#). Retrieved 08.14.09.

⁹³ [Montana's Graduation Requirements](#). Retrieved 08.14.09.

⁹⁴ [Rule 10a half5.905: Montana's Graduation Requirements](#). Retrieved 08.18.09.

Nebraska	Nebraska does not incorporate 21 st century skills (outside the core content areas) in its standards . ⁹⁵	Nebraska is just now developing a single state test. Reading/Writing is in the pilot stage. Math test is in development. A statewide writing assessment is already in place. Currently, no statewide assessments are part of the graduation requirements . ⁹⁶ School districts have significant leeway in determining how courses meet the graduation requirements. No specific 21 st century skills coursework is required. ⁹⁷
Nevada	Nevada is one of the more recent additions to the P21 skills cohort. ⁹⁸	The Nevada Proficiency Examination Program incorporates many of the skills inherent with P21 . This test (reading, writing, and math) is a graduation requirement. Incorporating these skills into state graduation requirements is a long term goal. In the short term, Nevada has identified these requirements as important skills. Nevada students are also required to take a half credit in computer literacy. ⁹⁹
New Hampshire	The New Hampshire Curriculum Framework has been updated to include 21 st century skills. The English standards , for example, now include media literacy. ¹⁰⁰	The New Hampshire Educational Assessment and Improvement Program is designed to test students on the core frameworks. ¹⁰¹ Students are required to earn a half credit in technology literacy and earn community service to graduate. New Hampshire is also moving to competency based credits, including 21 st century skills such as problem solving, technology literacy, etc. ¹⁰²

⁹⁵ [Nebraska's State Standards](#). Retrieved 08.14.09.

⁹⁶ Interview with John Moon, Nebraska Test Coordinator. Conducted 08-14-09.

⁹⁷ [Nebraska Department of Education: Regulations and Procedures](#). Retrieved 08.18.09.

⁹⁸ ["21st century skills movement grows."](#) Retrieved from [Eschool News](#) on 08.05.09

⁹⁹ Interview with Diane Mugford, Evaluation Consultant, Nevada Department of Education, conducted 08.05.09.

¹⁰⁰ [New Hampshire English Standards](#). Retrieved 08.16.09.

¹⁰¹ [New Hampshire Educational Assessment and Improvement Program](#). Retrieved 08.16.09.

¹⁰² [New Hampshire: School Approved Standards](#). Retrieved 08.16.09.

New Jersey	The New Jersey Department of Education has created the Office of Math and Science Education to give special consideration to P21 skills in those areas. New Jersey's standards are undergoing a review to improve the standards to meet ensure P21 skills . ¹⁰³	The New Jersey Assessment of Knowledge and Skills and the assess core content area knowledge and skills New Jersey is P21 skills . They plan to incorporate many of those skills in the continual revision of future assessments. Students in New Jersey must also take a half credit in economics or financial literacy, and show proficiency in technological literacy throughout the core curriculum. They must also pass the math and language arts portions of the High School Proficiency Exams . ¹⁰⁶
New Mexico	The New Mexico Content Standards include benchmarks for common core areas of study, and these do include some examples of 21 st century skills. ¹⁰⁷	Students are required to take one course in economics and one course in communication skills in order to graduate. ¹⁰⁸ Students must also pass the New Mexico High School Competency Exam to earn a diploma. ^{109 110}
New York	New York has standards for technology, career development, and occupational studies. ¹¹¹	Students in New York must pass statewide exams in order to earn a high school diploma, though these exams do not include 21 st century skills beyond the core content areas. Students must also take one credit in economics. ¹¹²

¹⁰³ [New Jersey Standards](#). Retrieved 08.05.09.

¹⁰⁴ [New Jersey Department of Education](#). Retrieved 08.05.09.

¹⁰⁵ [New Jersey Standards](#). Retrieved 08.05.09.

¹⁰⁶ [New Jersey Department of Education](#). Retrieved 08.06.09.

¹⁰⁷ [New Mexico Content Standards](#). Retrieved 08.16.09.

¹⁰⁸ [State Graduation Requirements](#). Retrieved 08.16.09.

¹⁰⁹ [New Mexico Graduation Requirements](#). Retrieved 08.16.09.

¹¹⁰ [New Mexico Assessment and Evaluation Bureau](#). Retrieved 08.16.09.

¹¹¹ [New York Content Standards](#). Retrieved 08.16.09.

¹¹² [New York: Graduation Requirements](#). Retrieved 08.16.09.

North Carolina	North Carolina has adopted P21 skills , but they are taking a top down approach, creating standards and assessments for superintendents and administrators around P21 skills . ¹¹³	North Carolina is currently working to incorporate online biology assessments on a small scale. They are also partnering with the Educational Testing Service to expand a 21 st century assessment to the rest of the state. ¹¹⁴ North Carolina's state tests are based on their standard course of studies (competencies). North Carolina uses End of Course Assessments in high school. Students must pass English, algebra I, biology, economics, and U.S. history to graduate. ¹¹⁵ These tests incorporate some of the P21 skills. North Carolina's research graduation project also assesses students' capacity to utilize 21 st skills. ¹¹⁶ North Carolina further requires students to pass a computer skills assessment for graduation. ¹¹⁷
North Dakota	North Dakota added media/technology literacy to their core academic standards in 2003. ¹¹⁸	North Dakota does not require a formal assessment of 21 st century skills as part of their graduation requirements but does require students to take one credit of economics. ¹¹⁹
Ohio	Ohio has included standards in career training and financial literacy to its core standards . ¹²⁰ Ohio is currently revising its standards, infusing 21 st century skills into the core content areas and adding other standards including computer literacy and entrepreneurship. ¹²¹	Students must pass the Ohio Graduation Test (reading, writing, math, and science) to earn a diploma. This test is aligned to the state standards. ¹²² Students in the class of 2014 and beyond must also earn credit in financial literacy. ¹²³

¹¹³ [North Carolina Standards](#). Retrieved 08.06.09.

¹¹⁴ [North Carolina Assessments](#). Retrieved 08.06.09.

¹¹⁵ [North Carolina Graduation Requirements](#). Retrieved 08.0.09.

¹¹⁶ [Letter to Parents regarding the North Carolina Graduation Project](#). Retrieved 08.19.09.

¹¹⁷ [North Carolina Accountability Services](#). Retrieved 08.06.09.

¹¹⁸ [North Dakota Content Standards](#). Retrieved 08.18.09.

¹¹⁹ [North Dakota Graduation Requirements](#). Retrieved 08.18.09.

¹²⁰ [Ohio Content Standards](#). Retrieved 08.18.09.

¹²¹ [Ohio Standards Revision Process](#). Retrieved 08.18.09.

¹²² [Ohio Graduation Test](#). Retrieved 08.18.09.

¹²³ [Ohio Graduation Requirements](#). Retrieved 08.18.09.

Oklahoma	Oklahoma's core content, or PASS (Priority Academic Student Skills), incorporates information and technology literacy as well as financial literacy. ¹²⁴	Oklahoma assesses some of the PASS standards through EOI (end of instruction) tests. ¹²⁵ Students must either take a class in financial literacy or demonstrate an understanding of 14 selected attributes of financial literacy. They must also either take two years of foreign language OR courses in technology literacy or both. ¹²⁶
Oregon	Oregon's standards are currently under revision. Included in that revision process is the assurance that the new standards address 21 st skills. ¹²⁷ Math is the first standard to have been revised through this process. ¹²⁸	Oregon students must pass statewide assessments (Oregon Assessment of Knowledge and Skill) on reading, writing, math, and science in order to graduate. ¹²⁹ A course on personal finance is also a graduation requirement. ¹³⁰ Oregon's class of 2012 is further required to demonstrate proficiency in the use of technology, critical thinking skills, and global literacy. Local districts will determine how this is assessed. ¹³¹
Pennsylvania	Pennsylvania standards, last updated in 2003, include benchmarks for economics and science/technology. ¹³²	Pennsylvania has recently moved to end of course, or " Keystone ," exams, though local districts can opt for other assessment tools, including the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment . No 21 st century skills courses or assessments are required for graduation. ¹³³
Rhode Island	The core content standards of Rhode Island in Health Education include references to personal finance (though this is not a graduation requirement). ¹³⁴	Students in Rhode Island must demonstrate proficiency in technology as part of the graduation requirement . They also have to meet cut scores on the English and math examinations. ¹³⁵

¹²⁴ [Oklahoma PASS](#). Retrieved 08.18.09.

¹²⁵ [Oklahoma EOI tests](#). Retrieved 08.18.09.

¹²⁶ [Oklahoma Graduation Requirements](#). Retrieved 08.18.09.

¹²⁷ [Oregon's Academic Standards](#). Retrieved 08.18.09.

¹²⁸ [Oregon Standards Revision Schedule](#). Retrieved 08.18.09.

¹²⁹ [Oregon Assessment of Knowledge and Skill](#). Retrieved 08.18.09.

¹³⁰ [Oregon Graduation Requirements](#). Retrieved 08.18.09.

¹³¹ [Essential Skills and Career Related Standards](#). Retrieved 08.19.09.

¹³² [Pennsylvania's Academic Standards](#). Retrieved 08.18.09.

¹³³ [Pennsylvania's Graduation Requirements](#). Retrieved 08.18.09.

¹³⁴ [Rhode Island Standards](#). Retrieved 08.18.09.

¹³⁵ [Rhode Island Graduation Requirements](#). Retrieved 08.18.09.

South Carolina	The South Carolina Academic Standards highlight no 21 st century skill outside of the core content areas. ¹³⁶	Students in South Carolina must pass the exit exam, the High School Assessment Program , a measurement of English and math proficiency, in order to earn a diploma. ¹³⁷ Students must also earn a half credit in economics, as well as demonstrate computer literacy prior to graduation. ¹³⁸
South Dakota	South Dakota has recognized P21 skills as an important component to K12 education. They are currently evaluating what P21 skills are already in place in the existing standards . ¹³⁹	South Dakota has plans to redesign local assessments around 21 st century standards. Currently, South Dakota has technology standards designed to provide a roadmap for technological proficiency and literacy. ¹⁴⁰ South Dakota also requires a half credit in personal finance for graduation. ¹⁴¹ There is no state examination that is required for graduation.
Tennessee	Tennessee's standards include norms for computer literacy and usage. The core content standards also integrate some 21 st century skills. ¹⁴²	Students must take a half credit of personal finance in order to earn a diploma. Tennessee is in the process of creating end of course exams in the core content areas, but these are not yet graduation requirements. ¹⁴³
Texas	The academic standards for Texas, the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills , have been updated to include many 21 st century skills. ¹⁴⁴	Texas students are required to take a half credit in economics/free enterprise as well as 1 credit in technology applications. ¹⁴⁵ Students must pass the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills in four areas (English, math, science, social studies) in order to graduate. ¹⁴⁶

¹³⁶ [South Carolina Academic Standards](#). Retrieved 08.18.09.

¹³⁷ [South Carolina High School Assessment Program](#). Retrieved 08.18.09.

¹³⁸ [South Carolina Graduation Requirements](#). Retrieved 08.18.09.

¹³⁹ [South Dakota Standards and Assessment](#). Retrieved 08.06.09.

¹⁴⁰ [South Dakota K-12 Educational Technology Standards](#). Retrieved 08.06.09.

¹⁴¹ [South Dakota Graduation Requirements Overview](#). Retrieved 08.06.09.

¹⁴² [Tennessee Standards](#). Retrieved 08.19.09.

¹⁴³ [Tennessee Graduation Requirements](#). Retrieved 08.19.09.

¹⁴⁴ [Texas Curriculum and Standards](#). Retrieved 08.19.09.

¹⁴⁵ [Texas Revised Graduation Requirements](#). Retrieved 08.19.09.

¹⁴⁶ [Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills](#). Retrieved 08.19.09.

Utah	Utah's core curriculum incorporates some 21 st century skills but not in isolation. ¹⁴⁷	Utah students are required to take a half credit of personal finance and a half credit of computer technology, in addition to passing the statewide assessment on core content areas. ¹⁴⁸
Vermont	Vermont's core curriculum incorporates some 21 st century skills. ¹⁴⁹	No 21 st century coursework is required for graduation, though some districts do require a half credit in computer literacy. ¹⁵⁰
Virginia	Virginia's standards include computers/technology, as well as the main core content areas. ¹⁵¹	Virginia's graduation requirements include assessments for core content areas. No 21 st century coursework is required for graduation. ¹⁵²
Washington	Washington's academic standards include standards for educational technology , revised 2008. ¹⁵³	Washington does not require specific 21 st century course work for a diploma. The WASL/HSP assesses some 21 st century skills, but not in isolation. ¹⁵⁴
West Virginia	The West Virginia Department of Education revised its standards to ensure they address P21 skills . ^{155 156} They further categorized those skills into three broad categories .	West Virginia developed a separate assessment, the Westest 2 , to measure students on their ability to demonstrate 21 st century knowledge/skills. ¹⁵⁷ The Westest 2 also contains an online writing component . Passing the Westest 2 however is not a graduation requirement. ¹⁵⁸ No specific 21 st century coursework is required for graduation. ¹⁵⁹

¹⁴⁷ [Utah Core Curriculum](#). Retrieved 08.19.09.

¹⁴⁸ [Utah Graduation Requirements](#). Retrieved 08.19.09.

¹⁴⁹ [Vermont Core Curriculum](#). Retrieved 08.19.09.

¹⁵⁰ [Vermont Graduation requirements](#). Retrieved 08.19.09.

¹⁵¹ [Virginia Core Curriculum](#). Retrieved 08.19.09.

¹⁵² [Virginia Graduation Requirements](#). Retrieved 08.19.09.

¹⁵³ [Washington Standards](#). Retrieved 08.19.09.

¹⁵⁴ [OSPI Assessment](#). Retrieved 08.19.09.

¹⁵⁵ [West Virginia Standards](#). Retrieved 08.06.09.

¹⁵⁶ [Westest 2 Standards](#). Retrieved 08.06.09.

¹⁵⁷ [Westest 2 Overview](#). Retrieved 08.06.09.

¹⁵⁸ [Testing in West Virginia: An Overview](#). Retrieved 08.06.09.

¹⁵⁹ [West Virginia Graduation Requirements](#). Retrieved 08.19.09.

<p>Wisconsin</p>	<p>Wisconsin's Model Academic Standards incorporate most P21 skills, including technological and financial literacy, as well as global and civic awareness.¹⁶⁰</p>	<p>Students are required to earn a passing score on the Wisconsin Concepts and Knowledge Examination Test, an assessment that incorporates core content P21 skills. School districts are encouraged to devise formative assessments at the local level for P21 skills that are not graduation requirements.¹⁶¹ Wisconsin requires no specific 21st century skills coursework for graduation.¹⁶²</p>
<p>Wyoming</p>	<p>Wyoming's standards contain several 21st century skills.¹⁶³</p>	<p>Students in Wyoming have to show proficiency in several 21st century skills (finance, problem solving, etc.) but no specific 21st century coursework is required. Districts are required to devise a system of assessment that will show if students have met these standards.¹⁶⁴</p>

¹⁶⁰ [Wisconsin Standards](#). Retrieved 08.06.09.

¹⁶¹ [Wisconsin Assessment](#). Retrieved 08.06.09.

¹⁶² [Wisconsin Graduation Requirements](#). Retrieved 08.19.09.

¹⁶³ [Wyoming Graduation Requirements](#). Retrieved 08.19.09.

¹⁶⁴ [Ibid.](#) Retrieved 08.19.09.

P21 Skills

The [Partnership for 21st Century Essential Skills](#) include the following as essential academic targets:

Life Skills

- The ability to be
 - Flexible
 - Accountable
 - Responsible
 - Self-Directed
 - Socially Aware

Learning and Innovation Skills

- Creativity & Innovation
- Critical Thinking & Problem Solving
- Communication & Collaboration

Information, Media, and Technology Skills

- Information Literacy
- Media Literacy
- ICT Literacy (Information, Communications, and Technology)

Core Subjects (Math, Science, English, History, etc) Foundation, Including:

- Global Awareness
- Civic Literacy