

National forum spotlights skills students need to succeed in global workforce

by Bend Weekly News Sources

Conference Focuses on Aligning Teacher Education, Assessment and Professional Development with 21st Century Learning Outcomes

More than 170 educational stakeholders will gather in Berkeley, California, on February 1-2 with the goal of accelerating the pace of educational reform to support student learning in the 21st century. Representatives from the Partnership for 21st Century Skills and from the core curricular areas of English, Geography, Math, Science and Social Studies will explore how 21st century skills can be embedded into core content subjects to give U.S. students the tools they need for success in a global society and workforce.

"Today's students need to be critical thinkers, problem solvers and effective communicators -- and we need to equip their teachers with the 21st century training, professional development and assessment tools they need to lead this effort," said Ken Kay, president of the Partnership for 21st Century Skills.

The goal of the 21st Century Literacies Impact Conference is for participants to generate ideas and suggest actions for teaching and learning outcomes through three critical areas of education: teacher education, assessment and ongoing professional development.

"When people ask about the kinds of schools we need, they have to think most of all about teacher learning," noted Randy Bomer, National Council of Teachers of English past president and facilitator for the conference's professional development study group. "You cannot move into a new world with last-century teacher knowledge. Teachers are ready to learn, but they need access to real innovation. They need to be asked themselves to be innovators."

Featured conference participants include Roy Pea, professor of education and the learning sciences and director of the Stanford Center for Innovations in Learning; Karen Cator, board chair of the Partnership for 21st Century Skills and director of education leadership and advocacy for Apple; Patrick Gaston, president of the Verizon Foundation; Jack O'Connell, superintendent of public instruction for California; and Kent Williamson, executive director of NCTE.

Conference sponsors include the Verizon Foundation, the Partnership for 21st Century Skills and Apple.

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