

## New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards for 21st Century Life and Careers

### INTRODUCTION

#### Life and Career Education in the 21st Century

The context for life and work in the 21st century is centered on a global society facing complex political, economic, technological and environmental challenges; a service economy driven by information, knowledge and innovation; diverse communities and workplaces that have come to rely on cross-cultural collaborative relationships and virtual social networks; and an intensely competitive and changing worldwide marketplace. Providing New Jersey's students with the life and career skills needed to function optimally within this global context thereby becomes a critical focus and organizing principle of K-12 public education. New Jersey has both an obligation and a vested economic interest to prepare an engaged citizenry, who are productive members of a *world class* workforce that rewards innovation, creativity and adaptation to change, in a millennium dependent on knowledge creation mediated by new technologies.

**Mission:** *21st century life and career skills enable students to make informed life and career decisions that prepare them to engage as active citizens in a dynamic global society and to successfully meet the challenges and opportunities of the global workplace.*

**Vision:** The systematic integration of 21st century life and career skills across the K-12 curriculum and in career and technical education programs fosters a population that:

- Possesses critical thinking and problem-solving skills to make reasoned decisions at home, in the workplace and as an informed global citizens;
- Uses effective communication, communication technology and collaboration skills to interact with cultural sensitivity in diverse communities and to work in cross-cultural teams in the multinational workplace;
- Is financially literate and financially responsible as family members and members of the broader community;
- Demonstrates creative and entrepreneurial thinking by recognizing and acting on promising opportunities while accepting responsibility for possible risks;
- Is knowledgeable about careers and able to plan, execute and alter career goals in response to changing societal and economic conditions; and
- Possesses community, business and political leaders that reflect core ethical values and the values of democracy and free enterprise during interactions with the global community.

## **Intent and Spirit of the 21st Century Life and Career Standards**

All students acquire the knowledge and skills needed in preparation for life as adult citizens and workers in the 21st century.

- In **Preschool**, children's social emotional development is the foundation of life skills and learning.
- In grades **K-5**, students are introduced to 21st century life skills critical for personal, academic and social development, career awareness information and basic personal financial literacy skills.
- In grades **6-8**, students continue to develop 21st century life skills and personal financial literacy skills while they explore careers that support academic and personal interests and aptitudes. They are provided with opportunities to apply knowledge and skills learned in the classroom to real or simulated career challenges as they prepare for the transition to high school.
- In grades **9-12**, students develop increasingly sophisticated 21st century life skills along with personal financial literacy knowledge and skills. They engage in the process of career preparation by participating in structured learning experiences, specialized programs and advanced courses that reflect personal aptitudes and career interests found within one or more of the States' 16 Career Clusters.

### **Revised Standards**

The language and organization of the four content standards and related strands in standard nine are as follows;

#### **Standard 9.1: 21st Century Life Skills**

**All students will demonstrate creative, critical thinking, collaboration and problem solving skills to function successfully as global citizens and workers in diverse ethnic and organizational cultures.**

The strands in Standard 9.1 have been reorganized to reflect the [Framework for 21st Century Learning](#) and include: Critical Thinking and Problem Solving, Creativity and Innovation, Collaboration, Teamwork and Leadership, Cross-cultural Understanding and Interpersonal Communication, Communication and Media Fluency, and Accountability, Productivity and Ethics.

#### **Standard 9.2: Personal Financial Literacy**

**All students will develop skills and strategies that promote personal and financial responsibility related to financial planning, savings, investment, and charitable giving in the global economy.**

The inclusion of Personal Financial Literacy as a standard, rather than as a strand, responds to the need for 21st century citizens who are financially literate and who face increasing financial choices due to the global economy. Financial literacy includes the application of knowledge, skills, and ethical values in consumer and financial decisions impacting self and family and the

local and global community. Standard 9.2 is aligned to the Jump\$tart Coalition for Personal Financial Literacy's [National Standards in K-12 Personal Finance Education](#).

The strands in Standard 9.2 include: Income and Careers, Money Management, Credit and Debt Management, Planning, Saving and Investing, Becoming Critical Consumer, Citizen Financial Responsibility and Risk Management and Insurance.

**Standard 9.3: Career Awareness, Exploration, and Preparation**

**All students will apply knowledge about and engage in the process of career awareness, exploration and preparation in order to navigate the globally competitive work environment of the information age.**

The three strands in Standard 9.3 are Career Awareness (grades K-4); Career Exploration (grades 5-8); and Career Preparation (grades 9-12). The strands reflect the requirements outlined in New Jersey Administrative Code (N.J.A.C. 6A:8-3.2).

**Standard 9.4: Career and Technical Education**

**All students who complete a career and technical education program will acquire academic and technical skills for careers in emerging and established professions that lead to technical skill proficiency, credentials, certificates, licenses, and/or degrees.**

The adoption of the career and technical education (CTE) standard reflects the call to action in recent reports by the National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE), the National Governors Association (NGA), the US Chamber of Commerce, and Achieve regarding the potential of CTE, as well as the requirements of the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act of 2006. These documents urge states to adopt policies and practices that effectively integrate academic content standards in CTE programs in order to both elevate the role of CTE and to align CTE with postsecondary education and training.

Using the **States' Sixteen Career Clusters** as an organizing tool for grouping occupations and careers, Standard 9.4 identifies a common set of **knowledge and skills** for success within each broad career cluster and **career pathway**. This framework has been reviewed nationally by teams of business, industry, labor, education and higher education representatives to encompass industry-validated knowledge and skills that individuals should know and be able to do in order to succeed in their careers.

## Resources

### Standard 9.1 21<sup>st</sup> Century Life Skills:

New Jersey State Department of Education. (1999). *Career education and consumer, family and life skills framework*. Trenton, NJ: Author.

New Jersey State Department of Education. (1996). *New Jersey core curriculum content standards. Standard 9: career education and consumer, family and life skills*. Trenton, NJ: Author.

Partnership for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning (2009). *Framework for 21st century learning*. Retrieved January 2, 2009, from: [http://www.21stcenturyskills.org/documents/framework\\_flyer\\_updated\\_jan\\_09\\_final-1.pdf](http://www.21stcenturyskills.org/documents/framework_flyer_updated_jan_09_final-1.pdf)

### Standard 9.2 Personal Financial Literacy:

Carolan, PhD, Carol A. (2007). *The ABCs of credit card finance: Essential facts for students*. Retrieved August 19, 2008, from: [http://www.njcfe.org/IFE-ABC\\_text.html](http://www.njcfe.org/IFE-ABC_text.html).

Jump\$tart Coalition for Personal Financial Literacy, (2007). *National standards in K-12 personal finance education: With benchmarks, knowledge statements, and glossary*. (3rd ed.) Retrieved August 19, 2008, from: <http://www.jumpstart.org/guide.html>.

New Jersey Department of Education. (1996). *New Jersey core curriculum content standards. Standard 9: career education and consumer, family and life skills*. Trenton, NJ: Author.

Utah State Office of Education. (2004). *General financial literacy core*. Retrieved August 19, 2008, from: <http://www.uen.org/core/core.do?courseNum=520802>

Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, (2006). *Wisconsin's model academic standards for personal financial literacy*. Retrieved August 19, 2008, from: <http://dpi.wi.gov/standards/pdf/pfl.pdf>

### Standard 9.3 Career Awareness, Exploration, and Preparation

National Career Development Guidelines <http://www.iptv.org/pub/STCpdfs/ncdgstan.pdf>.

New Jersey Department of Education. (1999). *Career education and consumer, family and life skills framework*. Trenton, NJ: Author.

New Jersey Department of Education. (1996). *New Jersey core curriculum content standards. Standard 9: Career education and consumer, family and life skills*. Trenton, NJ: Author.

New Jersey Department of Education. (2005). *N.J.A.C. 6A:8 Standards and assessment for student achievement (as readopted with amendments, June 1, 2005)*. Retrieved January 8, 2009, from <http://www.nj.gov/education/code/current/title6a/chap8.pdf>.

#### **Standard 9.4: Career and Technical Education**

New Jersey Department of Education. (2008). *New Jersey five-year state plan for career and technical education*. Trenton, N.J. Author.

New Jersey Department of Education. (1999). *Career education and consumer, family and life skills framework*. Trenton, NJ: Author.

States' Career Clusters Initiative. (2008) *Career clusters framework*. Retrieved January 8, 2009, from <http://www.careerclusters.org/>.

#### **Additional Resources**

Kendall, John S. and Marzano, Robert J. (2000) *Content knowledge: A compendium of standards and benchmarks for k-12 education, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition*. Aurora, Colorado: Mid-Continental Research for Education and Learning) & Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

New Jersey State Department of Education. (1996). *New Jersey core curriculum content standards*. Trenton, NJ: Author.

New Jersey State Department of Education. (2008). *Standards clarification project*. Trenton, NJ: Author. Retrieved January 8, 2009, from <http://www.nj.gov/education/aps/njscp>.

Wiggins, Grant, and McTighe, Jay. (2005). *Understanding by design. Expanded 2<sup>nd</sup> edition*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Curriculum and Development.