

## What is it? Why do I need it? How does it work?

*The world has changed over the last 50 years. We are becoming more globally integrated with jobs, projects and efforts that cut across countries and continents. Technology has shifted the way we understand and use information. How do we ensure that our students will be prepared to lead and thrive in the 21st Century? We adapt and provide a 21st Century education.*

*ICS is dedicated to ensuring our students are prepared. We are embracing the 21st Century Learning platform. This platform continues to teach the core subjects of math, reading, writing, science, social studies and language art, but builds upon them and enhances them with a new emphasis on instilling skills that will be necessary to succeed in the workforce and in life.*

### These skills include the 4 C's:

- Critical thinking and problem solving
- Communication
- Collaboration
- Creativity and innovation

The National Education Association in the U.S. further defines the 4Cs as follows:

### The importance of **CRITICAL THINKING**

- Teaching critical thinking and problem solving effectively in the classroom is vital for students. Learning critical thinking leads students to develop other skills, such as a higher level of concentration, deeper analytical abilities, and improved thought processing.
- Critical thinking and problem-solving can be defined as using various types of reasoning (inductive, deductive, etc.) as appropriate to the situation and being able to solve different kinds of unfamiliar problems in both conventional and innovative ways; identifying and asking significant questions that clarify various points of view and lead to better solutions.

### The Importance of **COMMUNICATION**

- Students must be able to effectively analyze and process the overwhelming amount of communication in their lives today. Which information sources are accurate? Which ones are not? How can they be used or leveraged effectively?
- Expressing thoughts clearly, crisply articulating opinions, communicating coherent instructions, and motivating others through powerful speech are necessary skills.
- Our students need to use communication for a range of purposes (e.g. to inform, instruct, motivate, and persuade), use multiple media and technologies, and know how to assess their impact and effectiveness and to be able to communicate effectively in diverse environments (including multilingual and multicultural) is a must.

### The Importance of **COLLABORATION**

- Collaboration is essential in our classrooms because it is inherent in the nature of how work is accomplished in our civic and workforce lives. Fifty years ago, much work was accomplished by individuals working alone. Not only does a collaborative effort create more holistic results than individual efforts, but it also creates knowledge for a greater number of people.
- Collaboration can be defined as the ability to work effectively and respectfully with diverse teams, exercise flexibility and willingness to be helpful in making necessary compromises to accomplish a common goal, assume shared responsibility for collaborative work, and value the individual contributions made by each team member.

### The Importance of **CREATIVITY and INNOVATION**

- Today, creativity and innovation are key drivers in the global economy. If students leave school without knowing how to continuously create and innovate, they will be under prepared for the challenges of society and the workforce.
- Creativity can be defined as the ability to use a wide range of idea creation techniques (such as brainstorming), create new and worthwhile ideas (both incremental and radical concepts), elaborate, refine, analyze, and evaluate original ideas to improve and maximize creative efforts
- Our students need to demonstrate originality and inventiveness in work and understand the real world limits to adopting new ideas, view failure as an opportunity to learn, understand that creativity and innovation are part of a long-term, cyclical process of small successes and frequent mistakes.
- Innovation = originality. Implement innovation: Act on creative ideas to make a tangible and useful contribution.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON 21ST CENTURY LEARNING PLEASE VISIT THESE WEBSITES:

- Partnership for 21st Century Skills
- National Education Association
- Innovation Unit