

Parents of Students Grades 5-8

This school year West Virginia added world-class rigor to traditional core subjects and aligned state standards with national and international standards. We call it Global 21.

How is public education changing?

- The content taught in West Virginia schools has been updated to be as challenging as any content taught nationally or internationally.
- The content focuses on core curriculum as well as performance skills like critical thinking, communication and collaboration.
- Lessons now include development of skills valued in the workplace, such as leadership; ethical behavior; respect for others; personal responsibility; considering the impact of your actions on others; taking the initiative to plan and execute tasks; and interacting productively as a member of a group.
- Students are working in teams to experience and explore relevant, real-world problems, questions, issues and challenges.
- Investments in technology now allow many students to use a variety of digital tools to learn information not in their textbooks.
- Teachers are learning new ways of teaching students that include applying knowledge to real-world problems and using technology skills to present information in multiple ways.
- The focus in the 21st century moves from fact memorization to what students know and can do after the details are forgotten.
- West Virginia schools are including social and economic themes to help broaden children's level of understanding of the world.

In the 21st century learning environment, students in fifth through eighth grade will

- be literate in reading, math, writing, science and social studies;
- use 21st century digital tools and resources instead of only textbooks for learning and problem solving;
- work with a partner or a group in reaching solutions;
- make connections between learning in school and solving real-world problems;
- be self-directed motivated learners;
- use technology to take courses that may not be available at their neighborhood school.

What should I do?

- Learn more about Global21 by visiting global21.k12.wv.us.
- Be an active participant in your child's education.
- Volunteer in your child's school, talk with your child's teacher and talk with your child about what is going on that is new and different in your child's school.
- Support the increase of high-speed Internet access in schools.
- Support school schedules that provide time for teachers to plan and to learn new skills and knowledge related to digital technology.
- Share your interest in and understanding of 21st century teaching and learning with your child's teachers.
- Visit the Teach 21 Web site to read the academic expectations for students (CSOs) at <http://wvde.state.wv.us/teach21>.
- Visit the West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE) parent Web site for additional resources and the reasons for 21st century learning <http://wvde.state.wv.us/21stparents/>.

