# CREC Essential Skills for Deeper Learning

CREC | Schools of Excellence

The vision of CREC Schools is to empower a diverse population of students to take ownership in meaningful learning and to be successful life-long learners in an ever changing global society. To achieve this vision, an intense commitment is put forward by all educators to motivate students to think critically and achieve high intellectual performance. CREC magnet schools are committed to the success of every student. Each student is encouraged to learn at the highest level through a rigorous curriculum with a focus on core content mastery. Each lesson is uniquely conceived and designed to inspire innovation and the exploration of new knowledge. Through the consistent encouragement of the essential skills for deeper learning, all students are prepared for success at every grade level.

The essential skills for deeper learning are comprised of a framework that not only encourages student success, but inspires educators to think critically about student learning. Teachers and students are encouraged to connect, motivate, and empower each other to be 21st century learners.



CREC Magnet Schools
Essential Skills for Deeper Learning

Creativity & Innovation

Communication & Collaboration

Core Content Mastery

Self Direction & Resourcefulness

Critical Thinking & Problem Solving

Connect • Motivate • Empower

# Core Content Mastery

Students at CREC must demonstrate mastery of Essential Content Knowledge to be deemed successful at any grade level. Our rigorous curriculum defines the standards by which students are measured and provides opportunities for technology integration, interdisciplinary exploration and information fluency. Students work collaboratively to explore, think critically and problem solve within and across core content areas to build a deep understanding of skills and concepts in preparation for a lifetime of learning.

**Students will meet performance standards in the following core content areas:**

- English Language Arts
- Mathematics
- World Languages
- Arts
- Health and Fitness
- Science and Engineering
- Social Studies
- Technology Literacy

**Students will demonstrate awareness of the following interdisciplinary themes as these are woven into the core content areas:**

- Global Awareness
- Financial, Economic, Business and Entrepreneurial Literacy
- Civic Literacy
- Environmental Literacy
- Theme Specific Knowledge
- Appropriate Use of Technology

**Students will demonstrate proficiency in research and information fluency\* in core content areas by:**

- Applying digital tools to gather, evaluate, and use information.
- Planning strategies to guide inquiry.
- Locating, organizing, analyzing, evaluating, synthesizing, and ethically using information from a variety of sources and media.
- Evaluating and selecting information sources and digital tools based on the appropriateness to specific tasks.
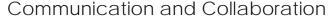- Processing data and reporting results.

## Essential Skills

**Students must be challenged to engage in opportunities to develop and demonstrate proficiency in the following essential skills:**

## Critical Thinking and Problem Solving

**All students will demonstrate proficiency in critical thinking and problem solving and meet rigorous content standards by:**

- Collecting, assessing, and analyzing relevant information.
- Reasoning effectively.
- Using systems thinking.
- Making sound judgments and decisions.
- Identifying, defining and solving authentic problems and essential questions.
- Reflecting critically on learning experiences, processes and solutions.
- Conducting research and managing projects using appropriate digital tools and technology.
- Understanding and using appropriate technology systems effectively and productively.
- Practicing safe, legal, and responsible use of information and technology.

## Communication and Collaboration

**All students will demonstrate proficiency in communication and collaboration and meet rigorous content standards by:**

- Using effective interpersonal skills during conversations and discussions to build positive relationships with others and promote collaborative learning.
- Communicating interactively and effectively to support individual learning and contribute to the learning of others using a range of contemporary tools, and digital media.
- Listening effectively to decipher meaning, including knowledge, values, attitudes and intentions. Communicating ideas through the creation of authentic products using a combination of words, data, and visual representations to inform, persuade and entertain others.
- Communicating effectively in diverse environments (including multi-lingual), using a variety of media and formats.
- Demonstrating cultural understanding and global awareness when engaging with learners of other cultures.
- Delivering effective oral presentations to communicate the results of inquiry. Fielding questions to demonstrate conceptual understanding and knowledge, along with details about the inquiry process.
- Collaborating with others.
- Demonstrating the ability to work effectively and respectfully with diverse teams.
- Exercising flexibility and willingness to be helpful in making necessary compromises to accomplish a common goal.
- Assuming shared responsibility for collaborative work, and valuing the individual contributions made by each team member.
- Working productively in teams for sustained periods of time to develop high-quality products.

# Creativity and Innovation

**All students will demonstrate proficiency in creativity and innovation and meet rigorous content standards by:**

*Thinking Creatively*
- Using a wide range of idea creation techniques (such as brainstorming).
- Creating new and worthwhile ideas (both incremental and radical concepts).
- Elaborating, refining, analyzing and evaluating their own ideas in order to improve and maximize creative efforts.

*Working Creatively with Others*
- Developing, implementing and communicating new ideas to others effectively.
- Being open and responsive to new and diverse perspectives; incorporating group input and feedback into the work.
- Demonstrating originality and inventiveness in work and understanding the real world limits to adopting new ideas.

*Demonstrating Courage to Explore*
- Viewing failure as an opportunity to learn: Understanding that creativity and innovation is a long-term, cyclical process of small successes and frequent mistakes.

*Implementing innovations*
- Acting on creative ideas to make a tangible and useful contribution to the field in which the innovation will occur.
- Developing innovative products and processes using technology.

# Self-Direction and Resourcefulness

**All students will demonstrate proficiency in self-direction and resourcefulness and meet rigorous content standards by:**

*Managing Goals and Time*
- Setting goals with tangible and intangible success criteria.
- Balancing tactical (short-term) and strategic (long-term) goals.
- Utilizing time and managing workload efficiently.
- Multi-tasking when appropriate, e.g. performing work on more than one project or activity simultaneously.

*Work Independently*
- Monitoring, defining, prioritizing and completing tasks without direct oversight.

*Being Self-directed Learners*
- Going beyond basic mastery of skills and/or curriculum to explore and expand one's own learning and opportunities to gain expertise.
- Demonstrating initiative to advance skill levels.
- Demonstrating commitment to learning as a lifelong process.
- Reflecting critically on past experiences in order to inform future progress.
- Taking chances and/or risks in an effort to expand knowledge or practice skills in new and unfamiliar contexts.

*Demonstrating a Positive Attitude*
- Cooperating with coworkers and supervisors.
- Taking direction willingly.
- Exhibiting eagerness to learn.
- Acting in a pleasant and polite manner.