



Advancing Excellence in Teaching, Learning, and Leadership

Virginia ASCD Position Statement 2008 - 2009

Teaching and Learning for a Changing World

Recommendations

VASCD recommends support for changes in teaching, learning, and leading in education that focus on preparing students to be successful in a complex, rapidly changing world. This responsibility requires policy makers and educators to support schools that will prepare students for technological, cultural, economic, informational, and demographic changes. VASCD further recommends that programs of study that lead to graduation reflect the essential skill subsets that prepare students for the 21st century.

Position

VASCD recognizes that although acquisition and application of core knowledge can serve as building blocks to new learning, students must graduate with skills that extend well beyond facts and content that can be measured on selected response tests. Students need to demonstrate creativity, innovation, and flexibility through learning partnerships for the purpose of advancing common goals. VASCD recognizes critical-thinking, problem-solving, and consensus-building are essential for achievement and growth both personally and as a learning community and asserts that accountability systems must evolve to include the assessment of these processes.

Rationale

For students to thrive in a complex, interconnected world, they must be equipped with skills that allow them to serve as both participants in and leaders of change. High-quality instructional programs in schools must have the tools that are fundamental in an age of information. These tools include using advanced technologies to access and facilitate learning, interacting in learning communities that foster teamwork through inquiry and authentic problem solving, and establishing environments where innovation and creativity are valued and practiced.

Therefore, teachers and administrators must display leadership skills that inspire students to achieve and work together while respecting diversity of thought and background. They must amend curricula and instructional processes, including systems of assessment, to provide consistent opportunities for students to use critical and creative thinking skills while teaching them how to discern and advance common goals.