Newsflash   communities stop poverty   firelight

11 December 2014

Dear Friends,

We hope you enjoy this week's edition of the Newsflash!

Sincerely,

The Firelight Team

(Resource) Framework for 21st Century Learning
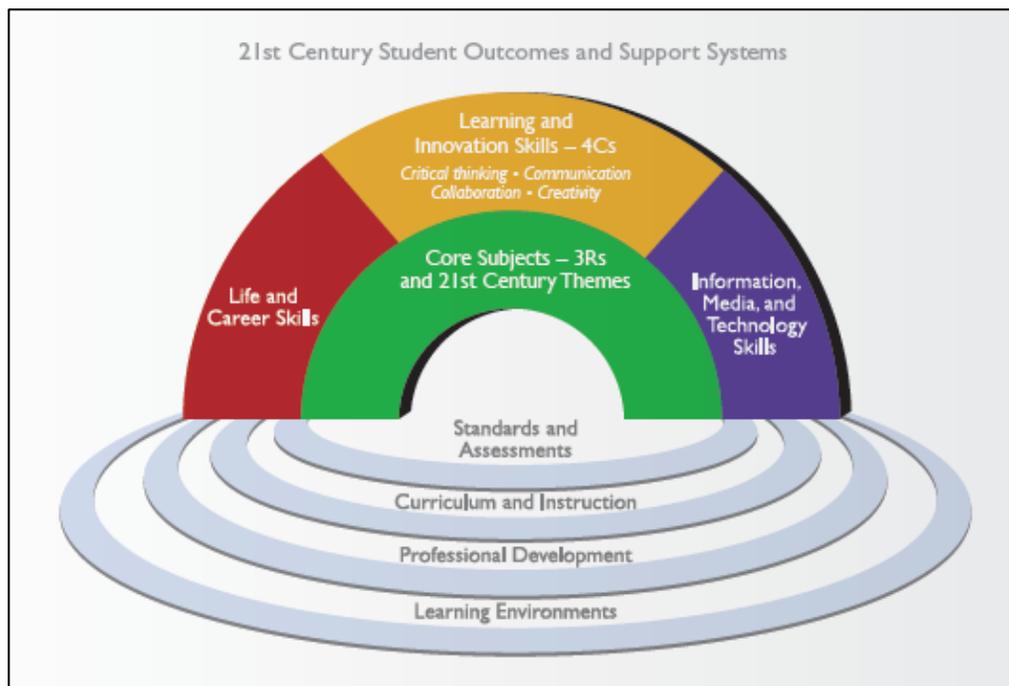*(Article) 21st Century Skills: What Are They? And What Role Can Early Childhood Programs Play?*
(Accepting Applications) The Netherlands Embassy/Zimbabwe Grants up to €15,000 for Poverty Alleviation Projects
(Fellowship Program) Open Government Fellowship Program for African Citizens (February-July 2015)

(Resource) Framework for 21st Century Learning

The Partnership for 21st Century Skills has developed a vision for student success in the new global economy.

21st Century Student Outcomes

To help practitioners integrate skills into the teaching of core academic subjects, the Partnership has developed a unified, collective vision for learning known as the Framework for 21st Century Learning. This Framework describes the skills, knowledge and expertise students must master to succeed in work and life; it is a blend of content knowledge, specific skills, expertise and literacies.

Every 21st century skills implementation requires the development of core academic subject knowledge and understanding among all students. Those who can think critically and communicate effectively must build on a base of core academic subject knowledge.

Within the context of core knowledge instruction, students must also learn the essential skills for success in today's world, such as **critical thinking, problem solving, communication and collaboration.**

When a school or district builds on this foundation, combining the entire Framework with the necessary support systems—standards, assessments, curriculum and instruction, professional development and learning environments—students are more engaged in the learning process and graduate better prepared to thrive in today's global economy.

Core Subjects and 21st Century Themes

Mastery of core subjects and 21st century themes is essential to student success. Core subjects include English, reading or language arts, world languages, arts, mathematics, economics, science, geography, history, government and civics.

In addition, schools must promote an understanding of academic content at much higher levels by weaving 21st century interdisciplinary themes into core subjects:

- Global Awareness
- Financial, Economic, Business and Entrepreneurial Literacy
- Civic Literacy
- Health Literacy
- Environmental Literacy

Learning and Innovation Skills

Learning and innovation skills are what separate students who are prepared for increasingly complex life and work environments in today's world and those who are not. They include:

- Creativity and Innovation
- Critical Thinking and Problem Solving

- Communication and Collaboration

Information, Media and Technology Skills

Today, we live in a technology and media-driven environment, marked by access to an abundance of information, rapid changes in technology tools and the ability to collaborate and make individual contributions on an unprecedented scale. Effective citizens and workers must be able to exhibit a range of functional and critical thinking skills, such as:

- Information Literacy
- Media Literacy
- ICT (Information, Communications and Technology) Literacy

Life and Career Skills

Today's life and work environments require far more than thinking skills and content knowledge. The ability to navigate the complex life and work environments in the globally competitive information age requires students to pay rigorous attention to developing adequate life and career skills, such as:

- Flexibility and Adaptability
- Initiative and Self-Direction
- Social and Cross-Cultural Skills
- Productivity and Accountability
- Leadership and Responsibility

For more information visit: http://bit.ly/1ygVIXZ

(Article) 21st Century Skills: What Are They? And What Role Can Early Childhood Programs Play?

In an era when knowledge is expanding at an exponential rate, it is futile for teachers to work feverishly to teach young people all the facts or procedures they know about a given subject. Instead, educators across the spectrum from early childhood to college, both school and community-based, are realizing they need to equip children differently. Today's generation needs skills for the 21st century.

-Learning and Innovation Skills
-Information, Media, and Technology Skills
-Life and Career Skills

This learning agenda takes the emphasis off content areas like math, science, and English and puts the emphasis on skills like creativity, communication, and problem-solving. These skills can be used all day long, in any discipline. Unfortunately, traditional

early care curricula and out-of-school time (OST) programs may not nurture these as much as they should, nor do in-school lesson plans.

To jump start a program and move it from 20th century education patterns, researchers suggest some of the following strategies. These strategies contribute to a child's ability to communicate, collaborate, create, and think critically.

Nurture sense of wonder
Allow children to wonder, investigate, experiment, ask questions, and suggest outlandish solutions/ideas. Keep an active list of what the children wonder about and questions they ask.

Emphasize effort over ability
Students learn more deeply when they believe it is the result of effort rather than ability.

Encourage use of objects/materials in multiple centers/areas and diverse ways
Don't restrict art materials to art area or blocks to block area. Encourage use of materials in varied ways (How many different ways can string be used?). Accessibility of materials encourages self-direction and innovative problem-solving.

Ask thoughtful questions
Questions that begin with "Why…?" "How…?" "What if…?" "So what…?" encourage critical thinking about an experience, promote creativity, and allow children to practice communication skills.

Provide effective feedback
Build in time for peer assessment. Encourage children to share what they liked and noticed, and what the person did well. Children can ask one another, "What is similar to mine; what is different from mine? If I do this again, what might I do differently next time? What additional things would I like to try?" This experience develops communication skills and critical thinking skills. It also increases the likelihood of knowledge transfer.

Notice Patterns
Highlighting patterns trains children's minds to think about similarities and to make connections. It helps them to consider how one component is part of a larger whole (systems thinking). The more children practice seeing connections, the stronger they will be at critical thinking and innovative problem-solving.

Use technology and social media tools
Technology can hook a child into learning or creating who might not otherwise be interested. Technology skills, not only for knowledge acquisition, but for communicating, creating, and collaborating enhance a child's overall learning experience.

Collaborate with others
Mentoring and apprenticeships (with near-peers or community-based experts)
are excellent ways to build real life skills. Invite area business people and
community volunteers to share their skills with the children in your program. Working side
by side develops a work ethic, models skills, demonstrates collaboration – all important
for success as adults. Even the simplest strategy of co-constructing with a child (playing
beside a child) models skills and encourages communication and sharing of ideas.
Provide opportunities each day for teamwork and group play.

Represent an idea/learning/instructions in multiple ways (words, diagram, photos, audio)
This helps a person to understand at a deeper level and transfer the understanding
to related situations in the future. (Education for Life and Work). After an accomplishment
or experience, encourage children to re-represent that experience in a new way.

These are a few of the many research-based recommendations that support a child's
development of 21st century skills. Programs that pay attention to both subject matter
(reading, math, crafts, playground games) and the 21st century skills of critical
thinking/problem-solving, creativity, communication, and collaboration will prepare this
country's next generation of workers and leaders for success in a global society.

To read more visit: http://bit.ly/1FOd7Gs

(Accepting Applications) The Netherlands Embassy/Zimbabwe Grants up to €15,000 for
Poverty Alleviation Projects

The Netherlands Embassy in Harare, Zimbabwe is accepting applications from
organizations in Zimbabwe,Zambia and Malawi. Grant request can be made for small
projects for poverty alleviation in line with policy focus. The primary objective of this
funding opportunity is to make contribution towards the empowerment of poor people,
expanding their freedom of choice and actions to structure their own lives.

Strategic Sectors

- Environment
- Job Creation
- Food security & nutrition (not humanitarian aid)

Types of intervention

- Capacity Building
- Training
- Research

Projects can be 6-8 months long and should end by 30 September 2015. The Embassy grant funding ranges between €5,000 to €15,000 depending upon the project.

Eligibility Criteria

- Proposed program should benefit a community or at least a group of people, not individuals.
- Project activities should promote sustainability, build self-reliance, and avoid dependency relationship with donors.
- Application should have the following elements – a clear problem analysis; clear objective, results and activities; inputs & outputs; risk analysis; detailed work plan and budget; implementing modalities and administration; proof of registration/legal entity; bank account details; and indication of other funding for the project or organization.
- Projects outside Harare will be prioritized.

Note: Applications can be made via email or regular mail to reach the organizers by the deadline. Applicants will be informed of the success/failure of their application by the end of January 2015.

Deadline: 15 December 2014

For more information visit: http://bit.ly/1Bf42c2

(Fellowship Program) Open Government Fellowship Program for African Citizens (February-July 2015)

The Code for Africa and Open Knowledge invite applications from African candidates for the Open Government Fellowship program. The major purpose of the program is to empower the next generation of leaders in field of open government. The program seeks to identify, train and support the next generation of open government advocates and community builders.

The six months program will be held from February to July 2015 as pilot. Total 3 candidates will be selected to become fellows. The fellows will be provided with a monthly stipend of $1,000, a $2,500 travel fund and a $3,000 project fund. Additionally, they will receive in-kind support such as access to Code for Africa workshop space in their Citizen Labs in Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa & Tanzania and access to similar spaces through Code for Africa affiliates in Ghana, Rwanda, Uganda, etc. The fellows can also get on-going technical support from Code of Africa team during the course of the program.

Eligibility Criteria

- Applicants must belong to an African country. The following countries are highly

encouraged – Angola, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ghana,
Kenya, Morocco, Mozambique, Mauritius, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, South
Africa, Senegal, Tunisia, Tanzania, and Uganda.
- Applicants should be engaged in community. This should be clearly mentioned in
the proposal.

Assessment Criteria

- Existing engagement in the Community (past and present).
- Vision for the Fellowship & expected outcomes.
- Engagement strategy of the proposed local open government community.
- Project Proposal describing how the candidate plans to utilize $4,000 micro-grant
in her/his project.

In the application form, applicants will be required to tick mark the three strongest
skills among the following – data analysis, policy analysis, political advocacy, impact
assessment, communications, event & workshop facilitation, research, investigative
journalism, data collection, data extraction (web scraping, PDFs), topical expertise
(elections, extractive industries, education, etc.), community
building, programming/coding. They will have to describe one advocacy or campaigning
strategy that you have used to get access to government information/data.

Deadline: 15 December 2014

For more information, visit: http://bit.ly/15PBHvT

As part of the Firelight Foundation's Capacity Building Program, Firelight provides
"Newsflashes" to share relevant resources and information with our active grantee-
partners via weekly emails and via post on a monthly basis. We hope that by facilitating
access to information for grassroots, community-focused organizations, programming for
children and families, as well as organizational development, is enhanced. Past editions
of the Firelight Newsflash can be found on our website:
http://www.firelightfoundation.org/resources/newsflash

We welcome your comments, feedback and ideas for upcoming Newsflashes at
newsletter@firelightfoundation.org

For more information contact:

Firelight Foundation
740 Front Street, Suite 380
Santa Cruz, CA 95060 USA
www.firelightfoundation.org
+1 831-429- 8750