

West Windsor-Plainsboro Competencies

Innovative & Practical Problem Solver	Effective Communicator	Collaborative Team Member
Flexible & Self-Directed Learner	Globally Aware, Active, & Responsible Student/Citizen	Information Literate Researcher

1. Innovative and Practical Problem Solver

As I continue to strengthen my ability to **create and innovate**, I:

- Use a wide range of idea creation techniques
- Create new and worthwhile ideas (both incremental and radical concepts)
- Elaborate, refine, analyze and evaluate my ideas in order to improve and maximize creative efforts
- Develop, implement and communicate new ideas to others effectively
- Am open and responsive to new and diverse perspectives; incorporate group input and feedback into my work
- 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 is a long-term, cyclical process of small successes and frequent mistakes
- Act on creative ideas to make a tangible and useful contribution to the field in which the innovation will occur

As I continue to strengthen my ability to become a **practical problem solver**, I:

- Observe situations and identify a problem.
- Define problems clearly and accurately.
- Brainstorm solution strategies using reasoning, prior knowledge, common sense, and creativity.
- Use various types of reasoning (inductive, deductive, etc.) as appropriate to the situation
- Identify and gather relevant information to support solution strategies.
- Apply the steps necessary to carry out the solution strategy (such as effectively analyze and evaluate evidence, arguments, claims and beliefs; analyze and evaluate major alternative points of view)
- Interpret information and draw conclusions based on the best analysis that apply to the solution(s) of the problem.
- Synthesize and make connections between information and arguments
- Solve different kinds of non-familiar problems in both conventional and innovative ways
- Identify and ask significant questions that clarify various points of view and lead to better solutions
- Reflect critically on learning experiences and processes
- Extend and/or transfer the learning to new situations.

2. Effective Communicator: Articulate thoughts and ideas effectively using oral, written and nonverbal communication skills in a variety of media and contexts for a range of purposes (e.g. to inform, instruct, motivate and persuade)

As I continue to strengthen my ability to communicate with others **verbally**, I:

- Express my thoughts, ideas and opinions clearly in front of a group
- Use clear, concise, organized language in all speaking situations
- Choose appropriate forms and strategies of speaking for a variety of purposes and audiences

As I continue to strengthen my ability to communicate with others **in writing**, I:

- Organize and convey information and ideas accurately
- Use persuasion to judge, propose, and convince
- Express myself in my own unique voice
- Demonstrate appropriate grammar, usage and mechanics
- Revise and edit using self, teacher, peer and collaborative feedback
- Appropriately credit sources of information

As I continue to strengthen my ability to communicate with others **visually**, I:

- Choose and use multiple forms of media to convey what has been learned
- Choose visuals that effectively *engage* my audience and *convey* my ideas

As others communicate with me and I continue to strengthen my ability to **be a good listener**, I:

- Listen effectively to decipher meaning, including knowledge, values, attitudes and intentions actively respond to what I am hearing
- Give appropriate feedback to a variety of speakers
- Develop listening strategies such as: asking relevant questions, taking notes, and making predictions to understand what is heard
- Follow oral directions

As I continue to strengthen my ability to **be a good reader**, I:

- Use appropriate strategies for understanding a variety of text
- Read for meaning and demonstrate understanding through personal response
- Respond to text by showing understanding, making connections, and making judgments

As I continue to strengthen my ability to **be a critical viewer**, I:

- Utilize a variety of media to gain information
- Glean information from charts, graphs and diagrams
- Respond to visuals by showing understanding, making connections, and making judgments

3. Collaborative Team Member

As I continue to strengthen my ability to **collaborate** with others, I:

- Understand and commit to the goal of the group
- Share ideas with others
- Accept ideas/opinions from others
- Actively participate in brainstorming sessions
- Demonstrate respect for myself and others
- Positively interact with group members
- Demonstrate flexibility in group decisions (compromise)

As I continue to strengthen my ability to **cooperate** with others, I:

- Follow directions
- Accept responsibility for my role in the task at hand
- Demonstrate dependability and reliability
- Contribute to accomplishing the goal in a timely manner

As I continue to strengthen my ability to develop **interpersonal skills**, I:

- Respect cultural differences and work effectively with people from a range of social and cultural backgrounds
- Respond open-mindedly to different ideas and values
- Leverage social and cultural differences to create new ideas and increase both innovation and quality of work
- 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
- Assist in resolving conflicts
- Am knowledgeable about individual roles of group members
- Actively listen to others (Know when it is appropriate to listen and when to speak)
- Provide constructive feedback to others
- Utilize feedback from others

As I continue to strengthen my ability to develop **leadership skills**, I:

- Use interpersonal and problem-solving skills to influence and guide others toward a goal
- Leverage strengths of others to accomplish a common goal
- Inspire others to reach their very best via example and selflessness
- Demonstrate integrity and ethical behavior in using influence and power

4. The Flexible & Self Directed Learner

As I continue to become a **responsible, self-directed** learner, I:

- Arrive prepared for class.
- Plan and budget time to meet deadlines.
- Follow through on commitments.
- Attend to and follow directions.
- Manage my behavior so that I remain focused.
- Organize time and materials.
- Contribute positively to the learning environment.
- Persevere in challenging situations.
- Take ownership of work and actions.
- Strive to do my best work and be accurate in all situations.
- Prioritize, plan and manage work to achieve the intended result
- Am able to undertake independent study so that I can monitor, define, prioritize and complete tasks without direct oversight

As I continue to become a **resourceful, self-directed** learner, I:

- Ask a variety of questions in order to clarify my understanding.
- Know when and how to seek help and assistance.
- Find and use information from a variety of sources.
- Evaluate information for reliability, accuracy and credibility.
- Demonstrate a willingness to take risks in order to learn.
- Use reasoning strategies, knowledge and common sense to solve problems.
- Apply prior knowledge to new situations.
- Set and meet goals, even in the face of obstacles and competing pressure

As I continue to become a **flexible, adaptable** learner, I:

- Adapt to varied roles, jobs responsibilities, schedules and contexts
- Work effectively in a climate of ambiguity and changing priorities
- Incorporate feedback effectively
- Deal positively with praise, setbacks and criticism
- Understand, negotiate and balance diverse views and beliefs to reach workable solutions, particularly in multi-cultural environments

As I continue to become a **reflective, life-long** learner, I:

- Am thoughtful, open-minded, and curious.
- Assess my work in order to identify areas of strength and weakness.
- Assess the strengths and weaknesses of how I learn in order to make appropriate adjustments.
- Recognize and capitalize on strengths.
- Generate and employ strategies to improve weaknesses.
- Respond to new information by reflecting on experience and reconsidering my opinion and sources of information.
- Listen to and respect the contributions of others.
- Go beyond basic mastery of skills and/or curriculum to explore and expand one's own learning and opportunities to gain expertise
- Demonstrate initiative to advance skill levels towards a professional level
- Demonstrate commitment to learning as a lifelong process

5. Globally Aware, Active, & Responsible Student/Citizen

As I continue to strive toward being a **responsible student**, I:

- Demonstrate skill in decision-making which reflects that my choice is informed and based on ethical behavior rather than peer-pressure.
- Understand and accept responsibility for my actions.
- Resolve conflicts peacefully without compromising personal values.
- Respect the rights and feelings of myself and others.
- Respect school property as well as the environment.
- Make healthy choices.

As I continue to strive toward being an **involved student**, I:

- Participate in a variety of school activities beyond the school day.
- Productively contribute to the community.
- Demonstrate dependability, productivity and initiative.

As I continue to strive toward being a **globally aware citizen**, I:

- Participate effectively in civic life through knowing how to stay informed and understanding governmental processes
- Exercise the rights and obligations of citizenship at local, state, national and global levels
- Understand the local and global implications of civic decisions
- Use 21st century skills to understand and address global issues
- Learn from and working collaboratively with individuals representing diverse cultures, religions and lifestyles in a spirit of mutual respect and open dialogue in personal, work and community contexts
- Understand other nations and cultures, including the use of non-English languages

As I continue to strive toward being a **financially literate citizen**, I:

- Know how to make appropriate personal economic choices
- Understand the role of the economy in society
- Use entrepreneurial skills to enhance workplace productivity and career options

As I continue to strive toward developing **health literacy**, I:

- Obtain, interpret and understand basic health information and services and using such information and services in ways that are health enhancing
- Understand preventive physical and mental health measures, including proper diet, nutrition, exercise, risk avoidance and stress reduction
- Use available information to make appropriate health-related decisions
- Establish and monitor personal and family health goals
- Understand national and international public health and safety issues

As I continue to strive toward developing **environmental literacy**, I:

- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the environment and the circumstances and conditions affecting it, particularly as relates to air, climate, land, food, energy, water and ecosystems
- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of society's impact on the natural world (e.g., population growth, population development, resource consumption rate, etc.)
- Investigate and analyze environmental issues, and make accurate conclusions about effective solutions
- Take individual and collective action towards addressing environmental challenges (e.g., participating in global actions, designing solutions that inspire action on environmental issues)

6. Information Literate Researcher

As an information literate researcher, who **plans** and **determines** the nature and extent of the information needed, I:

- Define and articulate the need for information.
- Identify a variety of types of formats of potential sources of information.
- Consider the costs and benefits of acquiring the needed information.
- Reevaluate the nature and extent of the information needed.
- Formulate questions based on information needs that focus student inquiry and analysis.

As an information literate researcher, who **locates & gathers** the necessary information effectively and efficiently, I:

- Selects the most appropriate investigative methods or informational retrieval systems for accessing needed information.
- Constructs and implements effectively designed search strategies.
- Distinguishes fact from fiction/opinion.
- Distinguishes between a primary and a secondary source.
- Retrieves information online or in person using a variety of methods.
- Refines the search strategy if necessary.
- Evaluates the sources of information critically.

As an information literate researcher who **extracts & organizes** information by **evaluating sources critically** and incorporating selected information into my knowledge base, I:

- Extract, record, and manage the information and its sources.
- Summarize the main idea to be extracted from the information gathered.
- Articulate and apply criteria for evaluating both the information and its sources including both how and why media messages are constructed, and for what purposes
- Synthesize main ideas to construct new concepts.
- Compare new knowledge with prior knowledge to determine the value added, contradictions, or other unique characteristics of the information.
- Distinguish between essential/relevant and non-essential/irrelevant information in support of thesis.
- Determine whether the initial query should be revised.
- Validate understanding and interpretation of the information through discourse with other individuals, subject-area experts, and/or practitioners.
- Outline ideas in a coherent and organized format and develop a logical conclusion.

As an information literate researcher, individually or as a member of a group, I use information effectively to **create a product** that accomplishes a specific purpose through:

- Applying new and prior information to the planning and creation of a particular product or performance.
- Revising the development process for the product or performance.
- Understanding and utilizing the most appropriate media creation tools, characteristics and conventions to most effectively convey information.
- Communicating the product or performance effectively to others by addressing and engaging audience for intended purpose.
- Applying a fundamental understanding of the ethical/legal issues surrounding the access and use of information.

As an information literate researcher, I **self-reflect** on my research process and product by identifying my own strengths and weakness toward continual improvement as an effective and efficient researche