



## Initiative

**What it is:** Initiative for the purposes of *ACCESS AfterSchool* can be defined as the student's ability to direct the course of their learning, to rely on self-motivation to set and achieve goals and the capacity to work independently.

**Why it's important:** Initiative and Self-Direction are identified by the Partnership for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills as one of five critical life and career skills for students to develop.<sup>1</sup> Studies indicate that self-directed learners are goal-oriented, exhibit persistence in learning and possess a strong desire to learn and change.<sup>2</sup>

### Strategies to develop Initiative in *ACCESS AfterSchool*:

- Provide opportunities for students to choose projects or assignments
- Offer hands-on learning opportunities
- Allow students opportunities to work independently as well as in small groups
- Support goal-setting activities

### Applications/Examples:

- Cooking class students design a menu or choose dishes to cook in class
- Biking/Running students select the trail/route for class
- Martial Arts students set skill, belt or achievement goals
- Tech students create their own video game based upon their interests and desires

**How the skill will be assessed:** Teachers will be surveyed after the course is complete, including how Responsibility was included in their curriculum, how students displayed these skills to them and how they might improve upon their methods or suggest to other teachers how to implement in the future. Students will self-report on pre- and post-program surveys about their interest and aptitude of 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills.

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<sup>1</sup> Partnership for 21st Century Skills (2009). P21 framework definitions. Retrieved from

[http://www.p21.org/storage/documents/P21\\_Framework\\_Definitions.pdf](http://www.p21.org/storage/documents/P21_Framework_Definitions.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Taylor, B. (1995). Self-directed learning: Revisiting an idea most appropriate for middle school students. Retrieved from

<http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED395287.pdf>