

Vol. 13, No. 4
May/June 2010

Tools FOR SCHOOLS

FOR A DYNAMIC COMMUNITY OF LEARNERS AND LEADERS

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This newsletter was made possible with support from the MetLife Foundation.



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A WORLD *of* POSSIBILITIES

BY TRACY CROW

“We have to ask ourselves the hard question: Are we preparing students to be ready for a rapidly globalizing, interconnected, and interdependent world? And if we’re

not ready, what will it take to get us there?” Shari Albright of the Asia Society isn’t afraid to take on this challenge, and she doesn’t stand alone. In the 2009 MetLife *Survey of the American Teacher: Collaborating for Student Success*, a majority of teachers (71%) and principals (75%) agree that preparing their students for competition and collaboration in a global economy is “very important” among factors that can improve student achievement (MetLife, 2009).

One response to the challenge is to create schools focused specifically on international education. However, all schools will need to address this pressing need in some way. Along with other 21st century skills, many schools and educators are realizing that it is no longer optional to develop global knowledge

Educating
for global
competence

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A world of possibilities: Educating for global competence

Schools that see the benefit of integrating a global focus will have to look carefully at the implications for curriculum, instruction, assessment, and support for educators.

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and skills. American students compete more than ever on an international playing field when they leave schools, and businesses are looking for graduates who are ready to work as both collaborators and competitors in a global arena. The promise of technology, scientific and economic challenges, and the need for effective cross-cultural relationships call for a new set of skills. How can schools respond?

WHAT A GLOBAL FOCUS LOOKS LIKE

However deeply schools choose to enter the work of integrating a global focus, they need support and tools. Albright is a leader in helping educators, schools, districts and policy makers understand this learning opportunity in ways that can be addressed in any classroom. At the Asia Society, she administers the innovative International Studies Schools Network, and helps to lead the Partnership for Global Learning (see box below). The Asia Society has organized the partnership to support schools, districts, and educators with a wide range of interests and experiences in using international learning as a lever to propel students to higher levels of success. MetLife Foundation provides support to the partnership. Albright noted, “We give

people learning tools, models to examine as they explore what makes sense for their school.” She knows that some schools want to “dip their toes in the water” of global education, while others are ready to dive in.

A global focus, however, can’t be an add-on, just one more thing a school has to do. Schools that see the benefit of integrating a global focus will have to look carefully at the implications for curriculum, instruction, assessment, and support for educators. (See the tools on pages 4-5 to investigate your school’s readiness for a global focus.)

For Albright, this means asking such questions as, “How do we use science to unlock the understandings of global systems, and how do we use the world and global systems to unlock the understanding of science or math? How do we broaden the canon in English and language arts so students are reading a broader spectrum of works from around the world and using that to gain insight into culture, history, world conditions, and all kinds of human experiences?”

“What happens on the ground is students become really great inquirers about the world across the grades,” said Albright. “They understand looking at multiple sources, they can recognize differing perspectives, what may drive

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NSDC’S BELIEF

Remarkable professional learning begins with ambitious goals for students.

PARTNERSHIP FOR GLOBAL LEARNING

Established in 1956 by John D. Rockefeller, III, Asia Society is the leading global and pan-Asian organization working to strengthen relationships and promote understanding among the people, leaders, and institutions of the United States and Asia. Enhancing its ongoing education focus to strengthen teaching about Asia and Asian cultures, the education division added an emphasis on globalization with a broadened focus on teaching students about the world. To support this new focus, it established several related initiatives, including the Partnership for Global Learning and the International Studies Schools Network.

Educators from any school with an interest in connecting with the resources and expertise of their globally focused peers and the Asia Society may join the Partnership for Global Learning, which offers conferences, policy briefs, resources, and publications.

Learn more at the Asia Society web site: www.asiasociety.org/education.

A SCHOOLWIDE APPROACH

The International Studies Schools Network (ISSN) is an Asia Society initiative under the larger umbrella of the Partnership for Global Learning. Albright considers it the R&D arm of the organization – a laboratory where the Asia Society has designed a school model around global learning. More than 20 schools belong to the network.

“Everything we do is infused with the idea of global citizenship, and we ask how are we going to help our kids be active, thoughtful contributors to the global community,” said Jennifer Zinn. Zinn leads the Global Learning Collaborative in New York City, a high school with the goal of preparing students to graduate as knowledgeable global citizens with the skills necessary to be successful in any part of the world.

The school works to bring the world to the students and students to the world through speakers from different countries and companies and travel opportunities for students.

A lot of the work of the school's staff is very collaborative, noted Zinn. “Part of the professional development is around working together as a team, finding different protocols and norms for how we're going to work together to make sure that we can all be on the same page to really be able to support the kids to think more globally,” she said. Zinn also connects her school with others in the ISSN to share best practices across the network.

“A really important piece of being a global citizen is to have that sense of efficacy, to know that you can make a difference in the world.”

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someone owning one perspective vs. another and how to navigate among those differences.”

Helping students to take action on issues that matter to them globally and locally is a critical piece of the work in schools that emphasize global learning. “A really important piece of being a global citizen is to have that sense of efficacy, to know that you can make a difference in the world,” said Albright.

SUPPORTING ADULT LEARNERS

Supporting teachers in any school that emphasizes the importance of global competence is a multipronged task. Albright talks about the importance first of raising awareness about why it's important to emphasize this approach to schooling. “We look at the research, and what industry and business are telling us, and we look at where the world is moving.”

Reaching consensus on a definition of global competence is a start towards outlining what schools will expect of students (see pp. 6-7 for a definition of global competence at the elementary and secondary levels). “Then the question becomes,” said Albright, “How do we support one another in the learning at a campus so that as the adult educators in the work, we feel knowledgeable and comfortable or we become secure enough to be co-learners with students to move this work forward.”

Teachers and students agree that they have

a ways to go to become globally knowledgeable. In the 2008 MetLife survey, students rate their teachers' ability to teach about nations and cultures lowest among major categories of knowledge and skills, including 32% who rate their teachers fair or poor. Nearly two-thirds of teachers (64%) and half of principals (51%) rate their students as fair or poor on their knowledge of other nations and cultures and international issues (MetLife, 2008).

EXPECTATIONS FOR SUCCESS

In research studies examining the impact of the ISSN schools, the latest supported by MetLife Foundation, the Asia Society is seeing encouraging qualitative data. “We heard the most compelling stories from kids,” said Albright. One student said the graduate profile outlining his desired outcomes “‘is like my ten commandments; this is who I've got to be in the world,’” recalls Albright. “They truly see themselves as agents of change. They see themselves as making a difference, not waiting to grow up to make a difference.”

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Building global competence in students often starts in the classroom through the curriculum and learning, but it is not limited to that realm alone. When a school decides that preparing students for a globalized 21st century is a priority, this decision has implications for the school's mission and vision, the culture of the school, the professional learning that enables teachers and school leaders to bring the world into teaching and learning, the partnerships that the school creates to support students learning about the world, and the opportunities within and beyond the school day for students to engage with the world and make a difference in it. The following list of questions is a useful starting point for bringing the world into your school.

1. What are your state's current (and future) connections to other parts of the world, including economic development / jobs, cultural exchanges, and population diversity?

2. What knowledge, skills and values will your community's graduates need to function effectively in the interconnected world of the 21st century?

3. How might the K-12 curriculum be strengthened to promote international knowledge and skills?

4. What is the status of world language study, including less commonly taught languages?

5. How can technology resources be used to extend the international knowledge and experiences of teachers and students?

6. What kinds of international exchange programs for students and educators are now available or should be?

7. What international expertise do your teachers or administrators have and what professional development opportunities exist or can be developed to help them to gain more?

8. Which local ethnic communities or language groups can be tapped to strengthen learning about the world? And which partnerships can be created with colleges, businesses, and cultural or international affairs organizations to help enhance students' and teachers' international knowledge?

9. What student leadership opportunities or community service activities exist or could be developed to promote students' democratic values, citizenship, and global understanding?

10. How can your school and community libraries, after-school programs, and other informal learning resources be used to promote learning about the world?

Adapted with permission from *Going Global: Preparing Our Students for an Interconnected World*, Asia Society, 2008.

Bringing the world into our classrooms and schools creates an opportunity to increase relevance in learning and to enliven the standards and the content that are part of state or district curriculum expectations. Although many schools and districts have global awareness or global citizenship as part of their mission or vision, often teachers and leaders struggle to know how to make that a real part of the learning experience for students.

Through a partnership with the Council of Chief State School Officers and the Asia Society Partnership for Global Learning, a new, actionable definition of global competence has emerged that schools can use to bring a greater global perspective into teaching and learning everyday.

The definition articulates the knowledge and skills that students need in the 21st century. Students must

have the knowledge and skills to investigate the world in robust ways, to recognize and weigh their own perspectives as well as the perspectives of others, to communicate ideas effectively to diverse audiences in multiple ways, and to take action in order to not just learn about the world but to make a difference in the world. This knowledge and skill is built both within the core content areas as well as through interdisciplinary study in which the interconnectedness of issues as well as broader global themes are explored.

Schools or teachers can use the elementary or secondary version of the global competence matrix on the following pages as a planning tool to bring a greater global focus to the curriculum. Consider asking the following questions, either for self-reflection or as the prompt for a department or grade-level team conversation.

1. What am I already doing in the curriculum or through specific learning units that help students learn to investigate the world?

2. Is there a specific unit or topic that I currently teach that, by adding a focus on a global problem, issue or challenge, could foster a deeper understanding of the world for students?

3. What state standards or district curriculum provide an opportunity for students to articulate their own perspectives as well as explore different perspectives on an issue or event?

4. What opportunities are there for students to communicate with diverse audiences, use a language that they are learning, or connect with other students around the world?

5. How do students in my school “make a difference” in the world either through local actions and initiatives or through broader global actions and / or service opportunities?

6. What is one concrete step that I can take to develop global competence in my students through the learning opportunities that I create for them?

7. What learning do I need, and how can I learn in community with my peers, to be better prepared to develop global competence in my students?

Adapted with permission from *Going Global: Preparing Our Students for an Interconnected World*, Asia Society, 2008.

Global Competence is the knowledge, skills and dispositions to understand and act creatively and innovatively on issues of global significance.

INVESTIGATE THE WORLD	RECOGNIZE PERSPECTIVES	COMMUNICATE IDEAS	TAKE ACTION
<p>Students investigate the world beyond their immediate environment.</p>	<p>Students recognize their own and others’ perspective.</p>	<p>Students communicate their ideas effectively with diverse audiences.</p>	<p>Students translate their ideas and findings into appropriate actions to improve conditions.</p>
<p>Students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compare and contrast the location, climate, culture, beliefs, and lifestyles of countries and groups of people around the world. • Identify world problems/ challenges and explain how different countries are addressing them. • Identify, collect, and analyze knowledge and evidence about different world regions and world problems from a variety of national and international sources. • Present their knowledge and understanding about the world and world challenges in a coherent and compelling way. 	<p>Students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articulate what they think and understand about a situation, event, issue or phenomena and explain what led them to that understanding. • Articulate and explain perspectives of other people or groups that may be the same or different than their own and identify what influenced those ideas or views. • Explain how different cultures influence how we live and what we do in our own country as well as how we influence other countries with our culture and beliefs. • Identify what kinds of experiences and education that they have access to in their school, community and country and can compare that to the experiences and education of other students around the world. 	<p>Students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize that people speak and act differently in different settings and identify and demonstrate appropriate communication for the school setting as well as other settings in their lives. • Use appropriate language (English and other world languages), behavior and strategies to effectively communicate, both verbally and non-verbally, with diverse audiences. • Explain how effective communication impacts understanding and collaboration in the world. • Select and effectively use appropriate technology and media to communicate their ideas with diverse audiences in school and with students around the world. 	<p>Students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize their capacity to advocate for and contribute to improvement locally, regionally, or globally. • Identify opportunities to make a difference in their school, community, or on an international level, either on their own or in collaboration with others. • Create a plan for taking action on an issue that takes into account what others are doing about the issue already as well as the lasting impact that might be gained for others once the plan is enacted. • Act creatively and innovatively to contribute to improvement locally, regionally or globally both personally and collaboratively.

The Global Competence Matrix was created as part of the Council of Chief State School Officers’ EdSteps Project, in partnership with the Asia Society Partnership for Global Learning. Similar matrixes describing criteria for global competence within academic disciplines are in development. © 2009



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<p>Students investigate the world beyond their immediate environment.</p>	<p>Students recognize their own and others’ perspective.</p>	<p>Students exchange ideas effectively with diverse audiences.</p>	<p>Students translate their ideas and findings into appropriate actions to improve conditions.</p>
<p>Students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify an issue, generate a question and explain the significance of locally, regionally or globally focused researchable questions. Use a variety of languages and domestic and international sources and media to identify and weigh relevant evidence to address a globally significant researchable question. Analyze, integrate and synthesize evidence collected to construct coherent responses to globally significant researchable questions. Develop an argument based on compelling evidence that considers multiple perspectives and draws defensible conclusions. 	<p>Students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognize and express their own perspective on situations, events, issues or phenomena and identify the influences on that perspective. Examine perspectives of other people, groups, or schools of thought and identify the influences on those perspectives. Explain how cultural interactions influence situations, events, issues or phenomena, including the development of knowledge. Articulate how differential access to knowledge, technology and resources affects quality of life and perspectives. 	<p>Students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognize and express how diverse audiences may perceive different meanings from the same information and how that impacts communication. Listen to and communicate effectively with diverse people, using appropriate verbal and nonverbal behavior, languages and strategies. Select and use appropriate technology and media to communicate with diverse audiences. Reflect on how effective communication impacts understanding and collaboration in an interdependent world. 	<p>Students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and create opportunities for personal or collaborative action to address situations, events, issues or phenomena in ways that improve conditions. Assess options and plan actions based on evidence and the potential for impact, taking into account previous approaches, varied perspectives and potential consequences. Act, personally or collaboratively, in creative and ethical ways to contribute to improvement locally, regionally or globally and assess the impact of the actions taken. Reflect on their capacity to advocate for and contribute to improvement locally, regionally, or globally.

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Membership info: 800-727-7288

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ISSN 1936-9328

Tools For Schools is published four times a year (August, November, February, and May) by the National Staff Development Council, 504 S. Locust St., Oxford, OH 45056, for \$49 of each membership. Periodicals postage paid at Wheelersburg, Ohio, and additional offices.

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Showcase your learning team: Apply for new award from NSDC

The Shirley Hord Learning Team Award honors excellence in professional learning. Based on NSDC's definition of professional learning, the award recognizes a school team that successfully implements the cycle of continuous learning for professional learning that results in student achievement.

Given by NSDC and sponsored by Corwin, this new award serves three purposes:

- Increasing application of NSDC's definition of effective professional learning;
- Recognizing schools that have fully implemented the definition in practice; and
- Providing models of effective teams

to support others in implementing the definition.

Schools wishing to be considered for the award will submit a video clip of the learning team in action along with a description of results and a principal's letter of support.

The award winner will be announced in early November. The award to the learning team includes funds to support a team of three educators from the school to participate in an upcoming NSDC conference. The award also includes a \$2,500 gift to the school to support collaborative professional learning and a gift of Corwin books for the school's professional library.

The official deadline for submission is Sept. 25. See application details at www.nsdc.org/getinvolved/hordaward.cfm.

