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Introduction

By VIF Staff



GLOBAL EDUCATION AND EQUITABLE PREPARATION

All of our futures are increasingly linked to the challenges of the global community. The world's population is predicted to grow from our current 7.3 billion to 8.5 billion in 2030 and to nearly 10 billion by 2050. Such growth will affect a host of global issues including pollution, disease management, and the depletion of energy, food and water resources.

For students to participate effectively in this changing world, they must first understand it. The 21st century student will someday sell to the world, buy from the world, work for international companies, compete with people from other countries, manage employees from other cultures, collaborate with people all over the world and solve global problems.

In education, global competitiveness can be characterized as the set of skills and factors that support individuals' personal and professional productivity in their communities and in the world. Being globally competitive today requires developed global competence. Equipping students with specific hard skills to compete in a global job market is important, but cultivating their abilities to effectively share ideas and communicate across cultures in appropriate and respectful ways is critical.

Existing and emerging K–12 educational efforts — 1:1 technology initiatives and language, International Baccalaureate, STEAM and cross-cultural exchange programs — promote students' global competence. While these efforts are growing in popularity, they are still not available to a majority of students.

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Regardless of location, socioeconomic status or cultural background, all students are equally deserving of educational experiences that prepare them to be globally competent. How do we as educators continuously create learning opportunities and deliver instruction that ensures global competence for all? One option is to provide students with instructional practices that consistently engage global content, multicultural perspectives and problem solving across subjects.

A simple term for this is global education.

The most successful global education approaches recognize the attitudes, skills and knowledge needed to navigate, contribute and flourish in the world while integrating activities that purposefully resolve opportunity gaps on a daily basis.

In the following smart bundle, we will look closely at the characteristics of globally competent students and address how K-12 institutions can utilize global education practices to equitably prepare all students for success.

Back to Basics: Creating Equitable Learning Environments

By Meg Van Voorhis, Manager of Dual Language Curriculum and Instructional Services, VIF

“I think understanding is imperative to teaching diverse students and promoting equity. Not all students follow the same path or require the same amount of resources but they should be exposed to the range of opportunities and experiences that are out there. And then it is their choice which path to pursue.”

~ Dr. Neil Pedersen, Director of CCRESA and former superintendent of Chapel Hill-Carrboro Schools

In the world of U.S. education, the statistics around the achievement gap are often pretty grim. No Child Left Behind and other broad initiatives have attempted to close this gap on a larger scale, but some of the most impactful initiatives are those implemented at the school level.

If we accept that the day-to-day interactions between teachers, students and parents are determining factors of the success or failure of any broader attempts to promote success for all students, then sustaining a successful and equitable learning environment starts with three things: administrative support, meaningful student and teacher experiences and parent engagement.

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

“I think the most common characteristic of the successful turnaround schools is the principal. So if we could just get a great principal in these schools, it would trickle down to the teachers.”

~ Dr. Neil Pedersen

While he acknowledges that an equitable school environment cannot be created by a principal alone, Dr. Pedersen, former superintendent of Chapel Hill-Carrboro Schools in North Carolina and current Executive Director of CCRESA, deeply believes that the administration of a given school can have a tremendous impact on a school’s ability to promote a successful, equitable learning environment.

Suzanne Mitchell is an example of one of these administrators. After almost 10 years as a reading coach and then an assistant principal, Mitchell is now in her third year as principal of Selma Elementary, a Title I school in North Carolina. As many new principals do, she inherited years of school improvement plans as well as a “low-performing” designation in a school comprised mainly of minority students. On top of that she was handed a dual language program that, despite good intentions, had received negative feedback from teachers.

With so much at stake, including student performance on English standardized testing, how could she reinvigorate the school to not only improve student test scores but boost employee morale?

It required a culture shift within the school to support equitable learning practices. This shift primarily occurred as a way to better integrate the dual language program and promote it as an equitable program for the diverse population of students at Selma. Mitchell said:

"The instructional practices used in the dual language classrooms have contributed to students' ability to collaborate in groups, as well as a more positive attitude and approach to learning. I also wanted to move away from independent silos of instruction to the message of: 'we're all in this together.' The school motto this year is: 'One heart, one vision, one school' – we want to create a school where children are biliterate and where we celebrate our diversity as a strength."

And that's exactly what she has done. Mitchell was recently named 2015 Principal of the Year by Johnston County Schools and has seen her school go from a ranking of "Did Not Meet Growth" in 2012 to "Exceeds Growth" in 2015. She has led her staff to become proud supporters of the program and recognize the opportunities it offers their students.

MEANINGFUL STUDENT AND TEACHER EXPERIENCES

"Giving teachers experiences is better than giving them another coffee mug."

~ Suzanne Mitchell

When most people think of providing meaningful experiences in education, they think of the students – and rightfully so. But we can't neglect or forget about our teachers. Mitchell believes we need to promote initiatives that show appreciation for our teachers and create a connection beyond the school environment. Events could involve dress-up days for Dr. Seuss week, a cookout at a teacher's home or a school-wide 5K race. Administrators can also create a social media system through Facebook or Twitter to share positive messages and foster a sense of community.

Mitchell and her school actively celebrate the diversity of their staff, which ranges from U.S. born teachers, some of whom have never left the state of North Carolina, to international teachers from Colombia, Peru and Chile. Through international potlucks and cultural celebrations, the staff have become more engaged with one another. According to Mitchell, teachers must learn to appreciate their own diversity and have their own experiences in order to help their students to do the same.

Because of these initiatives, the dual language and traditional staff have become better integrated and plan student activities together. Teachers are now thinking about how thematic concepts could integrate global content and language when planning. Traditional teachers have started helping dual language teachers find materials in Spanish and there is less division between the international teachers and those from the U.S.

"When it comes to school, there are extreme differences among children's experiences."

~ Dr. Neil Pedersen

Not only do these meaningful, social experiences boost teacher morale, they also carry over into the planning and teaching of lessons to ensure all students have access to experiences that enrich their learning. Recently, when second grade students were completing a unit on the environment and camping, teachers realized that almost none of their students had ever been camping.

In order to level the playing field for all students, teachers and community members decorated the school auditorium like a campground. They set up tents, brought in firewood, created a virtual walk through the woods and ate s'mores. These meaningful experiences are crucial when working with students who come from diverse backgrounds. But while teachers can foster additional student experiences, these experiences become even more meaningful when shared with parents.

PARENT ENGAGEMENT

“There is no ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach. Parents, like students, come from diverse backgrounds and not all initiatives will work for all parents. It takes commitment and trust from school administrators and parents to collaborate and see the value in these efforts.”

~ Julie Keane, Director of Research and Evaluation, VIF

Encouraging parents to come to school and share in student experiences requires building trust between parents, teachers and administrators — an often difficult endeavor.

Administrators may make assumptions about parental involvement just as parents may harbor their own biases based on past experiences or language barriers. Parents often associate visits to school with discipline issues or missing homework assignments.

At **Selma Elementary**, Mitchell has attempted to create a more inclusive environment for parents. First, she initiated a “Pancakes with the Principal” breakfast for parents of all grade levels. Parents who attend can share stories about their kids, celebrate successes with other parents and sense that Mitchell views their families as human beings rather than statistics.

Mitchell and the international teachers also created an International Night to showcase student diversity and invited parents to participate. Students shared messages of inclusivity in Spanish and English and celebrated the diversity of their school community. Teachers and students called out every country represented at the school and invited families to stand when their native country was called. According to Mitchell, “the sense of pride was palpable.”

Perhaps the most successful parent initiative at **Selma**, however, has been their “JAM” nights, which stands for “Joining All Minds.” Parents come to the school on designated evenings to help their children complete science challenges, math games, read-alouds, etc. and have the opportunity to talk to teachers. They leave with bilingual books, teaching strategies to assist with homework and a better understanding of the learning environment at **Selma**.

Mitchell wants the focus of any meeting with parents to be on student growth rather than proficiency. And, as Keane has observed as a dual language parent and PTA advocate, Mitchell’s efforts to increase parent engagement will continue to evolve with the needs of both her students and parents.

“There’s no number that is going to define who we are: we are doing the very best for our students, period.”

~ Suzanne Mitchell

Selma Elementary’s path toward an equitable learning environment is one that can be replicated in any school that effectively combines administrative support, meaningful student and teacher experiences and parent engagement. Effective communication between administrators, staff and parents can lead to greater understanding and support for students and their diverse needs. The integration of these factors fosters an environment that promotes academic success for all students.

5 Best Practices to Globalize Your School

By David Young, CEO, VIF

For decades, national, state and local commissions have called on education leaders to implement a more comprehensive portrait of a college and career-ready graduate that incorporates the 4 C's (Communication, Collaboration, Creativity, Critical Thinking). This portrait now includes a global competence represented by the Partnership for 21st Century Learning's [Framework for State Action on Global Education](#). The combination of these approaches stands as a model for what it means to be a well-prepared graduate in today's rapidly changing, interconnected society.

Although we know what a modern education can and should look like, we struggle to provide equitable opportunities for all students. Global learning experiences in particular stand out as an element of a rigorous education that is common to some students fortunate enough to attend private schools, an affluent public secondary school or a solid university. Yet for the overwhelming majority of K-12 public school students, these opportunities are not available.

If these global learning opportunities are core to being college and career-ready, why are they not offered widely in K-12 classrooms? And how do we provide global learning to more K-12 classrooms to equitably prepare all students? Here are some real examples to follow:

DEFINE YOUR GLOBAL-READY GRADUATE

First, determine what a global-ready graduate looks like for your state, district or school. Because every school system is different, don't feel like your global-ready graduate plan needs to look like that of anyone else. Tailor it to the needs of your students. If you're looking for a great example of a district that has clearly defined what it is looking for in a global-ready graduate, check out the work being done in the [Houston Independent School District](#).

Need a little help? Check out these global student indicators for grades [K-5](#), [6-8](#) and [9-12](#).

DEVELOP GLOBAL-READY TEACHERS

Global-ready teachers are vital to the development of global-ready students, schools and districts. Online professional development (PD) programs offer schools a way to provide teachers continuous



learning opportunities, including developing their own **global competencies**. For teachers to engage in learning practices that model what we are asking them to do in the classrooms, effective PD must incorporate active pedagogical strategies.

A great example of implementing this practice is the **Launch and Learn** program initiated by the state of Kentucky, which is designed to effectively prepare teachers to deliver global learning experiences to their students. All teachers can become global-ready teachers with professional development and curricular resources. Long story short, start with teachers.

UTILIZE SUPERIOR GLOBAL CLASSROOM RESOURCES

Many students in underserved schools and districts are not exposed to rigorous, authentic or relevant curricula, and we can't expect students to be ready for advanced courses in high school if their K-8 creative opportunities were limited. Incorporating thematic interdisciplinary units that are **framed through a global lens** is an effective curriculum strategy. Students tend to become more engaged when they believe they are participating in real-world problem solving, and districts should be looking for standards-aligned resources that can be **delivered digitally** to ensure currency and broad access.

INCORPORATE TECHNOLOGY

The importance of technology cannot be overstated — it keeps costs down and increases scalability. Global schools can begin completely online. This allows traditional, site-based training, curriculum resource design and delivery to be more cost effective. Technology also plays a large role in both the classroom and **professional development** programs. Effective incorporation of technology supports inquiry, collaborative and active learning, and is an integral part of student-led classrooms.

INTEGRATE, INTEGRATE, INTEGRATE

For global education to be successfully implemented into any school, it is critical that global concepts are **incorporated into what teachers are already doing**. Global education is the context within which all teaching and learning can and should occur.

By infusing global themes throughout the curriculum using an inquiry-based instructional framework, developing global-ready teachers and ensuring access for all students, we can create educational environments that encourage creativity, innovation and equitable opportunities.

What Do Globally Competent Students Look Like?

By David Young, CEO, VIF

All of our futures are increasingly linked to the challenges of the global community. The world's population is predicted to grow from our current 7.3 billion to 8.5 billion in 2030 and to nearly 10 billion by 2050. Such population growth will affect a host of global issues including pollution, disease management, and depletion of energy, food and water resources.

For students to participate effectively in this changing world, they must understand it. The 21st century student will sell to the world, buy from the world, work for international companies, compete with people from other countries, manage employees from other cultures, collaborate with people all over the world, and solve global problems.

The mission of the United States Department of Education is "to promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access." Few would disagree that achievement, preparation, competitiveness, excellence and equal access are worthy aspirations for the educational systems serving students today.

While specific definitions for those terms vary and strategies to achieve them are vast, there is a sustained expectation in the U.S. for elementary and secondary education to effectively prepare students to make their way through successive grade levels, college, jobs and the world in general.



9 in 10 students recognize that jobs are becoming increasingly international in nature and believe they would be stronger employees with a better understanding of different cultures.

Students believe their appetite and enthusiasm for global education has not been met with an adequate level of instruction in global studies.

80% of teachers agree that it's more important than ever for students to learn about other countries and cultures...

... yet only 30% say they often incorporate material about other countries and cultures into their lesson plans.

Nearly 6 in 10 teachers report this is due to a lack of resources or administrative support, not for lack of student support.

In education, global competitiveness can be characterized as the set of skills and factors that support individuals' personal and professional productivity in their communities and in the world. Being globally competitive today requires developing global competence. Equipping students with specific hard skills to compete in a global job market is important, but cultivating their abilities to effectively share ideas and communicate across cultures in appropriate and respectful ways is critical.

Existing and emerging K-12 educational efforts--including 1:1 technology initiatives and language, International Baccalaureate, STEAM and cross-cultural exchange programs--promote students' global competence. But, while these efforts are growing in popularity, they are still not available to a majority of students.

DEFINITIONS

Global competence
Dynamic term that includes in-depth knowledge and understanding of international issues, an appreciation of and ability to learn and work with people from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds, proficiency in a foreign language, and skills to function productively in an interdependent world community.⁶

Global education
An interdisciplinary approach to learning concepts and skills necessary to function in a world that is increasingly interconnected and multicultural. The curricula based on this approach are grounded in traditional academic disciplines but are taught in the context of project- and problem-based inquiries.⁶

Opportunity gap
The ways in which race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, English proficiency, community wealth, familial situations or other factors contribute to or perpetuate lower educational aspirations, achievement and attainment for certain groups of students.⁷

All students, regardless of where they live or their socioeconomic status and cultural backgrounds, are equally deserving of educational experiences that prepare them to be globally competent. So how do we as educators continuously create opportunities and deliver instruction that ensures global competence for all? One option is to provide students with instructional practices that consistently engage global content, multicultural perspectives and problem solving across subject areas.

A simple term for this is global education.

The most successful global education approaches recognize the attitudes, skills and knowledge students need to navigate, contribute to and flourish in the world, and they integrate activities that purposefully resolve opportunity gaps among students on a daily basis. In this bundle, we will look closely at the characteristics of globally competent students and address how our K-12 education institutions can utilize global education practices to equitably prepare all students for success.

While the definition of global competence is dynamic, these soft skills and characteristics are widely seen as those needed to be globally competent:

Appreciation of culture. Students see their own cultures as strengths, seek to understand the cultures of others, are aware of similarities and differences among cultures and understand that behaviors and values are often tied to culture.

Evaluation of information. Students regularly question easily accessible information to seek deeper understanding and thoughtfully evaluate materials and perspectives rather than accept them at face value.

Cross-cultural communication skills. Students effectively exchange ideas with peers and adults from different backgrounds — either virtually or in person — and have the skills to enter new communities and spaces.

Perspective taking skills. Students demonstrate curiosity and empathy and display compassion for the perspectives of others.

Intelligent humility. Students understand that their knowledge is finite and appreciate how much more there is to learn about the world. Students understand the grandiosity of the world and its complexities.

Divergent thinking. Students see alternative or original solutions to existing problems and can envision the world differently than it currently exists.

Technological literacy. Students utilize and explore technology to communicate, collaborate, learn and share new ideas and information. Students create new technologies or discover new uses for existing technologies to help them and others navigate their worlds.

Appreciation of culture
Students see their own cultures as strengths, seek to understand the cultures of others, are aware of similarities and differences among cultures, and understand that behaviors and values are often tied to cultures.

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Students regularly question easily accessible information to seek deeper understanding and thoughtfully evaluate materials and perspectives, rather than accepting things at face value.

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Students effectively exchange ideas with peers and adults from different backgrounds — either virtually or in person — and have the skills to enter new communities and spaces.

Perspective taking skills
Students demonstrate curiosity and empathy and may show compassion for the perspectives of others.

Intelligent humility
Students understand that their knowledge is not finite and appreciate how much more there is to learn about the world. Students understand the grandiosity of the world and its complexities.

Divergent thinking
Students see alternative or original solutions to existing problems and can envision the world differently from how it currently exists.

Technological literacy
Students utilize and explore existing technologies to communicate and collaborate with others, and to learn and share new ideas and information. Students create new technologies or discover new uses for technologies that help them and others navigate their worlds.

How World Language Learning and Global Competence Complement Each Other

By Meriwynn Mansori, Manager, Instructional Services, VIF

In a [statement marking 2015's International Education Week](#), U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan highlighted the issue of equal access for students to experiences and opportunities that build global competency and noted that, "access to world language courses and overseas educational experiences are still considered luxuries, rather than essential components of a well-rounded, world-class education."

Educational organizations widely cite [proficiency in another language](#) as a key component of [global competency](#) and 21st century learning. If these are luxuries available to a select few, how do we make high-quality language learning opportunities available to more students?

While evidence demonstrates the cognitive and academic benefits of dual language immersion programs, we can't currently provide those experiences to all of our students. However, basic world language classes or programs are already part of the infrastructures of almost all U.S. school systems. By focusing world language programs on the building of proficiency and global competence, we can use existing educational infrastructure to provide high-quality, meaningful language learning experiences to larger populations of students. Here is what it takes:

Language learning correlates with higher academic achievement on standardized test measures.²²

60% of high school graduates say they wish they had more instruction in foreign languages in middle school and high school.

USE WORLD LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION TO ENHANCE GLOBAL COMPETENCE SKILLS.

Proficiency in another language is a key component of global competence, but second language proficiency does not guarantee global competence.

Development of those skills still requires exposure to the cultural contexts of languages. Only a small percentages of students are able to study abroad or participate in dual language immersion programs, so world language learning experiences in the U.S. must include deeper explorations of the often subtle cultural dimensions generally gained through immersion or study abroad experiences.

For example, in traditional world language courses students learn the formal and informal ways to address different people, but they may not be instructed on the cultural dimensions of power distance. Absent this cultural knowledge, the choice of using tú or usted may seem minor but it is actually

DEFINITIONS

Power distance
The degree to which the less powerful members of a society accept and expect that power is distributed unequally. The fundamental issue here is how a society handles inequalities among people.²³

laden with cultural nuance around showing respect. A recent flap in which a [Spanish journalist addressed King Felipe using the informal tú](#) underlines the importance of understanding the culture contexts for language variations in countries where the language is spoken.

Language learning is another area where students can make relevant connections to the content through inquiry approaches.

A lesson about the cuisines of Spanish-speaking countries becomes an opportunity for perspective taking when students explore cultural differences around what is acceptable to eat and why. In Peru, the guinea pig is a delicacy but in the U.S. it holds a privileged status as house pet. On the other hand, the U.S. relies heavily on processed and genetically modified foods that are often banned in other countries. Students might explore connections with groups that speak the target language in their communities and engage on issues that matter to them.



SUPPORT WORLD LANGUAGE TEACHERS IN INCREASING INSTRUCTIONAL TIME IN THE TARGET LANGUAGE AND THEIR KNOWLEDGE OF CULTURAL CONTEXTS.

For world language teachers to create classroom environments that produce proficient second language speakers, they must be prepared to confidently and effectively utilize the [target language](#) during instruction at least 90 percent of the time. This requires tools and support for world language teachers to maintain or improve their own target language proficiency and to expand or enhance their own cultural contexts for the target language through classroom partnerships, study abroad opportunities and [competency-based professional development](#).

At [VIF International Education](#), we have been experimenting with a world language course structure that equips teachers to build global competence and Spanish proficiency in novice language learners at the same time. The course’s flipped learning structure helps students explore cultural aspects of Spanish-speaking countries. This design allows teachers to frontload information in English that would be inaccessible to novice learners in the target language. In class, teachers focus on creating student-led, project-based learning experiences that emphasize the use of Spanish at least 90 percent of the time.

Initial feedback from teachers piloting the course has been positive. One teacher, after teaching the formal and informal forms of address through the framework of power distance, observed, “My students truly know now when to use tú versus usted, not by memorizing a formula, but by understanding about formality, respect and power distance. I am happy to say that 100 percent of my students can really understand when to use each.”

We continue to refine approaches to support high-impact language experiences for students without access to immersion or study abroad experiences, and we recognize there is still work to be done. It starts with defending the right of all students to high-quality educational experiences that prepare them to be global-ready citizens.

Four Parent Engagement Strategies for English Language Learners

By Meriwynn Mansori, Manager, Instructional Services, VIF

Research shows that parental engagement pays off for all students. Regardless of family income or background, students with engaged parents are more likely to:

- Earn higher grades and test scores, and enroll in higher-level programs.
- Attend school regularly, be promoted, pass their classes and earn credits.
- Have better social skills, show improved behavior and adapt well to school.
- Graduate and go on to postsecondary education.

In some U.S. states, one in four students is an English language learner. This statistic reminds us how critical it is to redouble efforts to ensure the success of all our students and think creatively about ways to collaborate with parents. Research indicates that when parents of English language learners have more say in their child's education, student outcomes improve.

For educators, engagement with parents of English language learners may look different than it does in traditional classroom settings because of perceptions around language and cultural differences. English as a second language (ESL) teachers must embrace opportunities to create inviting environments that allow parents to participate in their children's education in diverse ways. In the words of one ESL teacher, "It's not just about fundraising and showing up to parent nights."

Below are four suggestions for inviting collaboration and engagement with the families of English language learners.

5 MILLION STUDENTS

More than 5 million students in the U.S. public school system are English language learners.

ADOPT A GROWTH MINDSET

Rethinking your own mindset and the ways you view the circumstances of English language learners and their families is an important start. Mindset author Carol Dweck explains, "When people... change to a growth mindset, they change from a judge-and-be-judged framework to a learn-and-help-learn framework. Their commitment is to growth, and growth takes plenty of time, effort and mutual support." ESL educators and parents of English language learners share a common goal: their students' success. Adopting a growth mindset is key to achieving this goal.

HONOR CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

When you get to know the parents of students and invite cultural diversity into your classroom, you send the powerful message to both students and their families that they are in a safe space where their cultures are respected and valued. English language learners' diverse backgrounds provide rich fodder for culturally responsive teaching. At the same time, however, cultural differences can pose challenges. Different cultural norms may influence parent expectations about their roles in their children's education. Honor these differences and forge strong relationships with the families of English language learners by:

- Getting to know parents.
- Learning about the different cultural norms of your students.
- Directly communicating to parents your support for their children and respect for their cultures.

DON'T FRET OVER LANGUAGE DIFFERENCES

As students acquire English as a second language, they are developing the competitive advantage of being bilingual. Nevertheless, if you don't speak your students' home languages it's easy to view communication with their parents as a major challenge. Address the challenge of communicating effectively with parents by:

- Using straightforward language and avoiding jargon.
- Inviting native-language speakers to join discussions on grading, testing and report cards.
- Arranging student-led conferences.
- Using community or school resources to support translation needs.
- Giving hands-on demos at back-to-school nights.
- Encouraging L1 reading in home settings to promote first language literacy and second language acquisition.

BE CREATIVE ABOUT LOGISTICS

Child care issues, transportation challenges and work schedules can all get in the way of arranging meetings with the parents of English language learners. A little flexibility and creativity will help in finding ways to connect with parents in person or virtually. Some ideas for solving logistical issues include:

- Planning ahead when possible.
- Meeting parents at their home or workplace.
- Engaging parents virtually through Skype, Twitter or WhatsApp. Arranging for child care at school events.

It takes time and effort to nurture relationships with the families of English language learners, but your investment will pay off when the parents perceive you as an advocate for their child's success.

Conclusion

By Catherine Wedgwood, Communication + Marketing Manager, [Getting Smart](#)

THE SHIFT TO GLOBAL EDUCATION BEGINS NOW

By now it is clear that global education and equitable classroom preparation are a necessity for the 21st century. More than any generation to date, today's students are facing a more globally connected world and acquiring the skills they'll need for future success depends on how our K-12 education institutions utilize global education practices.

What are next steps for making the shift to global education? A good start is moving toward teaching the skills and characteristics needed to become globally competent today. We can accomplish this by:

- Teaching cultural appreciation of both the student's culture and those of other students.
- Encouraging students to ask questions to seek deeper understanding.
- Practicing communication skills with those from different backgrounds.
- Modeling curiosity, empathy and compassion for others in the classroom.
- Reiterating that learning is a continuous process, especially on a global scale.
- Helping students develop the ability to see the world from a different perspective.
- Utilizing existing — and imagining new — technology for better global connections.

We know some of the most impactful initiatives are those implemented at the school level, and sustaining a successful and equitable learning environment starts with three things: administrative support, meaningful student and teacher experiences and parent engagement. The importance of school administration, educators and parents effectively communicating and working together is key to supporting students' diverse needs, successfully teaching these soft skills and ensuring equity around global learning opportunities.

In addition, if global learning opportunities are also core to college and career-readiness, how exactly do we provide them to more K-12 classrooms? We can start by defining what a global ready graduate looks like, developing global ready teachers, utilizing superior global classroom technology and supporting the integration of global concepts into what teachers are already doing.

This support especially includes our world language teachers, who work against the still widely held belief that world language courses, travel abroad and cultural immersion are still luxuries for an elite few rather than necessities for the education of everyone. Many business organizations cite second language proficiency as a key component of global competency, meaning its importance in education will only grow. While we can't currently provide dual language immersion programs to all students, there is something we can do.

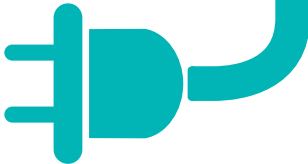
Since basic world language classes and programs are already part of almost all U.S. schools, we can build proficiency and global knowledge by redesigning the existing educational infrastructures to support world language teachers, increase instructional time in their target language and knowledge of cultural contexts.

This approach can help us provide high-quality, meaningful language learning experiences to a much larger population and begin positioning today's students as successful global citizens.

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For additional thought leadership on Global Education and Equity, see:

- [Two Foundations for Sustaining Equitable Education Strategies](#)
- [Can Dual Language Programs Support English Language Learners?](#)
- [Six Steps to Reinvigorate Language Learning](#)
- [Globally Competent Students Require Globally Competent Teachers](#)
- [How to Prepare Globally Competent Students](#)
- [Global Education & Equitable Preparation: An Educator's Digest of Facts and Figures](#)



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