

Cultivating Global Citizenship

by

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What makes a person a global citizen? Education leaders have been providing answers to this question in order to define the goal of their efforts, to identify the achievements of their work, and to create measurable outcomes for global education. If we know what it is, perhaps we can cultivate global citizenship in our schools through curriculum, instructional practices, and programs designed to develop global competence.

A review of school or district mission statements and graduate profiles might lead one to believe that global education is alive and well in many of our schools and districts. Some graduate profiles state that graduates will be global collaborators, global leaders, cross-culturally competent, or ethical global citizens. Some California school mission statements include, “guiding all students to become ethical, global citizens” “equipping all students with the tools to become produc-

tive citizens in a global community” and “developing socially responsible, respectful, global citizens.”

In my work with educators across the state, we have unpacked what we think the knowledge, skills, and dispositions are for global citizens. Here are some of the qualities that define global citizens as shared by teachers and administrators:

- Curious and constructive
- Creative and critical thinkers
- Flexible and resourceful
- Multilingual, multiliterate, and multicultural
- Confident, courageous, risk-takers
- Leaders, collaborators, decision-makers
- Equity-minded and socially responsible
- Open-minded and unique
- Empathetic, compassionate, kind, respectful

- Strong communicators
- Active listeners
- Honors difference and perspectives
- Inquiry orientation

[World Savvy](#), a leading U.S. organization dedicated to global education, defines global competence as the skills, values, and behaviors that prepare young people to thrive in a more diverse, interconnected world. Furthermore, in a rapidly changing world, the ability to be engaged citizens and collaborative problem solvers who are ready for the workforce is essential. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development ([OECD](#)) defines global competence as the capacity to examine local, global and intercultural issues, to understand and appreciate the perspectives and worldviews of others, to engage in open, appropriate and effective interactions with people from different cultures, and to act for collective well-being and sustainable development.

While the exact definitions may vary, there seems to be uniform agreement among educators that global citizenship is a worthy goal for contemporary education that prepares students for today's world. This world, which is often referred to as a "VUCA world" for its volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity. This term, which was introduced in 1987 and used in the U.S. Army War College after the collapse of the USSR, has returned to popularity in response to recent events including this global pandemic, Black Lives Matter movement, #MeToo movement, climate crises, social justice protests, gun violence, and the U.S. 2020 election.

How we define global citizenship is

less important than how we help students to recognize, understand, and prepare for their active and important roles as local and global community members. These roles include decisions about what and how much they consume (e.g., energy, food, clothing, entertainment, etc.), how and where they travel, information they share and receive, jobs they fill, and organizations that they support. Before students graduate from high school, they should acquire the knowledge, skills, and disposition to understand and act on issues of local and global importance, which include respect for individual dignity, difference, and human rights.

In Social Studies, we have multiple opportunities to address issues of identity, culture, and community as well as power, oppression, equity, and justice. The themes presented in the California History-Social Science Framework, Appendix B: Problems, Questions, and Themes in the History and Geography Classroom, offer opportunities to address global citizenship with historic, geographic, and economic perspectives as students explore:

- Patterns of Population
- Uses and Abuses of Power
- Worlds of Exchange
- Haves and Have-Nots
- Expressing Identity
- Science, Technology, and the Environment
- Spiritual Life and Moral Codes

The Global Competence Framework, presented by the California Global Education Project (CGEP), provides guidance for the teachers to integrate global competencies



within and across disciplines. The framework defines global competence as the disposition and knowledge to understand and act on issues of global significance (CCSSO & Asia Society), and presents the Sustainable Development Goals (United Nations) adopted by countries to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure prosperity for all.

CGEP has adopted the four domains, or capacities, for global competence presented by CCSSO & Asia Society (2011) to foster awareness and curiosity about how the world works, which is informed by disciplinary and interdisciplinary insights. Globally competent students are able to:

- **Investigate the world** beyond their immediate environment, framing significant problems and conducting well-crafted and age-appropriate research.
- **Recognize perspectives**, others' and their own, articulating and explaining such perspectives thoughtfully and respectfully.
- **Communicate ideas** effectively with diverse audiences, bridging geographic, lin-

guistic, ideological, and cultural barriers.

- **Take action** to improve conditions, viewing themselves as players in the world and participating reflectively.

CGEP created the following indicators within the four domains for instructional purposes in developing global competence:

INVESTIGATE THE WORLD

- Pose questions to better understand issues and perspectives
- Identify and suspend assumptions and judgements
- Recognize the value of each person in a global community
- Explore the world with curiosity

RECOGNIZE PERSPECTIVES

- Keep an open mind
- Empathize with others
- Identify my personal perspectives and influences
- Examine the perspectives and influences of others

- Consider multiple perspectives and opinions
- Analyze cultural influences, connections, and contexts

COMMUNICATE IDEAS

- Share ideas and context with diverse audiences
- Actively listen to others
- Engage in civil discourse
- Consider the audience and communicate appropriately

TAKE ACTION

- Use evidence and values to guide plans
- Assess options and consider the potential impact of planned actions
- Apply creative thinking and solve problems
- Capitalize on available resources and partnerships
- Persist through challenges
- Act and reflect individually and collaboratively
- Act with respect for individual dignity, differences, and human rights
- Contribute to a better world

Combined with the Sustainable Development Goals, these global competence indicators guide the work of CGEP in supporting global education in K-12 programs in California. Benchmarks for the indicators are available at CalGlobalEd.org and provide performance descriptors for each indicator at three levels: developing, progressing, and practicing.

Teachers have found this framework useful in understanding and teaching global

competence. Kelly Leon said, “Utilizing the global competence framework in my curricular planning and instruction has helped me connect my discipline to the broader aims of education, while simultaneously showcasing for students the connection between what they learn in school and what matters in the world.” Dawniell Black shared, “Recognizing perspectives is vital for students to successfully move through not only their educational spaces, but in their daily interactions with others. We often focus on helping students to empathize with others and keep an open mind, but we don’t always spend the time we need to help students understand their bias, perspectives and upbringing and how that impacts their world view.”

With grounded ideas of what makes a global citizen, the question becomes *How do we cultivate global citizenship?* The articles in this issue provide some answers to that question as Kelly Leon, a teacher in Sweetwater Union High School District and Generation Global Cohort Leader for preservice teachers at San Diego State University, describes her high school Global Scholars program and makes an excellent case for geography education as a key to global education. Also, Barbara Vallejo Doten, CGEP Director and preservice supervisor at CSU Long Beach, writes about the power of story in cultivating global citizenship across the grades. Dave Potter, CGEP Director of Partnerships, describes the importance of a statewide network that supports teachers to ensure that California is global-ready today and tomorrow. These three contributors are part of a larger leadership network that cares deeply about access to high quality global education

for every student in California. If you are looking for more ideas, resources, or connections to this network, please contact me at

eschell@sandiego.edu or any of our CGEP directors through CalGlobalEd.org.

