Chapter 8: Infusing Perspectives of Global Citizenship Through School-wide Initiatives

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This particular chapter has been designed for those who are interested in establishing a school-wide program of global citizenship in their community. The success of any global education school program is directly proportional to the way a school can successfully define a school-wide global curriculum plan and global school projects. To this end, a school global planning team, was established at a Catholic secondary school north of Toronto, which devised a comprehensive global curricula framework. This school plan was used to guide the school writing teams, staff in-services, and successive school projects and partnerships. Both the curriculum plan and the projects are outlined in this section.

In 1997, the secondary school was officially designated by its board of education, as a School for Global Education. This designation was the culmination of two years of work whereby a team of teachers and administrators studied successful global education programs in the Toronto region, consulted with provincial leaders in global education and met with university educators in the field of global and international issues. Furthermore, international examples of successful global education programs were studied from the United States, England, France, Germany, and Japan. Finally, international efforts at global/environmental citizenship by important international groups such as UNESCO (e.g. Baltic Sea project) or the EU (Europe in the Classroom) were studied to glean their exemplary practices.

Since 1997, the school has established school curriculum writing teams to infuse global issues in its curricula, implemented teacher in-service sessions on global issues, and engaged in a number of important school projects and partnerships—all with the ultimate goal of wanting to ensure that our youth become informed, globally literate, critical thinkers and citizens.

The Role of Education in a Global Era

There is a perceived “crisis” in education—namely, that our schools have failed to keep up with the demands of globalization: world commerce, technological innovation, educational achievement, and understanding our interdependent global needs. Our schools, which have always been sites of struggles by competing interests for control of the educational agenda, are now engaged in a struggle to define the purpose of education in and of a global context.

It is these larger global issues that are forcing us to arrive at new definitions about what constitutes “excellence” in education. Excellence in education demands that students acquire a profound understanding of the impact of all aspects of globalization.
Perhaps the most daunting task about understanding globalization is the vast amount of information about it as a topic and the mistaken assumption that it is simply an economic and technological phenomenon. Globalization, however, is a far more complex and interconnected phenomenon and it should be understood as having at least six major dimensions—economic, technological, political, cultural, ecological, and ethical/moral—and that almost all significant global issues encompass these six dimensions.

In the material that follows, it will be demonstrated how this school-wide global program was designed to incorporate these challenges for education in a global era. It is our hope that this model will be useful for those designing a school program as well as school projects, activities, and partnership in global education.

The successful establishment of a global citizenship education program can be very difficult. Over a decade ago, Boulding (1990) pointed out that students living in prosperous nations could view the world from an array of technologies and study the data on its issues but were nonetheless disengaged from its pain, chaos and dangers. Gigliotti (1990), in reflecting on global education’s elder sibling, environmental education, was perplexed by the resistance of moving people’s feelings and actions to support environmental causes—even among those who became well versed intellectually, in its issues. He pointed out a critical linkage—that knowledge must be combined by a desire to act for change—that schools need to appreciate this experiential linkage in its pedagogy and programs if there were to effect change in the status quo.

There is certainly an urgency to making global and citizenship education a school-wide program. Kaplan (1997) argues that the concentration of world wealth in the hands of a few thousand companies, and the power they exert on elected governments, constitutes a challenge to democracy in our time. Equally urgent, students need to learn about the systemic inequities and erratic nature of globalization itself. Brown and Lauder (1996) caution that in the shift to a high value-added knowledge economy, the way nation-states make this shift can have far reaching implications for democracy, unions, public utilities, the welfare state and social justice. Cruikshank (1995) argues that educators must become more aware of the consequences of economic globalization, its ideology, its impact on workers and the inequities it produces. This uneven, disruptive nature of globalization is an important issue for students to understand. In fact, Geyer and Bright (1995) argue that globalization at the end of the 20th century has been more accidental than deliberate. The global webbing, via technologies, by regional autonomous power centres (like Toronto or New York) to other world centres has resulted in uneven yet powerful new global circuits of power, capital, and culture-away from traditional centres of power (e.g., Ottawa or Washington). Furthermore, what is emerging as a result of globalization is the gradual erosion of the middle class in industrial societies as secure, well-paying jobs become the preserve of a minority, compared to the exponential growth of large numbers of “McJobs”—low paying, service employment characterized by few paid benefits or little to no pension plans. Celente (1997) points out that by 1995 only 40% of Americans were truly middle class.
However, the disruptive effects of globalization on education can create a “pedagogy of (dis)location” (Edwards & Usher, 1998) where established definitions of truth, knowledge, and culture become multiple, ambivalent, and unending—which is both a problem and an opportunity for education and the cultivation of citizenship. Burbules and Torres (2000) make the important observation that what we have been experiencing is “globalization from above” by economic elites and this is at odds with “globalization from below,” a more popular process drawn from the rank and file of civil society.

To reverse the decline of civil society will mean forging significant “democratic Alliances” between researchers, educators, and NGO’s, including those located in the developing nations. The concept of “globalization from below”—namely, the alliance of local, national, and international activists against the ill effects of globalization is becoming a stronger reality each year (e.g., the convening of international summits by political and business leaders in Rio de Janeiro 1992, Koyoto 1999, Seattle 1999, Quebec 2000 became the gathering point for alternate summits for NGO’s and activist groups that provide invaluable opportunities for networking and collective action on a global scale).

As Welch (2000) points out, the choice is to retreat into a “commodified, increasingly private world,” as indicated by globalization and/or modernity, or instead, to work towards the redemption of modernity which is capable of renewing democracy, including through education. This is the heady challenge and rationale for pursuing a school-wide global education program. This is the opportunity to create globally literate teachers and students who realize the important common ground we share in our global future.

**Establishing A School-Wide Global Education Program**

The success of any global education school program is directly proportional to the sense of expertise, ownership, understanding - and comfort - that the school staff possesses vis a vis global and citizenship education. Many teachers highlight international issues in their curriculum, and many even have had experience overseas as volunteers, teachers or travelers. However, many do not necessarily see these experiences in a broader context or framework of international issues, trends or challenges. As a result, the planning team (mentioned earlier in the introduction of this chapter) devised a comprehensive curricula framework for the school's definition of global education. This curricula framework was then used to guide the writing teams, staff in-services, and successive school projects and partnerships. A school framework or plan is a very important activity to nurture staff ownership and leadership in such a program as each school maps out its own framework.

1. **The Curriculum Framework**

All major global issues ultimately are multi-dimensional. As a result, the school’s curricula definition of global education defined all major world issues and trends as consisting simultaneously of six dimensions—economic, political, technological, cultural, and ecological. As a Catholic secondary school, the role of faith issues is yet another important component in global education—particularly those positions on global social justice enunciated by the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops or the Pope on
matters such as the end of the global arms race, disinvestment in dictatorships/apartheid regimes, and call for a fair distribution of the world’s resources. Even for those schools which are not religious based, an emphasis on humanitarian and ethical social justice issues is a cornerstone of global and citizenship education.

Next, our framework encompassed four major goals:

- That students acquire a global systems thinking perspective—that all issues are interconnected.
- That students appreciate the local/global nature of global trends.
- That students learn about successful examples of global success and hope—that world crises have been solved successfully by international cooperation and teamwork.
- That students need to experience personal growth through their understanding and experience with global trends and issues.

2. **Curriculum Writing by the School Staff**

Curriculum writing by staff members was an important component of the global education program. Inviting large numbers of the staff to join the school writing team (some 35 teachers over several years)—with release time and writing stipends—went a long way in ensuring that staff members developed a comprehensive global perspective on their subject area. These teacher/writers were in turn responsible for in-servicing their subject department colleagues and monitoring the success and revisions to the curricula they had written. Also, a Global Guidance Plan was developed to focus on new careers in the global economy as well as the requisite personal and humanitarian perspectives that were needed in a global society.

After several years, all courses in grades 9 and 10 were infused with global material using the framework mentioned above. For the senior secondary school, selected courses were identified and globalized, and students taking these courses could receive a Global Education Certificate upon graduation. These courses were chosen to provide breadth of programming in global issues as students were required to select courses that covered curricula in the areas of Faith/Ethics, Business/Economics, Politics, Culture, Technology, and Ecology.

3. **Global Teacher In-Services**

There was initial staff discomfort with this comprehensive approach to global education. It was too multi-dimensional, too cross curricular. However, this was not difficult to overcome. Secondary school teachers are passionate about their particular subject—its merits, its contributions to society, and its value in the offerings of a high school. Our team put only one demand upon each school department—organize a PA day for a site outside of school, which demonstrates how your subject area is played out on the global scene. For some, it even required extra prompting and assistance, but, in the end, the results were very overwhelming.

To name but a few, English teachers visited the offices of CANOE/Yahoo, Social
Science teachers visited CBC-TV headquarters, and Business teachers toured and talked with staff at the Scotia McLeod Trading Room in the financial district. Science teachers met with doctors and toured the research facilities of the Hospital for Sick Children and Religion teachers visited the offices of the Catholic Organization for Development and Peace (which conducts overseas relief projects). Special education teachers visited the Famous Peoples Players Theatre (an internationally acclaimed theatre troupe whose members are physically and intellectually challenged).

By understanding - and experiencing-how their subject has global significance, staff began to discover how much they have in common with other teaching areas—since all roads ultimately led out to a global destination. This creation of a school-wide global perspective was further enhanced when once every two months, school departments were brought together to share their department projects and curricula initiatives in global education.

**Global Partnerships/Certificates/Activities**
What follows are several other additional activities/projects/partnerships which were launched to enhance the global education program.

**Strategy 1: The Global Co-op Program and the Global Education Certificate Program**

This certificate placed an important emphasis on both knowledge and experience as a means to best appreciate the merits of global and citizenship education.

As is obvious now, a curricula framework by itself does not ensure the success or vitality of a school-wide program of global and citizenship education. It is essential that for staff to feel empowered by the project, they must see how it fits into their subject domain and they must engage deeply in the writing process—in almost a cathartic process—to realize the significance of a global perspective in their curricula and pedagogy. In all cases, this process was invigorating for staff who pursued this avenue. Likewise, for students, it opened up new ways for them to look at the world, to investigate current events and to have a greater sense of the global forces/trends in the world. What follows are two other additional projects which were launched to expand these same accomplishments.

**Learning Expectations**
- Demonstrate an understanding of citizenship within a global context.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the challenges of governing communities or societies in which diverse value systems, multiple perspectives, and differing civic purposes coexist.
- Demonstrate a knowledge of different types of citizen participation and involvement.

- Demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which outside forces and events have shaped Canada’s policies and Canadian life.

- Develop a sense of global citizenship and become informed, purposeful, and active participants in Canadian society.

- Have knowledge of and experience of interdependence, diversity, international themes and issues, and the role Canadian individuals and organizations play in responding to issues and events of global importance.

**Steps at a Glance**

Experiential opportunities were equally important for students. To enhance students’ experiential education in global/international issues, they were invited to conduct their student community service work with a global agency or organizations. Thus,

- A Global Coop program was established where students could spend a semester long (four month) co-op education placement with a global agency or organization, which earned students credits towards their high school diploma.

- Students were free to select a placement in one of the six areas (ecological, cultural, technological, etc.)

- Placements were arranged via the Guidance and Coop education staff of the school.

- To-date, students have had Global Co-op placements with such establishments as Bombardier, SPAR Aerospace, UNICEF, the Globe and Mail newspaper, McCarthy Tetrault law firm, Hospital for Sick Children, St. Michael’s Hospital, and various Internet corporations. This certificate helped students gain access to limited-enrollment post-secondary programs and obtain prestigious university scholarships.

- Finally, a school Global Education Certificate was established.

- Certain senior high school courses were identified as “globalized” by the school writing team and these were highlighted in the school’s course calendar.

- Students enrolled in these courses were eligible to receive this special school certificate awarded upon graduation.

- As part of the certificate requirement, students had to have done their community service work with a global group or participated in the school Global Co-op
program (working with an international company or NGO) and have written an extended essay on a special global topic (2500 words in length).

- The Global Certificate Program is promoted via i) homeroom visits during course selection time each February ii) presentations in the Career Education course, and it is recognized at graduation via a special certificate and plaque for those who have completed the program requirements.

**Strategy 2: Global Speaker Series/Global Career Education Days**

The Global Speaker Series was established to expose students to significant global issues and events from persons who are leaders in the international community. The Global Speaker Series/Global Career Days consists of an annual school-wide event featuring a keynote speaker and six to seven workshop speakers on international issues/trends from groups in global sectors of business, culture, the environment, technology, media, entertainment, health, and science. The speaker is chosen for their extensive knowledge and experience in global affairs. Workshops then follow this speech with panelists asked to give specific career advice to students about their international career area.

The keynote speakers have included Gwynne Dyer, Dr. A. Leahy (Former Canadian Ambassador to Russia), Samantha Nutt (War Child Canada), Toronto Star journalist David Crane, CBC journalist Anne Medina, Gordon Cressy (former head of the Learning Partnership), Gerald Skinner, Canadian Ambassador to Iceland and Peter Drake, vice-president, T.D. Canada Trust.

Career panelist speakers have included representatives from the International Red Cross, AT&T, Environment Canada, Greenpeace, CBC-TV, The National Film Board, Royal Plastics, KPMG, Hewlett Packard, Doctors without Borders, the Humane Society of Canada, and Olivetti Technologies.

The global speaker/global career day activity has been well received by staff and students because contemporary global trends are examined by speakers who have a wealth of first-hand knowledge and experience in their fields. For example when Gwynne Dyer spoke to an assembly of staff and students two weeks after the tragedy of September 11th, 2001, he was able to explain the context and origins of this major world event.

**Learning Expectations**

- Demonstrate an understanding of citizenship within a global context.

- Demonstrate an understanding of how global economic and environmental factors affect individual career and lifestyle opportunities.

- Acquire first hand knowledge via international speakers about global interdependence, diversity, international themes and issues, international employment, and the role of Canadian individuals.
You Will Need
- Support Resources (# 1, 2, 3, reproduced at the end of the Steps at a Glance section for Strategy 2)

Steps at a Glance
- Decide a major theme—a timely and topical global theme appeals to both guest speakers and students alike.
- Select keynote speaker and panelists speakers that directly relate to the major theme. Allow some four months in advance to contact speakers and confirm their attendance.
- Prepare for the presentation. Students complete background readings, take notes during presentation, and formulate questions for the speaker.
- Assessment of notes and questions.
- Debrief sessions on the theme presented by the speaker in classes the next day.

Directions for the Keynote Speaker and Panelists
(Support Resource #1)

While guest speakers are often willing to speak before large school assemblies such as this, it is very important that the speakers be aware of the topics you wish them to cover. Keynote speakers and the panelists were asked to address specific following questions.

Speakers were encouraged to speak well beyond the bounds of these topics, but by at least covering the core topics (See Support Resource #2), even speakers/panelists found it fascinating to compare the common global trends that are challenging their professions, no matter how diverse their professions.

Global Speaker Series/Global Career Days
(Support Resource #2)

Guest Speaker Ambassador Gerald R. Skinner - Ambassador Of Canada To The Republic of Iceland

Ambassador Gerald Skinner addressed the students about Canadian foreign policy, including the impact of changes in Russia, Eastern Europe, and the Middle East.
Directions for the Keynote Speaker and Students
All guest speakers in this series are asked to address the following questions. Students are directed to prepare their questions and record the remarks of the speakers in the following areas:

- What are the changing global issues and trends in your career area?
- What kind of training and education are required to enter the field?
- What personal qualities should one possess or try to develop?
- How has the nature of work changed in the last 5 years?
- What role does technology play?
- Which jobs/positions have become obsolete in recent years and what has happened to the people in these positions?
- What is the future outlook for employment in your career area?
- How important is the knowledge of a foreign language and culture?
- Does travel play a big role in your career area?
- What global changes should one anticipate and prepare for?

Global Speaker Series/Global Career Days
(Support Resource #3)

Keynote Speaker: Dr. Samantha Nutt, Warchild, Canada

1. Students should take detailed notes on the presentation

2. The notes will be collected by your teacher and assigned a mark, the information may also be used as a basis for class discussion. Some of the areas that students should base their notes on include:
   - global issues and trends for the 21st Century
   - changes occurring in Canada and the world
   - the impact of global changes on Canada and how Canadians are addressing these changes
   - difficulties Canada is facing as a result of global changes
   - how students can meet the challenges presented by new global trends
   - the role of education in preparing students for global changes
   - the role of government (Federal, Provincial, Local) in preparing students or global changes
   - the role of business in preparing students for global changes
   - the academic, employability and personal growth skills required by the new economy

3. Students should prepare one question to ask the keynote speaker on her presentation.
Strategy 3: School/Community/Global Partnerships

In this activity we examine the process and merits of establishing school partnerships with global agencies and university faculties. The school has entered into partnership agreements with a nearby university (and its resident group the CIIA, the Canadian Institute for International Affairs, the latter being an education group consisting of staff from Canada’s External Affairs department). Benefits of this partnership included an annual student conference on the college campus involving the university staff from the International Studies Department. Students were also invited to attend special lectures and conferences on international and global issues.

The school also has an educational partnership with the Faculty of Environmental Studies (FES) at York University, which, too, resulted in annual and semi-annual conferences for students and access to FES special events and university conferences. As well, this partnership allowed staff and students to attend university special lectures and conferences on international and global issues.

The conferences have been very successful and very popular with high school students. To date these conferences have included the following themes (and organizations):

- Perspectives on Iraq, May 21, 2003 (300 students).
- Canada and Terrorism 2002 (members and colleagues of the Canadian Institute for International Affairs).
- Asia and the Global Economic Crisis 1999 (Glendon College faculty).

Learning Expectations

- Develop an understanding of global interdependence and Canada’s varying responsibilities through involvement in school/community/global partnerships (e.g., community, university).
- Develop a broader understanding of related concepts (e.g., globalization, diversity, sustainability).
- Demonstrate an understanding of how global economic and environmental factors affect individual career and lifestyle opportunities.
• Develop a sense of the role Canadian individuals and organizations play in responding to issues and events of global importance and an increased awareness of the difference individual and collective actions can make.

**Steps at a Glance**

**Step 1**
• Identify post-secondary institutions in your community, which have an established involvement in global and citizenship education.

**Step 2**
• Locate the name of a Faculty or College Dean in this area and then contact them in a brief telephone conversation Explain your interest in establishing an educational partnership with them and advise them you would be willing to provide them with a background file detailing your school's interests and activities in global and citizenship education.

**Step 3**
• Include in this letter any suggestions you might have about how your school could enhance the partnership (e.g. producing recruitment videos for the university, preferential access to your school athletic /auditorium facilities, provide advice on how secondary school educational reforms will impact on colleges/universities).

**Step 4**
• Most importantly, in negotiating the details of the partnership it is important to move slowly, patiently and agree on commitments completely. It is an important matter of that you reassure the college/university that this is a non binding partnership and will not be a financial cost to them. In both cases, this is a sharing of talent, facilities, and existing conference work at each site that is most beneficial to now share between the two schools.

**Concluding Remarks on a School–Based Global Education Program**

The establishment of a school-wide approach to global and citizenship education offers the opportunity of energizing teachers and students about the exciting range of phenomena happening in our world, be they economic, political, ecological, technological, cultural, humanitarian, or a combination of all of these. In a world characterized by rapid global change, it is our mutual educational advantage to provide our teachers and students with the knowledge, skills and values to understand the magnitude of global problems—and to work constructively towards a better future for humanity and our world.

This kind of program takes many years to establish so take it one measured step at a time Its success rests squarely upon the good will, camaraderie and sense of purpose that a large staff need to share to accomplish this large task. Nonetheless, despite the hard work it has been a wonderful journey.
References


