

Participate helps educators teach global citizens of the future

by David Young

As human beings, we all have an innate global curiosity. We can usually remember an educator who, through their own interests, fostered that curiosity. Maybe they traveled to a foreign country over summer vacation or hosted exchange students in their home, then came back to lead a small-scale project in our classrooms. These types of educational experiences are imperative in today's increasingly global society.

The question we have to ask, however, is how can we make global learning accessible to all students, across all types of communities, both rural and urban? How can we make global competencies whole-school initiatives, instead of a special program only available to a select group of students? How can we create global schools that grow global citizens?

The goal of a global school is to help students realize who they are as cultural beings – in both *local and global contexts*. We want students to become aware of global issues, yes, but to also have a broader view that encompasses the communities around them. We also want students to have innate and to take action on those deep inquiries. In the seven years we've been collaborating with global schools, we've found that successful, sustainable programs include:

Whole-school integration: Everyone should be involved, from front office staff to all teachers.

Global concepts selected by committee: After engaging with a group of teachers and presenting them with concepts, teachers select two or three (often overlapping) to explore for the year. Some concepts might include empathy from a global and local perspective, effective global communication or self-awareness in global issues.

Project selection based on teacher interest: Building on their existing interests or experience, each teacher selects a project to explore with their students. For example, access to clean water or sharing STEM-based coding outcomes with students in another country.

Professional development courses: After the planning process is complete, the next step is to identify the professional development courses that will help build skills or competencies to support that project. Courses have topics like accessing creativity, effective technology integration or the U.N.'s Sustainable Development Goals.

Peer review of learning products and student involvement: As a critical piece of the puzzle, teachers collect evidence throughout their projects and upload it to Participate. Certified reviewers look over and offer feedback and reflection.

Increased student engagement and achievement, boosted college and career-readiness and heightened teacher retention rates are a result of our framework. We support educators to explore, experiment and reflect upon their global education journeys.

Global citizenship means having an understanding and awareness of a wider world and one's collective and individual place in it. As educators we are challenged with teaching the next generation of global citizens to be empathetic, active members of society. By creating programs with frameworks that encompass the above components, we can build schools that support students in becoming lifelong, global learners.

David Young is CEO of Participate, a Chapel-Hill based, certified B-Corp education technology and provider of professional development for teachers. Chatham County has 15 Participate teachers.