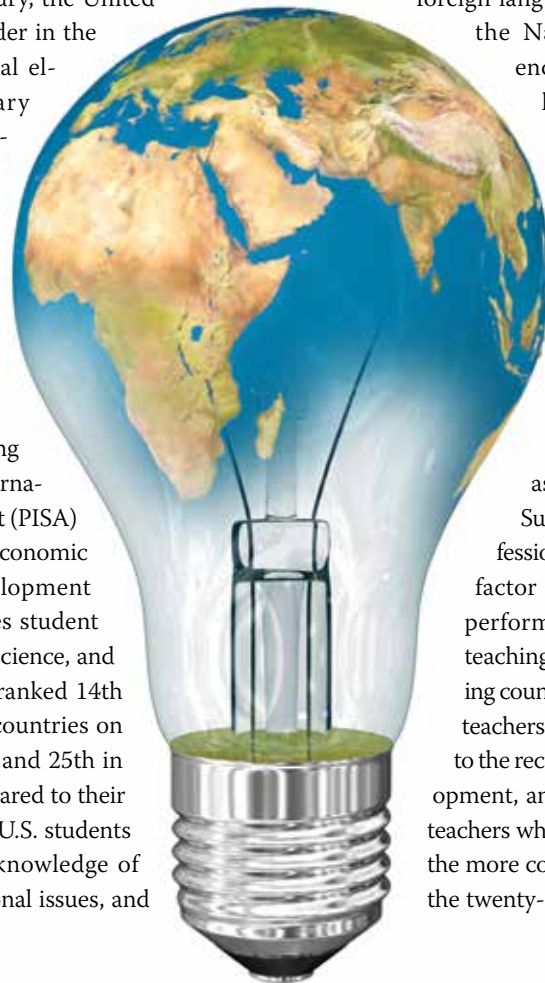


## Succeeding Globally: Transforming the Teaching Profession

**T**HE WORLD IN WHICH TODAY'S STUDENTS WILL GRADUATE is fundamentally different from the world in which we [adults] grew up. The quickening pace of globalization over the past 20 years—driven by profound technological changes, the rise of China and India, and the accelerating pace of scientific discovery—has produced a whole new world. As never before, education in the United States must prepare students for a world where the opportunities for success require the ability to compete and cooperate on a global scale. Yet a critical gap in our national ability to succeed globally is the lack of consistency in the quality and preparation of our nation's teachers. Developing a world-class teacher and school leader workforce, equipped with the knowledge and skills to help our students succeed in an increasingly diverse and interconnected world, is a critical imperative for the nation and for higher education institutions.

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In the twentieth century, the United States was the world leader in the development of universal elementary and secondary education and in the expansion of access to higher education. While U.S. higher education is still widely admired around the world, in the twenty-first century our K–12 education system and its students have been left behind. According to the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), which measures student achievement in reading, science, and math, U.S. 15-year-olds ranked 14th among OECD member countries on reading, 17th in science, and 25th in math in 2009.<sup>1</sup> And compared to their peers in other countries, U.S. students are far behind in their knowledge of world cultures, international issues, and



foreign languages. A 2007 report from the National Academy of Sciences warns, “The pervasive lack of knowledge of foreign cultures and languages threatens the security of the United States as well as its ability to compete in the global marketplace and to produce an informed citizenry.”<sup>2</sup>

Studies of countries whose school systems outperform the United States as well as three International Summits on the Teaching Profession have shown that a central factor in world-class educational performance is the quality of the teaching profession. High-performing countries place great emphasis on teachers, paying systematic attention to the recruitment, preparation, development, and retention of high-quality teachers who can help all students meet the more complex demands for skills in the twenty-first century.<sup>3</sup> Although we

can't predict with certainty what skills the rapidly changing economies and societies of the twenty-first century will require, certain elements are clear. They will be: (1) science and technology-based, requiring scientific and technological literacy; (2) globally interdependent so that global knowledge and skills become a core competence; (3) demographically diverse so that cross-cultural understanding and communication are critical; (4) innovation-driven, placing a premium on creativity and learning how to learn; and (5) resource-challenged, in need of critical thinking about sustainability.

There is growing awareness among both policymakers and parents of the need to make our schools world-class, as well as increasing interest among schools in becoming more globally oriented. But it will not happen unless we transform the teaching profession. Despite intense attention to internationalization within higher education institutions, the preparation of teachers is typically among the least internationalized functions of U.S. college and university campuses.

### **What Higher Education Institutions Can Do**

Helping the next generation of students to succeed in today's global context is a tremendous challenge that will require the attention of the whole university. Universities urgently need to address the goal of developing a world-class teaching profession through two strategies—learning from international best practices and increasing the global competencies of teachers.

#### ***Learning from international best practices***

Elementary and secondary education systems that outperform the United States are in different parts of the world and have different organizational structures and cultural and political contexts, but they all put a central focus on developing the highest quality teaching profession. The highest performing countries do a much better job than others of recruiting students from the top half of the academic talent pool to go into teaching, preparing them well, providing professional

development, and mentoring to all new teachers so that they can be effective and retaining them in the profession. Whereas in too many places in the United States, teacher education programs have low admissions standards, are rated poorly by teachers for the preparation they provide, and their graduates do not stay in the profession.

### **Universities urgently need to address the goal of developing a world-class teaching profession through two strategies—learning from international best practices and increasing the global competencies of teachers.**

To be sure, higher education institutions are not solely responsible for all aspects of the teaching profession. School districts, state governments, and teacher unions all play roles in issues like certification, compensation, working conditions, and career development, for example. But higher education institutions can play a critical role in establishing higher standards of entry into teacher preparation—raising the quality of preparation programs to attract able students, and prepare them adequately for the challenges of today's diverse learning environments and the new skills needed for a globalized and digital world; and collaborating with school systems to get feedback on the success of their graduates.

Teacher preparation programs that meet current international standards of best practice, for example, have: (1) clear, internationally benchmarked standards and accountability for what their graduates should know and be able to do; (2) more emphasis right from the start on guided practice in classroom settings; (3) greater capacity by teachers in using inquiry and problem-solving methods and in incorporating information and communication technologies; (4) greater facility by teachers in using assessment and data to guide instruction; (5) greater understanding of local and global diversity; and (6) research and diagnostic skills to solve classroom problems based on evidence.

Higher education's school leadership programs also need to become more rigorous and internationally benchmarked. Most countries today are devolving more authority to schools to meet their increasingly ambitious educational goals for students. Hence, their universities are replacing their old school administration programs (whose quality and relevance in the United States have been criticized in innumerable studies) with programs that redefine the leadership responsibilities of their graduates as those most closely linked to improved student outcomes. These include setting strategic direction and using data to drive progress; developing and evaluating teachers; resource allocation to focus all activities on learning; and partnering with other institutions to ensure the development of the whole child.<sup>4</sup> Close collaboration between universities and schools is also essential to the recruitment of potential school leaders and to provide adequate clinical training and mentorship to new principals. School leaders are a relatively small but pivotal group in moving schools toward higher achievement and in retaining effective teachers, so an investment in producing effective school leaders can yield a high rate of return.

Just as schools of business, engineering, medicine, law, and public health follow international as well as domestic developments in their fields, learning from other countries as well as sharing the best U.S. experience with international colleagues, so do universities need to ensure that their colleges of education redesign their teacher and school leadership programs for the twenty-first century, informed by the world's best practices.

#### ***Increasing the global competencies of teachers***

Few teachers today are prepared with the knowledge and skills to educate students for the new global reality. To facilitate their students' learning, teachers themselves need to become globally competent individuals, defined by a task force of the Council of Chief State School Officers and Asia Society as those who "have the knowledge and skills to investigate the world beyond their immediate

environment, recognize their own and others perspectives, communicate ideas effectively with diverse audiences, and translate their ideas into appropriate actions.”<sup>5</sup> In short, global competencies are “twenty-first century skills applied to the world.” Yet too few teachers today have much knowledge of the

world beyond our borders, speak a second language, or participate in education abroad programs. Some institutions have developed international activities aimed at prospective teachers, but these remain isolated events rather than part of an overall strategy to promote their graduates’ global competence.

Over the last few years, a number of institutions have made more comprehensive and strategic efforts to internationalize their teacher education programs. Lessons from these pioneering institutions, as described in the Longview Foundation report on *Teacher Preparation for the Global Age*, suggest that teacher preparation programs should be revised to ensure that:

- The institution’s strategic vision includes global competence as a priority for teacher preparation, and standards and mechanisms are established to ensure that all activities align with that vision.
- Admission to teacher education programs requires that students take courses in their freshman and sophomore years that help each prospective teacher to develop knowledge of at least one world region, culture, or global issue and some facility in a language other than English.
- Professional education and pedagogy courses are infused with a global perspective to enable future teachers to address the global dimensions of their subject.
- An in-depth cross-cultural experience is required for every pre-service teacher through study or student teaching in another country and/or service-learning or student teaching in a multicultural community or globally focused school in the United States. Partnerships with other U.S. institutions that have education abroad programs or with international partner institutions are useful in creating such opportunities.
- Incentives are provided for faculty development such as fellowships to modify or pilot courses, small travel grants for research activities abroad that are tied to the institution’s strategic plan and are integrated back into the college, or through taking global activities into account in applications for promotion and tenure.
- Programs for prospective world language teachers are modernized to include research-based language pedagogy and to prepare more teachers for languages for which there is growing demand, such as Chinese.
- Data are collected to assess the impact of these global learning opportunities on teachers and teaching.<sup>6</sup>

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**To go beyond rhetoric and actually happen, it will need the commitment and purposeful action of international educators and offices across the institution—in arts and sciences, colleges of education, and institutional leadership.**

Each institution will approach this change task differently and the kind of comprehensive internationalization described above doesn't happen overnight. However, the experiences of pioneering institutions such as the University of San Diego, Miami University (in Ohio), University of Maryland, Michigan State University, Kent State University, a consortium of universities in New Jersey led by Rutgers and the University of North Carolina, to name a few, provide practical and different models of the process of internationalization. And NAFSA, the Longview Foundation, Global Teacher Education<sup>7</sup>, and Asia Society provide web-based resources, examples of promising practices, places to start, and case studies on institutional change from which other institutions can create their own roadmaps.

**An Imperative for International Educators**

The call for action is clear. The challenge of developing a supply of high-quality teachers to prepare all students with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions for success in an increasingly globalized and digital world grows ever more acute. As U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan said at the second International Summit on the Teaching Profession, "With teaching morale low and the need to recruit about one million new teachers into the profession over the next four to six years, we must take a challenging situation and turn it into an opportunity for transformational change."<sup>8</sup> And the U.S. Department of Education's first fully articulated international agenda, issued in 2012, stated its main goal as increasing the global competencies of all U.S. students, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds.<sup>9</sup>

Each institution will need to create its own approach toward developing a world-

class and globally competent teacher workforce. But for it to go beyond rhetoric and actually happen, it will need the commitment and purposeful action of international educators and offices across the institution—in arts and sciences, colleges of education, and institutional leadership.

Countries around the world are making unprecedented changes to their education systems to prepare students for a very different world. Graduating the next generation of students prepared for the challenges of a diverse, globally interconnected world is imperative. It is my strong hope that international educators across higher education institutions in the United States will embrace the challenges before them and work together toward the common goal of providing our prospective teachers, and therefore the next generation of students, with a world-class and globally oriented education. **IE**

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**ENDNOTES**

<sup>1</sup> Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).(2010). PISA 2009 results: Executive Summary. Available: <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/34/60/46619703.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> National Research Council. *International Education and Foreign Languages: Keys to Securing America's Future*. Report of the Committee to Review the Title VI and Fulbright-Hays International Education Programs (Washington, D.C.: National Academies Press, 2007).

<sup>3</sup> Vivien Stewart, *A World-Class Education: Learning from International Models of Excellence and Innovation*. (Alexandria, VA: ASCD, 2012).

<sup>4</sup> Vivien Stewart, "School Leadership Around the World," *Educational Leadership* April 2013, 48–54.

<sup>5</sup> Veronica Boix Mansilla and Anthony Jackson (eds.) *Educating for Global Competence: Preparing our Youth to Engage the World*. Council of Chief State School Officers EdSteps Initiative and the Asia Society Partnership for Global Learning. (New York: Asia Society, 2011). Available: <http://asiasociety.org/files/book-globalcompetence.pdf>.

<sup>6</sup> Longview Foundation. *Teacher Preparation for the Global Age: The Imperative for Change*. 2008. Available: <http://www.longviewfdn.org/122/teacher-preparation-for-the-global-age.html>.

<sup>7</sup> In February 2013, the Crosswalks Foundation launched [www.globalteachereducators.org](http://www.globalteachereducators.org), an online resource and community for teacher educators.

<sup>8</sup> Vivien Stewart, Asia Society. *Teaching and Leadership for the Twenty-First Century: The International Summit on the Teaching Profession*. (New York: Asia Society, 2012).

<sup>9</sup> U.S. Department of Education. U.S. Department of Education International Strategy 2012–16. 2012. Available: <http://www2.ed.gov/about/units/ed/internationalel/international-strategy-2012-16.html>.


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