

Global Schools First

LEVEL ONE GUIDE



Childhood Education
International™



GETTING STARTED ON YOUR GLOBAL SCHOOLS FIRST JOURNEY

This guide includes an overview of Childhood Education International’s (CE International) Global Schools First program, basic participation information, steps for getting started, and information about global citizenship education.

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For further information on Global Schools First, please email globalschoolsfirst@acei.org.

DEFINING GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

Unlike national citizenship, global citizenship is not a legal status. Instead, global citizenship is a way of thinking about the world and one's place in it. Individuals who have embraced global citizenship feel a sense of belonging to a common humanity and shared responsibility to find solutions to global challenges. They are prepared to actively engage with diverse people, problems, and opportunities. Global citizens honor the rights and dignity of every human being and recognize that in an ever-changing, increasingly interconnected world, we all must learn to live and work together peacefully.

Schools play an important role in this process, harnessing the transformative potential of education to empower learners with the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values needed to become global citizens.



Through global citizenship education, we learn to respect one another, develop skills and acquire knowledge that enhances our global awareness, work together to address complex human challenges, and take action to create a more peaceful, just, and sustainable world for all.

GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION – STARTING EARLY

Global citizenship education is a lifelong journey—one that begins when we are very young, before we ever enter a school. As we grow and develop relationships outside the family, we learn about who we are—our identity—and how we are similar to and different from others. Learning to respect all kinds of human differences is as much an encounter with ourselves as it is with those who are different from us. This early learning is the foundation of global citizenship education.

Primary and elementary schools (approximately ages 5-12) play a critical role in preparing young learners to become global citizens. All members of the school community share the responsibility for nurturing children's growing sense of self and helping them to relate with people from many different backgrounds. Schools also help children to develop interpersonal skills such as kindness, compassion, and empathy. As children's perspectives expand to include their classrooms, schools, community, nations, and the world, they take the first steps toward adopting the mindset of global citizenship.

SIX DIMENSIONS OF GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

The *Six Dimensions of Global Citizenship Education* are a framework that represents how global competence and global citizenship education can be integrated throughout a school and incorporated into schoolwide global learning strategies. The assessments in Global Schools First Level 1 and Level 2 are based on this framework. You will learn more about the six dimensions—and what they might look like at the school level—in Level 2. Brief descriptions of the *Six Dimensions of Global Citizenship Education* are provided below.



DISCOVERING OURSELVES AND OTHERS

Developing self-awareness and learning to appreciate the unique identities and perspectives of diverse others.



EMBRACING SHARED VALUES

Understanding universal ethical principles and shared values and using these ideas to reinforce our common humanity.



BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

Establishing relationships of mutual understanding through trust, respect, sensitivity, communication and consensus-building.



EXPLORING OUR INTERCONNECTED WORLD

Expressing curiosity and thinking critically about connections between issues in the local community and global challenges.



MAKING INFORMED CHOICES

Evaluating credibility of information, analyzing arguments, conducting inquiries, and making and sharing decisions.



CREATING CHANGE THROUGH INNOVATION

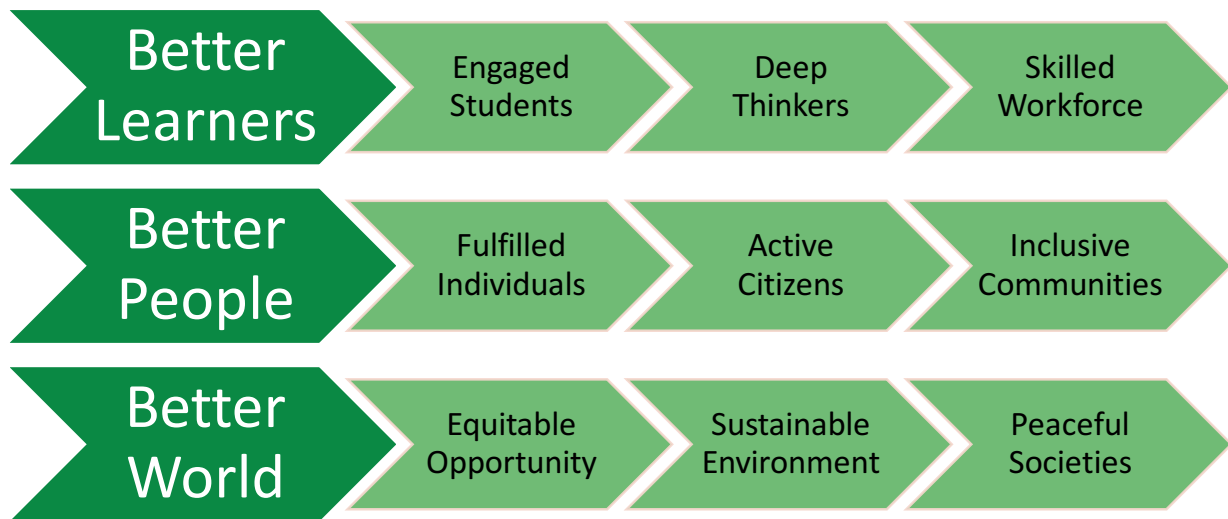
Analyzing critical issues, innovating to find solutions, and acting to achieve sustainable change for a better world for all.

“Whereas national citizenship is an accident of birth, global citizenship is an act of will.”

— Queen Rania of Jordan

Why Global Citizenship Education?

A quality education goes far beyond just basic literacy and numeracy. The skills necessary for children to succeed as adults are based on experiences they have early in life and schooling. Primary schools face the vast challenge of empowering children as active participants in the global community. This includes helping students thrive academically, preparing them for workforce success, supporting them to build character and civic engagement, and developing necessary skills to address large-scale, complex social issues. Global citizenship education provides a framework to engage learners to become **better learners, better people**, and contributors to a **better world**.



The Case for Global Citizenship Education

The case for global citizenship education is simple: it improves the lives of the children it touches; it deepens their positive impacts on their communities; and it facilitates our collective journey towards a just, sustainable, and peaceful world.

BETTER LEARNERS

Global Citizenship education encourages learners to become academically engaged and deep thinkers proficient in skills such as analysis, adaptability, initiative, social awareness, teamwork, and communication which are critical for 21st Century work and school success.



GOAL: ENGAGED STUDENTS

Global citizenship education helps engage students by connecting their learning to real-world issues, providing them with tangible, relevant concepts to explore, and deliberately developing opportunities for social awareness and relationship-building.

GOAL: DEEP THINKERS

The situations and issues presented through global citizenship education challenge learners to consider situations from multiple perspectives, think critically, weigh possibilities and ethics, and ponder systemic interconnections.

GOAL: SKILLED WORKFORCE

Through global citizenship education students learn to use creativity and critical thinking to solve problems and collaborate and communicate effectively with others preparing them for a globalized and rapidly changing workplace.

BETTER PEOPLE

Students who receive global citizenship education become individuals who are empathetic, tolerant, self-aware, respectful of others, and dedicated to helping their communities.



GOAL: FULFILLED INDIVIDUALS

When schools teach global citizenship education, they are also building an understanding of personal identity, relationships, social emotional skills, a sense of belonging, altruism, and efficacy –characteristics that are associated with purposeful, fulfilled individuals.

GOAL: ACTIVE CITIZENS

Global Citizenship Education helps students understand the nuances of public debate, formulate and share their own informed opinions, and build a habit of active participation in their local, national, and global communities.

GOAL: INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES

At school children can be taught to celebrate differences, see diversity as a strength, and recognize the interconnections between all people and places by educating them for global citizenship, allowing them to become integral members of inclusive spaces.

BETTER WORLD

Building a generation of active and engaged global citizens encourages broad and effective collaboration to address issues that affect the entire world. Students can be equipped with the skills and attitudes that can help them transform the world into a more equitable, sustainable, and peaceful place.



GOAL: EQUITABLE OPPORTUNITY

Global citizenship education teaches children to use a critical lens on existing situations, actively considering historical and ongoing injustices, and their role in addressing them.

GOAL: SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT

Students who have access to global citizenship education learn to focus on sustainability in their daily choices and use their voices to advocate for high-level change.

GOAL: PEACEFUL SOCIETIES

Schools can affect certain aspects of societies that are linked to peace such as acceptance of the rights of others and cultivating good relations with neighbors; global citizenship education contributes to this effort by teaching children to resolve conflicts, build consensus, and identify shared values and goals.

Beyond the Classroom: The Whole School Approach

There is no doubt that the individual efforts of globally conscious educators are vital for preparing learners with the competencies they need to be successful in our interconnected world. Yet to educate a new generation of learners as global citizens, we must go beyond global citizenship education (GCED) in individual classrooms.

Sustaining change is best achieved when the entire school works together coherently. Rather than focusing exclusively on classroom-level activities, the Global Schools First whole-school approach also addresses school culture, leadership, teaching and learning, home and school partnership and community interactions. We will discuss these areas in further detail below.

Whole School Areas



SCHOOL CULTURE

- Physical environment
- School values
- Expectations of student behavior and achievement
- Relationships among staff, families and students
- Extracurricular classes and events
- Inclusion



SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

- Modeling
- Professional Development
- School Policies
- Mentoring
- Decision-making process
- Organizational culture



TEACHING AND LEARNING

- Curriculum
- Pedagogy
- Inter-disciplinary work
- Class offerings
- Assessment
- Student voice



HOME AND SCHOOL PARTNERHIP

- Communication between home and school
- Family involvement during school day and other activities
- Supporting home culture and language
- Addressing student specific concerns



COMMUNITY INTERACTIONS

- Relationships with local people and organizations
- Field Trips
- Community Service
- Participation in Community Events
- Global Interactions
- Virtual field trips and projects
- Citizen science
- Travel initiatives

SCHOOL CULTURE

CREATING AN EXPECTATION OF GCED

Students learn to be global citizens not just through formal classroom lessons, but also through the climate of their daily life at school. The school experience gives students many opportunities to receive subtle messages about the importance of global perspectives and shared values. These messages can be conveyed through the physical environment of the school – what do they see as they walk through the hallways, for example. In addition, culture includes the perceived values of teachers, leadership, and staff – how do they spend their time? Finally, schoolwide initiatives, such as those related to sustainability, can provide strong messages about what the school considers to be a priority. An ideal school culture gives students clear expectation that global citizenship is and should be the norm through school environment, individual examples, and initiatives.



SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

SUPPORTING STAFF TO BECOME GCED LEADERS

School leadership provides an essential element to global citizenship education. Leadership signals the importance of GCED to all members of the school community and ensures the necessary supports are in place to realize this vision. Leadership prioritizes GCED through public statements, policies, and modeling global citizenship in their interactions with staff, students, and families. For example, GCED-centered leadership might include messages about inclusion in remarks at school events, school policies that ensure inclusion of students of all backgrounds and abilities, or deliberately seeking out new, previously silent voices in discussions with staff and students. At the same time, school leaders have a responsibility to give staff the tools and skills development needed to incorporate GCED themes into the curriculum and school culture. This may include professional development opportunities, instructional resources, and supporting GCED programming.



TEACHING AND LEARNING

INCORPORATING A GCED LENS INTO LESSONS

The curriculum and pedagogy employed during formal teaching time should reflect GCED related topics, perspectives, and related pedagogies. This can take many different forms. For example, interdisciplinary lessons on global issues can be developed, such as understanding the impacts of lacking clean water using science, social studies, math, and even physical education. However, global perspectives can also be added into existing curriculum. For example, if students are studying literature, the stories and narratives they explore should contain varying perspectives and locations that both reflect reality for the students and give them a view of different everyday environments. A GCED-promoting pedagogy includes giving students the opportunity to apply their learning to real-world problems, use their innovation to find solutions, and collaborate using social-emotional skills.



HOME AND SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP

WORKING WITH FAMILIES TO SUPPORT GCED IDEALS



Learning does not stop at the school gates; children's values, attitudes, knowledge and skills are formed and supported at home. Therefore, it is vital that families and guardians understand and are engaged in the school's work to promote GCED. Firstly, clear communication to families helps build understanding of GCED and the approach the school is taking. Secondly, it helps families know how to contribute to this effort. Partnering with homes also means recognizing each family unit and child as different with unique contributions and needs. Using the values of GCED in relating to families, schools can celebrate the power of different perspectives, voices, and cultures. Collaborating with parents can allow them

to bring their skills and knowledge to the classroom. Finally, teachers, leadership, students and families can come together as a team to determine and meet the individual needs of each child.

COMMUNITY INTERACTIONS

UNITING WITH OTHERS

Moving beyond the environment of the school, either virtually or physically, helps students more readily understand connections between the people with whom they share the planet and their in-school learning. Local interactions such as field trips and community service can help provide tangible connections, allowing children to better understand their potential impact on their local communities. At the same time, long-distance interactions, often facilitated using technology, can help expose students to an unfamiliar world and build skills of cross-cultural collaboration and communication. These interactions can form the basis of a developing sense of empathy and global belonging.



Advantages of a Whole School Approach

A whole school approach offers great benefits for learners as well as the entire school community. Using these different areas as a lens to examine existing practice and determine next steps, schools can look across the student experience to build a more complete understanding of how to systematically develop global citizenship in students. In addition, rather than just have individual classrooms promoting GCED, a systemic approach means equitable access to 21st Century content and skills. Finally, GCED is more sustainable when incorporated throughout the school community, integrated with existing school priorities and supported by senior leadership. A whole school approach can support a move towards GCED that is systematic, with all parts of the school working towards a common aim; systemic, with all students participating; and sustainable, where staff feel supported and encouraged and the importance of GCED is well understood.

GLOBAL SCHOOLS FIRST IS A FRAMEWORK FOR ASSESSING YOUR SCHOOL’S PROGRESS AND CELEBRATING YOUR ACHIEVEMENTS IN GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION.

The Global Schools First program provides a school assessment and recognition opportunity for primary schools committed to fostering the competencies that children need to be successful in today’s complex and increasingly interconnected world. We believe an integrated, schoolwide approach to educating children as global citizens fosters these competencies and creates a lasting impact on students’ growth and learning.

THE GLOBAL SCHOOLS FIRST JOURNEY

Through Global Schools First, your school may journey through three distinct levels. All schools must start with Level 1.

LEVEL 1: GSF COMMITMENT

Goal: Demonstrate your school’s commitment to global citizenship education

What you’ll do:

- Create your Global Schools First Team
- Learn about global citizenship education using the Level 1 Guide
- Commit to the Global Schools First process
- Complete an initial assessment of global citizenship education in your school
- Reflect on the meaning of global citizenship education to your school

What you’ll achieve: Global Schools First Certificate of Commitment

Estimated time to complete: 1-3 months

LEVEL 2: GSF CHAMPIONS

Goal: Examine your school's global citizenship education efforts in order to celebrate strengths and identify areas for growth

What you'll do:

- Use a comprehensive set of questions to reflect on global citizenship education in your school
- Submit your completed assessment, with supporting evidence, for review by global education specialists
- Receive a custom analysis to help you improve key areas

What you'll achieve: Global Schools First Champions Award

Estimated time to complete: 3-9 months

LEVEL 3: GSF SHOWCASE

Goal: Sustain and grow your school's excellence in global citizenship education

What you'll do:

- Showcase your school's innovative practices through CE International's publications, website, and social media
- Join the GSF Community of Practice and connect with GSF schools globally
- Mentor local schools as they begin the GSF journey

What you'll achieve: Steady improvement of GCED in your school

Estimated time to complete: ongoing



What if my school doesn't have much experience with global citizenship education? Is Global Schools First for us?

Yes! Whether your school has years of experience or has just begun to think about global citizenship education, the Global Schools First journey can be a beneficial learning experience for all schools that are committed to global citizenship.

Will my school be accredited by CE International?

No. Global Schools First is not an accreditation program. Schools that successfully complete each of the two levels are recognized with the Global Schools First Certificate of Commitment for Level 1 and the Global Schools First Champions Award for Level 2.

What are the deadlines?

There are no deadlines for Global Schools First. Your school can participate at any time and does not need to be in session while working on GSF. Additionally, CE International accepts Global Schools First Level 1 and Level 2 submissions on an ongoing basis.

How long will it take?

Each school should work at the pace that is right for them. The time needed to complete the different levels will vary for each school. We estimate that Level 1 will take approximately 1-3 months, and Level 2 will take 3-9 months. Some schools may be able to complete the steps relatively quickly, while other schools may need a little more time.

What resources are needed to participate?

Strong commitment from your school's Global Schools First Leadership Team and school leadership is the most important resource you will need. Reliable internet access is also necessary to complete and submit the required forms.

Why is participation limited to primary schools?

Although all levels of schooling can play an important role in promoting global citizenship, Global Schools First has been designed particularly for primary school (approximately ages 5-12) where the development of identity and foundations of global citizenship are being shaped.

Can individual teachers participate?

No. Global Schools First is a school-level program that has been designed to examine how global citizenship education has been integrated into all aspects of your school, inside and outside the classroom as well as in all classrooms.

Do I need my principal/head teacher's approval?

Yes. Since Global Schools First requires you to reflect on how global citizenship education is integrated into all aspects of your school—and not just one classroom—it is essential that school leadership approves, supports, and ideally participates in the process.

Can the composition of my GSF Leadership Team change?

CE International encourages each individual to commit to the Global Schools First process from start to finish. However, if an individual is no longer able to serve on the team, they may relinquish their role and be replaced by another member of the school community. Please notify CE International of any changes.

Is a site visit involved?

No. Global Schools First relies on schools to give honest and accurate responses, and provide supporting evidence. We believe you are the experts on your own context and look forward to understanding what GCED looks like at your school.

Does Global Schools First provide a checklist of necessary actions for GCED?

No. Our approach is not prescriptive in that way. We celebrate the fact that GCED can be enacted in different ways in different spaces and part of our mission is to share those practices between schools. Each school and context is unique and while we provide extensive guidance on aspects and implementation of GCED, we do not believe that there is one right way to do GCED.

Does the Global Schools First recognition expire?

Yes. Both the Global Schools First Certificate of Commitment (Level 1) and the Global Schools First Recognition Award (Level 2) expire after 5 years. Previously recognized schools may reapply by completing a GSF renewal application.

Who can I contact if my question is not answered here?

You can email CE International's Global Schools First program team at globalschoolsfirst@acei.org