

## CHAPTER 1: achieving your goals by expanding learning time



To be successful in today's global 21st century, students need an integrated set of learning experiences that help them expand their horizons from their neighborhood to the world. As the world becomes more and more interconnected, it is important for all students to become globally competent (see box on global competence). Students with strong global knowledge and skills will be better prepared for the workforce they will enter in today's global economy, and for active citizenship in today's global society.

The critical competencies that are now required for success in work and citizenship include 21st century skills such as problem identification, analysis, synthesis, interpretation, and critical thinking, all embedded within rigorous disciplinary study. Schools are being held to a higher accountability from policymakers and parents for the development of these new skills. Furthermore, these new skills are increasingly critical for low-income and minority youth, who equally deserve the opportunity to compete for high-paying jobs in the global economy.

To a school leader, this can be a daunting task within the confines of the traditional school day and year. With this higher accountability and responsibility, many schools find that if they expand the boundaries of time, space, and partners, they can better achieve global competence, provide more opportunity and connections for their students, and broaden their stakeholder groups of support. This guide will help you achieve those goals.

Providing global content, skills, and experiences through a variety of learning opportunities leads to highly motivating instruction. This has proven effective in closing achievement gaps and in helping students develop responsibility and agency as citizens of the world. The types of learning experiences essential to acquiring global competence include those such as:

- Global arts programs that introduce students to the diversity of cultures and traditions worldwide
- Exposure to foreign languages, especially less commonly taught languages such as Chinese and Arabic
- Service learning projects that connect local and global issues
- Internships and apprenticeships that help students explore careers in a global economy
- Cross-cultural communication and collaboration via international exchange projects (both real and virtual)

These types of activities can be coordinated and enhanced through the integration of different learning settings, such as those that are community-based and digitally-based, and with the collaboration of an assortment of partners that provide out-of-school time (OST) programs.

## GLOBAL COMPETENCE MATRIX

Global Competence is the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to understand and act creatively and innovatively on issues of global significance.

| INVESTIGATE THE WORLD  | RECOGNIZE PERSPECTIVES  | COMMUNICATE IDEAS   | TAKE ACTION   |
|--|---|---|---|
| Students investigate the world beyond their immediate environment.   | Students recognize their own and others' perspectives.  | Students communicate their ideas effectively with diverse audiences.  | Students translate their ideas and findings into appropriate actions to improve conditions.   |
| <p><b>Students:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify an issue, generate a question, and explain the significance of locally, regionally, or globally focused researchable questions.</li> <li>Use a variety of languages and domestic and international sources and media to identify and weigh relevant evidence to address a globally significant researchable question.</li> <li>Analyze, integrate, and synthesize evidence collected to construct coherent responses to globally significant researchable questions.</li> <li>Develop an argument based on compelling evidence that considers multiple perspectives and draws defensible conclusions.</li> </ul> | <p><b>Students:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognize and express their own perspective on situations, events, issues, or phenomena and identify the influences on that perspective.</li> <li>Examine perspectives of other people, groups, or schools of thought and identify the influences on those perspectives.</li> <li>Explain how cultural interactions influence situations, events, issues, or phenomena, including the development of knowledge.</li> <li>Articulate how differential access to knowledge, technology, and resources affects quality of life and perspectives.</li> </ul> | <p><b>Students:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognize and express how diverse audiences may perceive different meanings from the same information and how that affects communication.</li> <li>Listen to and communicate effectively with diverse people, using appropriate verbal and nonverbal behavior, languages, and strategies.</li> <li>Select and use appropriate technology and media to communicate with diverse audiences.</li> <li>Reflect on how effective communication affects understanding and collaboration in an interdependent world.</li> </ul> | <p><b>Students:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify and create opportunities for personal or collaborative action to address situations, events, issues, or phenomena in ways that improve conditions.</li> <li>Assess options and plan actions based on evidence and the potential for impact, taking into account previous approaches, varied perspectives, and potential consequences.</li> <li>Act, personally or collaboratively, in creative and ethical ways to contribute to improvement locally, regionally, or globally and assess the impact of the actions taken.</li> <li>Reflect on their capacity to advocate for and contribute to improvement locally, regionally, or globally.</li> </ul> |

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## MAKING OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME COUNT

Historically, out-of-school time has been used for a variety of before- and after-school programming, tutoring or summer programming, early childhood education, supplemental education services, distance or technology-based learning, and cultural and recreational activities. Many of these have traditionally been provided outside the premises of the school from community-based organizations, such as YMCAs or Boys & Girls Clubs. In addition, within the school, study hall, homework clubs, elective and advanced coursework opportunities, advisories, and block scheduling or double periods have commonly been considered to extend learning time. You might currently have a few clubs in your school loosely connected to your overall school vision for global education, such as Model United Nations or cultural clubs like folkloric dance, but chances are they are not explicitly connected to the specific knowledge and skills students need to acquire for success in the 21st century in such a way that students

can “count” this learning toward what they need to accomplish for graduation.

Simply extending the instructional time for students is not the same as expanding it. The key is how the time is used, the quality of learning that happens during that time,

and how the results of that learning are recognized within the traditional education system. Expanded learning programs redesign a school’s entire educational program as “a school-wide improvement strategy to boost academic performance, close achievement gaps, and expand enrichment opportunities” (Rocha 2007, 2). Opportunities such as those mentioned above can take place outside classroom hours and school walls

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and with a variety of partners. Moreover, through these opportunities students can build their portfolios, pursue additional credit opportunities, and gain experiences that will help put them on a path toward graduation, college, and a successful career.

## WHAT DOES EXPANDED LEARNING MEAN?

Before we go deeper, it is helpful to review some new terms and how they will be used in this guide:

- “*Expanded learning time*” generally refers to out-of-school time, including before and after school, summer, weekends, and during school breaks, during which schools offer a set of programs and activities that extend the amount of time for learning that is available to all students.
- An “*expanded learning program*” refers to a comprehensive, coordinated, and integrated array of activities that are intentionally designed to align curriculum, instruction, and assessment across in-school and out-of-school time. Ideally, an expanded learning program will result in the recognition, based on proficiency rather than seat time, that a student has fulfilled a requirement toward a course credit, diploma, certificate, or some other meaningful marker.
- “*Expanded learning opportunities*” are not isolated enrichment or recreational activities such as sports programs, nor are they solely academic advancement or remediation programs like tutoring or homework help. Expanded learning opportunities are provided for or created by students to actively address their specific learning needs and interests, regardless of when or where the learning opportunities take place in relation to the traditional school and/or classroom setting. High-quality and rigorous “anyplace, anytime” learning opportunities integrate academics, enrichment, and skill development through hands-on experiences in out-of-classroom/out-of-school settings that make learning relevant and engaging, such as local communities and digital environments.

Expanded learning programs are a new way to think about where and when learning happens and an

essential strategy in shaping the school schedule and structure to successfully address two key issues facing U.S. education: the achievement gap, the inability of schools to effectively educate all low-income and underserved minority students; and the opportunity gap, the need for every student to develop the knowledge, skills, and dispositions required for success in the 21st century global economy.

Many schools feel trapped by external constraints on time, such as union contract terms regarding the length of the learning day and the year. Adopting an expanded learning program that leverages community partners helps address those constraints. To date, there has not been a great deal of research on expanded learning programs as defined above. However, there are many valuable and relevant lessons from decades of research on out-of-school time, which we will present throughout this guide. When implemented in a thoughtful, well-coordinated way, research is strong that expanded learning in out-of-school time can help students:

- Build stronger attendance on a day-to-day basis
- Build stronger work habits
- Build stronger family connections to the school
- Build stronger confidence and competence in children and their vision of their own success in life
- Contribute toward higher test scores (Durlak and Weissberg 2007; Vandell et al. 2005)

When building global competence and skills in students, the supports built into expanded learning time can help your school—and your students—reach your goals.

#### EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIPS ARE KEY

In order to reach the ambitious goal of creating global competence in all students, schools cannot and should not go it alone. One look at successful expanded learning time programs and it becomes clear that effective partnerships between schools and community organizations are key. Studies that looked at the core features of the best-achieving programs showed that strong partnerships with mutual aligned goals were a key defining element (Birmingham et al. 2005).

#### FOCUS OF THE GUIDE FOR SCHOOL LEADERS

- Provide information on how expanded learning programs can help build global competence in students and help students achieve their goals in school and beyond
- Provide examples of how global learning in expanded learning time can lead toward formal recognition of learning (e.g., using work produced in afterschool for course credit, graduation requirements, or portfolio development)
- Provide strategies, resources, and tools to help create an implementation plan for building a globally focused expanded learning program, including building support in the community, among staff members, and with potential partners to assist with funding, operation, measuring success, and so on

With the demands of a global workplace upon us, it is important now more than ever to bring new community partners into schools and to expand the types of learning experiences that will help students achieve global competence. Some examples may help illustrate what expanded learning looks like in action. For example, The After-School Corporation's (TASC) Expanded Learning Time (ELT) program reengineers the learning day in public elementary and middle schools. Under the principal's leadership, community organizations work with school staff to provide 35 percent more learning time to the students. A blended team of teachers, community educators, teaching artists, and other instructional specialists work together to expose students to a balanced curriculum and engage them in real-world learning experiences. They provide support for the whole child, fortifying students socially and emotionally against often stressful lives. TASC has made it a priority to include activities that align with each school's goals, including achieving 21st century and global learning skills. For example, arts activities have students explore the connection between their current environment and their cultural history, such as researching and using video to tell their family stories to one another to promote a deeper understanding of their fellow students' and their families' perspectives.

While intermediary organizations like TASC make it possible for expanded learning programs to take place on a larger scale, there are many examples of individual districts and schools implementing successful expanded learning programs. Analysis of existing successful learning programs has identified five common characteristics:

1. Strong leaders
2. Teacher participation, leadership, and professional development
3. Use of data to drive continuous improvement
4. Community and family support and strong partners
5. Focused, aligned use of time that engages students and provides a positive culture (Farbman and Kaplan 2005; Rocha 2007)

This guide will address each of these to assist you with the intentional implementation of high-quality expanded learning programs at your school with a global learning focus. To do this, we will provide examples of successful implementation throughout the guide as well as planning tools to help you put the pieces in place. We will highlight ways that your program can be structured to meet the different needs of age groups across the K–12 grade span, as well as the variety of resources and organizations that might be available to help you, whether you are in the heart of San Francisco or the plains of South Dakota. Expanded learning programs provide the time and space to make global knowledge, skills, and perspectives a reality for students. Along the way, students gain a stronger understanding of the “why” beyond the curriculum subjects and enhance their understanding of the world and their place in it.