Creating Global Citizens: The journey at one Australian high school

Helen Leyden & Robert King, Sunshine Beach State High School, Queensland, Australia

The 2000 epoch is characterised by exponential change which has manifested in a myriad of technological innovations which are defining what it means to work and live. This paper case studies one high school in Queensland, Australia, which sought to answer a fundamental question about such change: How will we prepare our students for a rapidly changing world, providing authentic opportunities so that our students are able to develop skills, dispositions and competencies to be active global citizens?
Design

Sunshine Beach SHS is a band 11 school with 1400 students and is located on the northern end of the Sunshine Coast. The school opened in 1994 and has a small but important number of identified Indigenous students (3.2%) and students who have English as a Second Language (2.67%). In the latest census (2016), Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people make up 1.3% of the Noosa population. Like the Noosa community, the vast majority of our students are anglo-saxon, and the challenge for our school has always been the question “How will we prepare our students for a rapidly changing world, providing authentic opportunities so that our students are able to develop skills, dispositions and competencies to be active global citizens?”

Franklin D Roosevelt once said that “We cannot build the future for our youth – but we can build our youth for the future”. Our initiative has its roots in “The Melbourne Declaration” which challenged us to develop student’s capabilities in communicating across cultures and developing respect for cultural diversity. The work we had started was then given direction, focus and clarity with the "Global schools creating successful global citizens" 2014 draft proposal, which recommended, “An international approach to education recognises that for students to have the global skills they need, they must have access to quality languages education and exposure to intercultural experiences throughout their schooling”.

From these stimuli, we considered our past & current work and established three objectives with the aim to prepare our students for their futures by fostering the global competence needed to ensure their success in an interconnected and interdependent world. These were measured quantitatively (no. of projects, no. of students, no. of teachers, results, survey data) and qualitatively (feedback, letters of support, survey comments) and include:

1) A focus on languages
   - Maintain the strength of the Italian program
   - Redesign curriculum of Italian program to align with ACARA and embed an intercultural approach
   - Increase the language offerings available to students
2) Developing Intercultural Understanding

- Use iEARN (International Education and Resource Network) to engage students and teachers in global, collaborative project-based learning tasks that allow students to dig deep into a topic that could make a meaningful contribution to the health and welfare of the planet and its people. Students use digital technologies to collaborate on research and share their learning across continents.

- Use of New Pedagogies for Deep Learning (NPDL) as a framework (to collaboratively plan) to provide students the opportunity to foster the acquisition of the ‘global competencies’ (known as the 6Cs: Character, Citizenship, Collaboration, Communication, Creativity, Critical Thinking).

- Provide professional learning for teachers and leaders (NPDL)

3) Exposure to intercultural experiences

- Increase the numbers of international students and offer an exceptional learning experience
- Expand the exchange program with Bologna City Council, Italy
- Increase the number and diversity of Study Tours
- Establish a sister school in China (‘Ouqu Middle School’, Changshu, China)
- Increase the number of teachers involved in International Travel and professional learning
- Establish reciprocal exchanges with our Sister School (teachers and students)
- Develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Fri.Sa.Li. Group in Italy (including the Convitto “Paolo Diacono” school) allowing teacher and student visits (up to a month in length).

The following key documents have supported and informed our ‘Creating Global Citizens’ strategy: DET Strategic Plan 2016–2020 (connecting students and schools globally through languages, student exchange, sister school arrangements and welcoming international students); Every Student Succeeding: State Schools Strategy (creating the next generation of global citizens and entrepreneurs by embedding STEM opportunities and expanding the study of languages); The Melbourne Declaration on Education Goals for Young Australians (engaging and building strong relationships with Asia) and Asia Society ‘Preparing our youth to Engage the World’ (providing a
framework of four interconnected elements: Investigate the World; Recognise Perspectives; Communicate Ideas; Take Action)

Impact

Prompted by the "Global schools creating successful global citizens" 2014 draft proposal, a scan of school curriculum and activities in 2014 with the leadership team (HODs & Admin) led by our HOD International found that the Italian language program, the small number of visiting international students and our Exchange Program with Italy were the school's primary means of providing our students with exposure to global engagement across the school. Since this time, we have deliberately prioritised opportunities to internationalise our school (Appendix 2.2) and the impact is demonstrated across each of the three objectives.

A focus on languages: (Appendix 1.1) Over 4000 students have studied at least one full year of Italian in the past 21 years. Our school has always worked in partnership with our three feeder schools to offer our students the opportunity to study Italian continuously from Prep through to Grade 12, building on the knowledge and skills students have gained in earlier learning. Students attending one of our feeder schools will have had the opportunity to study at least 8 years of the Italian language by the end of Year 8. We know that there is significant research about the benefits learning another language can bring to students, opening their minds to different ways of living and promoting harmony and respect in the school yard and beyond (Baker 2006; Crozet and Liddicoat 1997; 2000). Students now have the opportunity to study an additional or alternate language and to date have studied Chinese, Japanese, German, French and Spanish. Furthermore, our year 12 exit data is consistently above state average, and in 2017, 100% Year 12 Italian students received a VH or HA in Italian.

The introduction of the Australian Curriculum provided an opportunity to redesign the Italian curriculum, moving from a linguistic model to one with a greater focus on developing intercultural understandings. This had significant implications for curriculum design and pedagogical and assessment practices. In 2015, teachers worked collaboratively during structured planning days to create units of work that implemented our school pedagogical framework (Art & Science of Teaching) and incorporated agreed ACARA content. An analysis of reporting data from 2015 to 2017 found that in Year 7 and 8 Italian student grades given for Effort (A-C) has consistently
outperformed other subjects, demonstrating a high level of engagement from students with the teaching & learning in Italian classes.

**Developing Intercultural Understanding:** (Appendix 1.2) In 2016 the first group of students (20) participated in an iEARN project (‘Water is Life’) using online tools (including wikispaces and forums) to interact with students from India, Tunisia, Taiwan, USA, Uganda, Pakistan, Victoria and Iran. The intent is that through collaboration, students will apply their learning to deepen knowledge. A key outcome of the project was the design and completion of an action project, studying the health of our local waterway and making recommendations to improve the environmental health. Students worked with local organisations, compared data, research and actions with students from other countries. The impact of this project included:

- 88% of students acknowledging growth in the selected competencies from being involved in the projects. Students reflect on the chosen competencies (e.g. Collaboration and Communication) and self-assess and set goals regularly against the provided NPDL rubrics (Global NPDL project- Michael Fullan)
- An increased number of students involved in global collaboraton with peers through the iEARN network: Solar Explorers (2 classes, collaboration with Taiwan), PhoneZone (junior school leaders collaborating with Japan), Drastic Plastic (environmental leaders collaborating with schools across Australia and other countries including Modova, Pakistan and Taiwan)
- An increased number of teachers involved in professional learning (understanding of global competency) and involvement in global collaborative projects

**Exposure to intercultural experiences:** (Appendix 1.3) SBSHS now has three regular outgoing exchange programs (Bologna, Cividale & Ouqu Middle School). These have enabled our students to develop intercultural understanding through immersive real world experiences. These programs are planned so that students will not only have time for cultural interactions but will gain knowledge about cultures and customs of the local people by staying with families and attending local schools. When students were surveyed, 100% of respondents stated “This experience allowed me to develop understanding and be more considerate of the viewpoints of other cultures”, and that “The experience of another educational system changed my attitude and view on to my own education and ways of working”.

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98% of families who have hosted International students travelling to our school as part of a study tour also noted that “the experience of hosting students from other countries has allowed them and those in their family to develop understanding and be more considerate of the viewpoints of other cultures”.

Twenty-three teachers in the past four years have travelled internationally on student and/or teacher exchanges between Italy and China. 100% surveyed said they believed “this experience has allowed them to develop understanding and be more considerate of the viewpoints of other cultures”, and that “this experience changed their perspective of the world and the lives of others” (Appendix 1.3.2).

Within the school, we regularly host study tours from Japan (up to four annually) and over 100 International Students each year (from 6 students in 2007). The latest EQI (Sem 2, 2017) International Student Arrival & Departure Survey Overview (46 respondents Sem 2, 2017) gave our school a 100% overall satisfaction rating (Appendix 1.3.1).

**Scalability**

Due to the success of the school’s involvement in iEARN collaborative projects since 2016, the school is currently leading a project, ‘Drastic Plastic’ (designed by our school) with ten North Coast region schools and eight schools from around the world (Appendix 2.1). Prior to our initiatives in 2016, no teachers had actively been involved in student global collaborative projects designed to enhance intercultural understanding and global competence. Over 10 teachers now have been directly involved in projects and all staff (including School Leadership and HOD’s) have engaged in professional learning activities to incorporate projects in their classrooms. This professional learning has also been presented at regional meetings, conferences and combined school cluster SFD meetings (Appendix 2.1). The outcomes of the original global project were shared with the United Nations (Dec 2016) and iEARN international conference in Morocco (Appendix 2.3). In addition, the authentic use of digital technologies for global collaboration has extended beyond the scope of the projects. Teachers are using the online environments and digital tools (padlet, edstudio, edublogs, wikispaces, VoiceThread, Verso) in richer ways across the curriculum (Appendix 2.3).

The international student program (ISP) has the support of agents, all who recommend our school to international students (sample endorsements Appendix 2.4). 100% of our staff undertake
regular cross-cultural awareness training, giving understanding and awareness of other cultures way of working and respecting differences.

Our high-achieving Italian Program has supported many schools in the region, providing suggestions and expertise in developing their curriculum and exchange programs (Appendix 2.5). The past four years has seen a significant increase in the broad number of opportunities that have been made available to students and staff (Appendix 2.2). Prior to this, our relationship with Bologna was the only opportunity for staff. The increase of, exposure to, and participation in intercultural experiences within our school is also evidenced in Appendix 1.3.1. In 2018 a PLC has been created for Internationalisation, with representation from all faculty areas in the school (meeting twice per term as part of the regular meeting rotations). Their priority task is the development and formalisation of a global competency framework.

**Investment**

The investment to create global citizens is not only managed within the school’s resource capacity but also generates revenue for our school, with the International Student and visiting Study Tour programs providing a valuable annual income. Part of this income source is used to encourage and grow other international programs to generate a cycle of sustainability.

**Focus on languages:** Distance education enrolment fee – no cost

Italian language collaborative planning days (2015: 3 TRS - 4 teachers x 2 days $2400; 2016 3 TRS x 2 days $2400)

**Developing Intercultural Understanding:** iEARN annual fee of $88

Collaborative planning days (2015: 2 TRS - 2 teachers x 1 day = $800)

NPDL Global Membership $2000 annually

Digital intercultural learning projects through infrastructure and hardware partly maintained from ISP income.

**Exposure to intercultural experiences:**

- International Students. 2016 Revenue $350 050 Expenditure $56 951; 2017 Revenue $378 700, Expenditure
$45 434. Costs are managed from revenue and contributes to staff professional learning and facility development.

- Study Tours. 2016 Revenue $63 653, Expenditure $27100; 2017 Revenue $96 630, Expenditure $69 127. All costs managed out of the revenue and contributes to school staff professional learning and facility development

- Exchange program Bologna – reciprocal arrangement for all accommodation and tourism costs in and around Bologna. 2014 $3931 p/p, 2016 $3617 p/p, 2018 $4000 p/p (nil cost to school for exchange program)

- Reciprocal exchange program under the MoU with the Fri.Sa.Li Group in Italy for both students and teachers. Costs to school include flights for staff. These are managed out of International students revenue.

- Sister School visits to China. In March, 2017 three teachers travelled to visit sister school (Ouqu Middle School) and formally sign agreement ($3300 p/p). In September two additional staff members taught at Ouqu Middle School and were homestayed with teachers during their Sept vacation ($2500 p/p)

- Sister school exchange program. Student visit to China $2450 p/p (nil cost to school – reciprocal arrangement)

Conclusion

Sunshine Beach High is creating global citizens through a multipronged approach, supporting students and teachers reciprocal visits, hosting study tours, developing sister school initiatives & MoU agreements, advocating a strong language program, and offering the international students an exceptional experience at our school. We are taking our school to the world and bringing the world into our schools. In addition, our school leaders and teachers are helping students to participate in global projects, communicating and collaborating across cultures, using digital technologies to reach beyond the classroom. International learning projects enable teachers and students to exchange learning in synchronous and asynchronous virtual online environments. The next phase for our school is for our newly formed Internationalisation PLC to collaboratively formalise a framework of global competency in line with current OECD research and practice.
Appendix 1: Impact

Appendix 1.1 (Focus on languages)

Appendix 1.1.1 Over 4000 graduating students from SBSHS have studied at least one full year of Italian in the past 21 years. Students attending one of our feeder schools will have had the opportunity to study at least 8 years of the Italian language. The number of students studying Italian each year has increased with the total student population with the year 12 exit data consistently being above the state average and the % of students receiving A-C on their academic reports between 88% and 100% students in each year level.

Appendix 1.1.2 The redesign of the Italian curriculum has led to a strong engagement from students with the curriculum. ‘Effort’ grades in the A-C range have consistently outperformed other learning areas. English comparative data is included to demonstrate this trend.
Appendix 1.1.3  
SBSHS students now have the opportunity to study other languages in addition to, or as an alternative to Italian. Over the past four years students (n=8) have studied German, Spanish, Chinese, French & Japanese via Distance Education. In addition, SBSHS has been involved in the Italian Immersion Program at Sunshine Coast University since 2012. In 2017 SBSHS had the largest number of senior language students in attendance (30)
Appendix 1.2 (Developing Intercultural Understanding)

iEARN Projects:

Teachers involved in global projects from 0 in 2016 to 10 in 2017 (100% increase).
All staff have engaged in professional learning activities to incorporate projects in their classrooms. Four teachers have presented internationally and engaged in further professional learning.

Students Survey Data: Respondents: CREST students (yr 7) from first ‘Water is Life’ Global Project (18 out of 20 students were surveyed 2 yrs later)

- 100% felt differently about how they presented information given that they had a global audience
- 94.4% believed that they develop a deeper understanding of the world from their shared collaboration with students from other countries
- 88% saw personal growth and progression along the chosen Cs during the project (communication and collaboration)
- 83.3% have been able to apply the learning from the communication & collaboration rubric in other ways since the project.
Appendix 1.3 (Exposure to intercultural experiences)

Appendix 1.3.1  The increase of, exposure to, and participation in intercultural experiences within our school

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>International student program</th>
<th>Growth from 6 students in 2007 to 105 in 2017 (1650% growth in 10 years)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>International Students (46 respondents Sem 2, 2017) gave our school a 100% overall satisfaction rating on the International Student Survey (compared with 95% Qld School Summary Data)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exchange program with Bologna City Council, Italy</td>
<td>Established in 1994 this Italian Language Exchange with the Bologna City Council is current today after 24 years of uninterrupted service. Over 280 students from SBSHS have travelled to Bologna and been part of the exchange. Faculties involved in the exchange program have expanded from Italian to Music, HPE, and History. The reciprocal exchange program means that our school also hosts 20 – 25 Italian students for one to two weeks each year.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of teachers involved in International Travel</td>
<td>Prior to 2012, the only teachers involved were the HOD International and one other teacher every two years (accompanying students). 1994 – 2012: 10 teachers in total had experienced international travel with the school. 2013 – 2017: 23 teachers</td>
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<tr>
<td>MoU with the Fri.Sa.Li. Group (Convitto “Paolo Diacono” school)</td>
<td>The signed MoU has given opportunity for students and teachers to study at the Convitto “Paolo Diacono” school. No. of SBSHS teachers since 2014 (staying between 2 weeks and 1 month): 8 No. of SBSHS students (staying from 1 month to 6 weeks): between 2 and 5 students each year (2016: 2 students; 2017: 3 students; 2018: 3 students) No. of Convitto students hosted by SBSHS: 4 – 6 annually</td>
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<tr>
<td>Study Tours</td>
<td>Since the first study tour in 2012, our school now hosts between three and four study tours each year (including Takamatsu Daichi, Matsuyama, Seinan High and Kobe), with 80 overseas Study Tour students annually.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sister school in China</td>
<td>Agreement signed in March 2017. 5 teachers have spent time in sister school (Ouqu Middle School, Changshu) on two separate visits. Exchange established, with 22 students from Changshu visiting in August 2017, and 24 students from SBSHS travelling to Ouqu Middle School in April 2018. A further 19 students and three teachers from Ouqu Middle School will arrive end July 2018 and will be hosted by the Sunshine Community.</td>
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Appendix 1.3.2  Staff, homestay parents and teachers survey data

**Student Survey Data**

Respondents: 32 / 32 (students who had travelled internationally in the past two years and had not yet graduated from SBSHS).

- 100% believe that this experience has allowed you them to develop understanding and be more considerate of the viewpoints of other cultures.
- 87.5% believe that this experience has allowed them to develop understanding and be more considerate of the viewpoints of other cultures.
- 100% believe that the experience of another educational system has changed their attitude and view on their own education and ways of working.

"It was an incredible exchange and I would recommend it to anyone who is curious about other cultures and ways of life.”

"I think it’s a good way to learn more independence and cultural awareness, I would recommend anyone who has the means to do something like the Cividale exchange definitely consider it.”
Homestay Parent Survey Data

Respondents: 38 / 50 parents who regularly host students from other countries

97.37% (37/38) believe that the experience of hosting students from other countries has allowed themselves and those in their family to develop understanding and be more considerate of the viewpoints of other cultures.

97.37% believe that the home-stay program has allowed themselves and their family to start to develop (or confirm their) global perspectives of the world.

“Great experience. Improves knowledge and more tolerance of people from other cultures. Improves general knowledge on countries customs etc. Truly have enjoyed making lifelong friends.”

“Hosting a student from another country has provided our child with an opportunity to see life beyond the typical Australian way of seeing the world. Our child has a greater understanding and respect for not only other ways of thinking, living and working, but also values our quality of life and opportunity in Queensland that is certainly a privilege. We would recommend this experience to other families as a way to give your student insight to global perspectives and ways they can engage as citizens of the world.”
**Teacher Survey Data**

Respondents: 21 / 23 (staff who have travelled internationally with the school since 2013).

100% believe that this experience has allowed them to develop understanding and be more considerate of the viewpoints of other cultures.

100% believe that this experience has allowed them to develop understanding and be more considerate of the viewpoints of other cultures.

85.71% believe that the experience of another educational system has changed their attitude and view on their own education and ways of working (see comments below).

“**It is beneficial for staff to have the opportunity to travel OS and to teach in classrooms not in Australia to appreciate different culture and understandings.**”

“It is an immense inner satisfaction being able to contribute to opening the horizons into our students' lives and ultimately building or strengthening in them their character and their sense of citizenship!”
Appendix 2: Scalability

Overview of key strategies and projects

**TIMELINE**

1994  The subject of Italian is introduced into the Curriculum after consultation with feeder schools and Sunshine Coast Italian Schools
1994  First exchange to Bologna.  This has now been a 23 year uninterrupted biennial exchange between SBSHS and Bologna City
1995  Bologna visits Sunshine Beach SHS
2004  School awarded Australia day medal by then Minister of Education for recognition of services to Education for the Bologna
2004  Second Italian teacher appointed at school
2005  Third Italian teacher appointed at school
2006  Relationship initiated with Convitto ‘Paolo Diacono’ (Cividale Del Friuli, Italy).
2007  International student program introduced with 6 students (now 103 per year)
2008  Music department undertakes exchange with Bologna City Council, and also stays at Convitto “Paolo Diacono”
2012  First study tour.  Takamatsu Daichi SHS from Japan (this school has returned every year continuously since)
2012  First Language Immersion Day in collaboration with Sunshine Coast University (held every year since that time)
2013  MoU signed with Convitto ‘Paolo Diacono’ (Cividale Del Friuli, Italy).
2014  Italian Excellence Program approved
2014  First group of students (6) and teacher from Convitto “Paolo Diacono” undertake short term stay (one month (they have returned
2014  First month long teacher visit to Convitto “Paolo Diacono” (as part of MoU).  7 teachers have been since.
2015  Primary Italian teacher from feeder school transitioned to SBSHS to support flying start program (4th Italian teacher - still current)
2015  New study tour group.  Ibara Kinishi (Japan)
2016  First school iEARN collaborative global project ‘Water is Life’ with schools in Tunisia, India, Victoria, Iran
2016  First year with three study tours.  Takamatsu Daichi SHS,Kobe SHS & Matsuyama SHS from Tokyo, Japan
2017  Global iEARN project (Water is Life) presented to the United Nations by participating students from USA
2017  Sister school agreement with Ouqu Middle School in Changshu signed
2017  Humanities incorporates a China unit into year 8 Humanities to support Sister School relationship
2017  First group of students come from sister school (Ouqu Middle School, China) and are billeted with SBSHS families
2017  Study tour Kobe Noda SHS, Japan (returning 2018 with agreement for continuous annual visits)
2017  Study tour Seinan SHS
2017  Humanities department undertakes student exchange with Bologna City Council
2017  Global iEARN collaborative project ‘Solar Explorers’ with students from Taiwan
2017  Global project established between students of SBSHS & Takamatsu (PhoneZone project)
2017  Teachers visit to Ouqu Sister School, China (two teachers for one week in classes)
2017  Teachers present at NPDL global conference (Toronto)
2017  Teachers present at NPDL conference in New Zealand
2017  Italian speech competition at SCU (in partnership with Sunshine Coast Modern Language Teachers Association)
2018  Internationalisation PLC formed (twice term meetings as part of meeting rotation)
2018  First group of SBSHS students travel to China over the Easter vacation (hosted by sister school)
2018  Second group of students due (August) from Ouqu sister school, China
2018  Global iEARN project, Drastic Plastic with Moldova, Taiwan, Pakistan and other schools across Sunshine Coast
2018  STEM based physics project on quantum theory & duality with Hang Zhou Dong Fang High School, Hang Zhou, China

References


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