Global Competencies in the Workplace

Global competencies are in demand—and workers with these skills earn substantial income premiums.

To illustrate: "a purchasing manager in a [U.S.] manufacturing multinational might be tasked with buying the best value inputs from anywhere in the world to supply factories in Asia. To do that job well, she would need advanced skills in a host of information technologies, the ability to coordinate the activities of colleagues and business partners in a global network, and very likely have a formal education in foreign languages—a scarce skill set, but one in increasing demand from employers" (McKinsey & Company, 2009).

A Model for 21st Century Citizenship

The trends that are changing and expanding the nature of citizenship present both significant challenges and tremendous opportunities for citizens who are prepared to participate. We believe that 21st century citizenship readiness encompasses three distinct dimensions and three research-based practices:

THREE DIMENSIONS OF 21ST CENTURY CITIZENSHIP

1 Civic literacy encompasses knowledge of government and the role of citizens—as well as the motivation, disposition and skills for civic participation:

- Understanding of government processes and the local and global implications of civic issues
- Knowing how to exercise the rights and obligations of citizenship at the local, state and national levels
- Staying informed
- Participating effectively in civic life

2 Global citizenship encompasses global competencies required to contribute in a varied society and make sense of significant, global issues:

- Understanding other nations and cultures
- Proficiency in language(s) other than English
- Communication, collaboration, social and cross-cultural skills for cooperative interactions in diverse groups and contexts
- Disciplinary knowledge in subjects such as history, geography, politics, economics and science
- Interdisciplinary knowledge, such as environmental literacy; financial, economic, business and entrepreneurial literacy; and health literacy
- The ability to investigate the world, recognize perspectives, communicate ideas, take creative action, and apply disciplinary and interdisciplinary expertise (Mansilla & Jackson, 2011)

3 Digital citizenship encompasses the knowledge and skills to use technology appropriately to navigate the digital world, manage the risks and take advantage of the participatory opportunities it offers. A "holistic and positive approach" (Cable in the Classroom, 2013) includes:

- Understanding how to stay safe and secure online
- Knowing how to find, evaluate, manage and create digital content (also known as digital literacy, or information, media and technology skills)
- Understanding how to participate intelligently and ethically as a responsible citizen in online communities
- Understanding the rights and responsibilities of a digital citizen