

## WORLDWIDE STUDENT TEACHING RATIONALE, LEGITIMACY, PROCEDURES

This paper presents answers to three categories of questions commonly asked by faculty and staff at colleges that are considering student teaching placements through the EducatorsAbroad Ltd., (EA) Student Teaching program (EAST):

- Why should student teachers complete their assignment in other national/cultural settings?
- Why should we work with EAST?
- What are EA procedures?

### Why should student teachers complete their assignment in other national/cultural settings?

The rationale for educators to act upon a global view of life and their profession in order to develop a globally competent citizenry has been presented by many authors and affirmed by professional associations over many years. These statements are based on an understanding of:

#### Global Realities

- We do not live in isolation. As citizens of the world our lives are impacted by the actions of citizens and educators living in other societies.
- The world's citizens are often not very knowledgeable about the world beyond their national borders.

#### Educational Realities

- Educators, who act in isolation as if they were part of a local trade, fail to prepare their students for the era of globalization of which they are and will be a part.
- Educators with a global perspective recognize the commonality in issues and solutions facing colleagues around the world, the value of learning from each other to inform practice, and the profession's obligation to ensure all children in the world have access to educational opportunity.
- The movement of educators from one region of the world to another demonstrates the international marketplace that exists for professional educators and highlights the shortage of teachers in our global profession.
- Teacher educators are preparing professionals who may ultimately work in any school and society in the world.
- Meeting the academic and social needs of foreign born students in each society requires teachers who have knowledge of the life experience and culture of these students and of the global context within which their former homelands exist.

#### Teaching as a Global Profession

- Teaching and teacher education are part of a global profession of educators with scholars and practitioners in all corners of the world.
- Educators do not work in isolation and should no longer be prepared to work within an imagined 60 mile/100 kilometer service area of their preparing institutions.
- Educators must be prepared to serve students from around the world and be enabled to teach across the global community.

- Educational systems are influenced by theory, policy and practice developed in other societies.
- Policy makers look to other societies for ideas for financing and organizing educational systems, and for preparing and employing educators.
- By expanding the emphasis on education beyond local and regional borders credence is given to the concept that educators are members of a global profession.

### **Questions to Teacher Educators**

In reality, there has been little action by teacher educators in response to these understandings and thus we must ask: ‘Why has there been so little action to fulfill professional responsibilities through global centered efforts? ‘What can teacher educators do to promote a global perspective in our profession and fulfill responsibilities to educators and students throughout the world?’

There are several reasons why little action has been taken including certification agency policy and practice, teacher educators preparing teachers for the local community rather than the global society of which they and their students are a part, concern that an international perspective in multicultural education will be at the expense of dealing with local inequities, efforts of universities to foster a global perspective in the curriculum not touching teacher education, concern that incorporating a global perspective will overwhelm the curriculum, and reluctance to grant credit for extended overseas experiences (including student teaching) based on an assumption that only participation in classes at the college and work in area schools can prepare individuals for teaching licensure.

Allowing such limited views of the profession and world to dominate the thinking and action around teacher preparation results in teachers less able to work with students of immigrant families, less effective in responding appropriately as international issues arise, and detached from the global stature and responsibility of the teaching profession.

### **What Can We Do?**

First, we must recognize – and then act on - the facts that as teacher educators:

- 1) Our graduates will be responsible for effectively educating any child anywhere in the world and any child from anywhere in the world – for the next 30 years, and
- 2) We do the next generation no favor by giving them teachers whose whole life experience is within a 60 mile/100 kilometer radius of their home, college, and school in which they will teach.

Then we must assure that prospective teachers develop a global perspective of their world and profession. This can be accomplished in several ways, for example:

- 1) Integrate into the pedagogical curriculum examples from instructional settings in other parts of the world to demonstrate that education is a global profession.
- 2) Require study of human growth and development that focuses on the development of children through a global and multicultural perspective to assure teachers will be effective in responding to the needs of all students they serve.
- 3) Encourage overseas study or student teaching and invite foreign nationals to study and learn with local students.
- 4) Require development of global understanding through arts and science coursework including study of other cultures, languages, and the global context within which each discipline creates and disseminates knowledge.

- 5) Attend international teacher conferences and work with teacher educators in other countries who face similar problems in teacher preparation. Assist each other in finding solutions through dialogue on a global profession.
- 6) Analyze international situations to help students see the impact of other cultures and beliefs on their lives so that they can better understand and respond to global issues.
- 7) Ensure that professional organizations highlight the need for educators to have a comprehensive and global knowledge of their students' cultures to effectively address the needs of multicultural and multinational students.
- 8) Integrate an international perspective into standards for teacher education and student achievement.

### **Worldwide Student Teaching**

Student teaching in another country/cultural setting is one way prospective educators can gain a broader perspective of our world and profession. This is not a new idea. EA faculty have placed over 1900 student teachers from over 100 colleges in Canada, the United Kingdom and United States in 58 countries since 1989. The Foundation for International Education (Wisconsin/Indiana University, USA) has placed over 4,000 students since 1962 and the Moorhead State University Student Teaching Abroad program (Minnesota, USA) placed over 1,600 students in countries around the world beginning in 1969. The Consortium for Overseas Student Teaching (COST) has for several years brought colleges, mostly in the S.E. U.S., together to offer their students this opportunity. And several colleges in the USA and other countries have their own programs through which their students develop teaching talents in schools in other countries.

By student teaching in a community different from that which the student is familiar, whether in another cultural setting within the student's home country or in another country, prospective teachers, their students, and the education profession all benefit. These benefits include opportunity for teachers to:

- Explore the role of teacher from a new perspective
- Apply knowledge and skills of good teaching in a global setting
- Experience learning and teaching in another culture
- Expand teaching vision and options internationally
- Increase employment choices – domestic and international
- Demonstrate competence and fulfill a dream

Many of the benefits of student teaching in another cultural setting center on personal growth and insight. Results of a study on the impact of international student teaching found that, "...an overseas experience has immense benefits for the student teacher, having impact on beliefs about self and others, professional development in terms of global mindedness, and improved self-efficacy." (Mahon, J. & Cushner, K (2002). The overseas student teaching experience: creating optimal culture learning, *Multicultural Perspectives*, 4(3), 3-8.

Some will argue that student teaching in an international setting will not prepare graduates to teach in the local community. Such opinions:

- 1) Ignore the fact that most of these students have spent the past sixteen plus years in schools that represent the local context that they have completed many hours in area schools in pre-student teaching practica, and that student teaching is a three to four month assignment out of a lifetime of experience.

- 2) Assume that schools are all alike within the service area of the college, that local standards of education are not accepted by colleagues in other cultural settings, that government policy concerning education does not change, and that the curriculum and instructional practices of each school or community are so unique that experience in one setting is not transferable to any other.
- 3) Presume that graduates will spend the thirty years of their teaching career in the local community(ies).

The reality is that when we move outside our ‘cultural cocoon’ we gain a different perspective on ourselves and our world allowing opportunity to enrich our lives and the lives of those we meet and seek to influence.

### **Why Should We Work With The EAST Program?**

Starting in 1989, EducatorsAbroad faculty built on the experience and success of the Student Teaching Abroad program of Moorhead State University. Since that time their work has evolved from placing nine students in Australia and New Zealand in the first year to annually serving approximately 200 students since 2005.

EAST offers prospective teachers the opportunity to complete school based pre-student teaching and student teaching requirements in several regions of the world, expands the range of placement options, and offers a unique opportunity for prospective teachers to develop their teaching abilities and expand their cultural awareness.

A few reasons why to consider offering international student teaching through EAST:

- EAST is a central part of several colleges that are fully accredited by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education under the NCATE 2000 standards.
- EAST is approved by state, provincial, and in England national teacher licensing bodies, is accredited by the British Accreditation Council and satisfies requirements of colleges that approve students for participation in the program.
- Experience and commitment:
  - Significant experience gained through placement and supervision of over 1900 student teachers in 58 countries on all continents.
  - Long term relationships with colleges with up to one-third of student teachers of participating colleges completing student teaching assignments through EAST in other countries.
  - EAST program director, Dr. Craig Kissock, has extensive experience living, working, and traveling in other countries.
  - Worldwide network of highly qualified teacher educators serving as faculty in host countries.
  - Enrolled students from over one hundred colleges and universities in Canada, U.K. and USA.
  - INTASC Standards of Effective Practice for Licensing Beginning Teachers (U.S. and Canada) and Qualified Teacher Status standards (England) form the foundation of student teacher development and assessment.
- Service to participating colleges and universities through:
  - Visiting colleges to meet with faculty and students.
  - Helping students make appropriate decisions for their professional development.
  - Managing the complete placement, supervision, and reporting process including paying schools and student teaching supervisors for services provided.
  - Arranging registration and payment of fees tailored to the needs of each college.

- Maintaining close communication among students, host-country coordinators and student teaching supervisors through e-mail, phone, mail, and on-site visits.
- Helping students gather information they need to fulfill portfolio requirements of their college or university.
- Providing current information on the placement and progress of students through the [educatorsabroad.org](http://educatorsabroad.org) www site and direct communication with *EAST* faculty.
- Holding high expectations of all participants to assure graduates are well prepared for entry into the education profession.
- Providing a dossier of information on *EAST* and student experience for participating university program approval and accreditation reviews.
- Creating opportunity for participating university placement directors and faculty to visit host countries and schools and fostering linkages for professional development and scholarly activity.

### **What Are *EAST* Procedures?**

**Faculty:** Initially teacher educator colleagues in host countries participated by locating appropriate schools, assisting with placements, helping students with accommodation, and by sharing insights about their educational system.

Supervision remained the responsibility of *EAST* faculty based in the USA through on-site visits to each student. With increased enrollment, and a desire to offer greater support and more effective professional development for students, a new placement and supervision strategy was needed.

Our solution was to bring teacher educators from host countries together, develop common understandings about program expectations, and have them place and supervise *EAST* students. The result has been the development of an international faculty – faculty who meet with each other, share suggestions and resources, and who have developed valuable skills in serving student teachers from several universities.

**Technology:** The EA www site ([www.educatorsabroad.org](http://www.educatorsabroad.org)) is a central part of the program. The public side of this site presents a detailed overview of the program, options (countries, times of year), a means of applying on-line, explanation of program requirements and procedures, detailed information to prepare students for participation, and all program materials.

The password protected part of the site effectively serves admitted students, program faculty, and the student's college. Admitted students receive the information they need about their school, supervisor, and program expectations etc. to assure a successful professional experience. [a sample student page can be accessed by clicking on the 'sign in' button on the www site home page and entering the word 'guest' as both username and password.]

Program faculty use a www overlay to the program database to conduct the placement and reporting process and faculty at the student's home college use this resource to track progress of their students. As appropriate new technologies become available they are integrated into the *EAST* process to better serve all participants in this program including use of flip video cameras and Adobe Connect video conferencing for student teaching supervision and reporting,.

**Administration:** *EAST* is a program of EducatorsAbroad Ltd. ([www.educatorsabroad.org](http://www.educatorsabroad.org)) that directly serves participating colleges by assuming responsibility for program operation and management.

**Worldwide Teaching Internship Options:**

- 1) Student Teaching (10 to 18 week placements).
- 2) Practicum in Education (3 or 4 week placement as introduction to, or comparative study of, education).
- 3) English as a Foreign Language Teaching Assistant (4 or 10 week placements).

**Placements** are consistent with the student's proposed teaching area(s) and fulfill requirements of the student's university. Northern hemisphere placements are from September to June with Southern hemisphere placements from February to December.

**Application, Placement, and Preparation**

Students complete the *EAST* application and have it approved by their university's student teaching placement director and/or teacher education faculty authorizing placement through EA. The application is completed on the program [www](http://www.educatorsabroad.org) site and consists of placement requirements, autobiography, academic record, and two letters of recommendation. The application is submitted to EA along with a placement fee.

Application materials are forwarded electronically to the EA faculty member in the student's country of choice or directly to a prospective host school for consideration. Upon acceptance, each student is notified through e-mail and their password protected [www](http://www.educatorsabroad.org) page of placement details.

Students then: a) communicate directly with their host school and EA faculty supervisor to arrange details of their teaching assignment, b) learn about their responsibilities and program expectations, travel, and the host country through the [www.educatorsabroad.org](http://www.educatorsabroad.org) site, and c) arrange for travel, accommodation, and arrival in the host country.

**Accommodation**, often in the form of home stays, is the responsibility of the student. Host schools advise and assist in this process – it always works.

**Support, Supervision, and Assessment**

EA faculty make placements with respected educators in schools with whom they are familiar. They foster close working relationships between EA and host schools, assist students with accommodation, respond to student needs and concerns, and visit the school and student to observe and assess student performance.

Cooperating teachers in the school bring to life professional aspects of teaching, share expertise, observe activities planned and introduced by the student, offer advice regarding effectiveness of teaching and management techniques, provide support for professional and personal well-being during the transition from student to professional educator, and provide three written reports of observations and a summative evaluation/letter of recommendation for the student's placement file.

## **Registration and Fees**

Registration is tailored to the needs of each college through registering at the student's home institution with fees paid by the college (or the student) to EA. In the USA and Canada students can use financial aid through their home institution for EA expenses. Alternative arrangements are available.

The fee for each EA program option includes required comprehensive study abroad insurance coverage, is adjusted annually, remains in effect from August through the following July, and is posted on the [www.educatorsabroad.org](http://www.educatorsabroad.org) site. Students are responsible for costs associated with travel, room and board, and personal expenses.

## **Reporting**

Final assessments and letters of recommendation, based on INTASC or QTS standards are submitted to the EA program office by the cooperating teacher(s) or host school and by the EA faculty supervisor. Upon receipt a letter is sent to the student's college indicating satisfactory completion and the appropriate grade is submitted for posting on the student's transcript.

For USA and Canadian participants grading is on an S (satisfactory) or N (not satisfactory) basis unless A-F letter grades are required by the student's university or state licensing office.

For participants from the United Kingdom a report, based on Qualified Teacher Status standards, is submitted to their college.

When a significant concern or difficulty arises the student's home college/university is informed and invited to participate in resolving the issue(s).

## **[www.educatorsabroad.org](http://www.educatorsabroad.org)**

The EA www site contains a wealth of information and is continually updated as a resource for:

- Prospective participants: complete program description, placement options, when and where placements are available, rationale, requirements, and on-line application.
- Admitted participants: program expectations, information about their particular country and school including opportunity to communicate with past participants; streaming video introductions by host-country coordinators; and information provided by participating colleges for their students.
- All people involved: students, EA faculty, host schools, and the student's home college have access to current information concerning each placement through a www overlay to the EA database.

**Further Information** - contact the program director, manager, or one of our regional colleagues:

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