

An International Education Perspective Study of Teachers in the Central United States

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### **Abstract**

The study explored the perceptions and expectations of preK-12 teachers from the central plains region of the U.S. regarding international education in their educational settings. Specifically, eleven PreK-12 teachers participated in a web-based survey comprised of 28 questions addressing international education; an in-depth interview was conducted with another teacher from a nearby school district. Findings indicate that the teachers hold varying understandings of the concept of international education. Further, the role of language and culture teaching received minimal attention in the responses about international mindedness. Additional research is called for to support a deeper understanding about the concept of international education and international mindedness through the lenses of teachers in broad areas of the U.S., including areas such as the central plains region which was used in this investigation. Results call for increased professional development for educators to 1) support pre-K students' learning and prepare them to become globally competent citizens, 2) develop teachers' and students' understanding of international education and develop broader perspectives, 3) enhance instructional strategies relevant to educational environments in internationally less-exposed areas, and 4) develop increased intercultural competence and world language education.

*Keywords:* international education, intercultural competence, international mindedness, teachers' perspectives, teacher professional development

### An International Education Perspectives Study of Teachers in North Central United States

As the second decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century unfolds and the call for globalization increases in multiple aspects of our lives, there is an increasingly urgent need for educators to prepare students to be world citizens who possess intercultural competence and international mindedness (Wang, Lin, Spalding, Odell, & Klecka, 2011). Varying positions exist as to why an international perspective is important for classrooms today. One perspective is that internationally-minded citizens are knowledgeable of global issues and cultural differences, as well as skillful in critical thinking and problem solving (Hill, 2012). Today, teachers are charged with ensuring that student learning meets published state and national standards as well as 21<sup>st</sup> century skills, but may live in areas that are geographically less connected to urban or international populations. However, whether the reason is to prepare future citizens for an economically competitive workplace or to become global citizens concerned with understanding the world and its interconnectedness, it can generally be agreed that international education is a response to an increasingly diverse and globalized world (Horn, Hendel, & Fry, 2011).

The relevance and significance of preparing a citizenry able to meet rapid global changes also call for opportunities in teacher professional learning that should include building intercultural knowledge and cross cultural capacity so that new global skills and concepts might be actively incorporated in K-12 schools and classrooms (Dooley & Villanueva, 2006; Duckworth, Walker Levy, & Levy, 2005; Zhao, 2010). To this end, the current study sought to understand the perceptions of teachers living in the central plains region of the U.S. regarding international education, international mindedness, and the implementation of international concepts in their educational work with K-12 learners. Understanding more about teachers'

perceptions and needs will enable us to understand which research and professional learning teachers need to foster and enhance their effectiveness in developing K-12 students' global competence.

Although many regard the concept of “international” to be solely associated with schools outside the U.S. or exclusively with the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO), international education should not merely be limited to this context (Shaklee & Baily, 2012). Today international education has come to include multiple meanings worldwide (Bray, 2010; Hayden & Thompson, 1995b; Hayden, Levy, & Thompson, 2010; Marshall, 2010). Furthermore, research in international education has evolved to include studies of language instruction in early childhood education (Gilmore, 2011) to several studies in teacher education that have investigated teachers' international mindedness in international schools (Duckworth, Walker Levy, & Levy, 2005), or intercultural competence (Bayles, 2009; DeJaeghere and Cao, 2009; Dooley & Villanueva, 2006; Grossman & Yuen, 2006; Emert, 2008; Lundgren, 2007; Mahon, 2006, 2009; McMillon, 2009; O'Neil, 2008; Sercu, 2006; Traffon, 2003; Westrick & Yuen, 2007; Yuen, 2010; Tian, 2013); however, none have investigated the perceptions of teachers located in areas of the central U.S. where international education is in newer in its development and application in the classroom setting.

In order to sustain a strong educational program that responds to globalization and creates internationally-minded, global citizens, educators who are mindful and aware of these same sorts of issues are vital (Snowball, 2007). It makes sense to learn more about where educators are currently situated, consider their preparation and current abilities and perceptions about how to best prepare their students to live and work in a rapidly changing world (Wang et al., 2011). After determining where educators are currently situated, teacher educators will then be better

able to determine what teachers need in order to become more internationally-minded themselves and then determine how they will apply this knowledge to curriculum development and classroom application.

Thus, the purpose of the current study was to capture the perceptions of a group of teachers in a central plains region of the U.S. that is experiencing demographic change. Two earlier studies influenced the research design of the current study (Duckworth, Walker Levy, & Levy, 2005; Hayden & Thompson, 1995b). Both studies had a core emphasis of international education perspectives for educators in international settings, however, the surveys and questionnaires from each study were able to be tailored to reflect a purposeful relevancy to the current study's context, e.g., in the U.S. central plains. We would like to note that although the Hayden and Thompson (1995b) research was a pilot study, it was later carried out in more expanded form (see Hayden, Rancic, & Thompson, 2000). The following research questions guided our study:

- 1) How do teachers in small, U.S. central plains schools define international education?
- 2) What are the perceptions of teachers at small, U.S. central plains schools about international education in the context of teaching and learning?

### **Historical Context of International Education**

As educators face the challenges and opportunities of globalization, terms such as global education, international education, multicultural education, and twenty-first century learning skills become very important terms. It may feel as if the terminology debate (Marshall, 2007) is a new concept to educators and politicians who may have recently entered into the discussion; however, it should be noted that international education has existed for at least a century with the

most significant resources documenting its existence and debate dating back to 1851 (Sylvester, 2007). Even so, this long and complex discussion has not yet yielded a common definition and it still continues today (Haywood, 2007).

International education in the field of education research experienced a strong thrust as a result of the post-World War II demand for greater diplomatic relations and expatriates who wanted an education for their children while serving abroad. Before that expanded interest, however, international education's practical beginning rose from international schools that can be traced back to the Victorian Age (Hill, 2010; Sylvester, 2010). With historical roots in London, India, Japan and Geneva (Sylvester, 2010), the concept of international education has now come to encompass multiple meanings (Hayden & Thompson, 1995a; Hayden, Levy, & Thompson, 2010). Broadening the possibilities for its application to schools and curriculum may have also resulted in a less-defined state. In addition, international education as a term has increasingly come to be used interchangeably with global, cross-cultural and comparative education, making it sometimes difficult to filter what meaning is being implied (Hayden & Thompson, 1995a). Sylvester (2010) stated "international education may be considered wide enough to embrace both education for international understanding, as it has been known for over a century, and education for world citizenship, which many have argued in support of for centuries" (p. 11).

Woolf (2011) also pointed out that international education can portray different meanings in different contexts, especially in the U.K. Woolf believed that the meaning of international education has taken a back seat to the late financial crisis in Europe, emphasizing that international education now means bringing in more international students to compensate for the reduction of government funding (p. 63). On the other hand, Tamo, Jubani, & Gjokutaj (2012)

found that including an international/global education philosophy as part of teacher pedagogical preparation was beneficial for the Albanian teachers to promote more democratic values in the education system (p. 87). However, the lack of clarity in its definition has caused challenges when teachers explore ways to implement “international education” in their curriculum or to assess students’ learning that utilizes international education. Recently, Bernardo and Malakolunthu (2013) explored the perspectives on international education of six teachers at three international schools that served Korean and Filipino students in the Manila metro region. This non-western study found that these teachers’ perspectives of international education “hinge[d] on the amalgamation of the country’s identity and indigenous resources and the knowledge it can learn from other nations” (Bernardo & Malakolunthu, 2013, p. 64). Here, the term international education appeared to include components of intercultural competence, including the assertion that one must understand self before he tries to understand others.

The International Baccalaureate Organization’s (IBO) concept of international education is perhaps the most well known. The IBO created a curriculum for international and national schools to adopt, emphasizing whole education that touches upon knowledge, skills, and attitudes, both pragmatically and ideally to support global understanding (Hill, 2010). Whereas international education was once thought of as part of a fairly exclusive private enterprise, it now is increasingly part of U.S. public schools that have adopted an IBO curriculum, making international education more widely available to a broader public (Hill, 2012).

Additionally, Hayden & Thompson (1995b) explored international education perspectives with 48, first-year, international undergraduate students in the U.K. and found the perception of international education is not always experienced in formal international schools but international education is often “reinforced...to which international attitudes were or were

not encouraged through formal and informal aspects of the curriculum” (p. 402). Also found was that international education does not always occur within a given curricular context. The perceptions held by students showed how international education has expanded beyond the traditional international school context into daily interactions outside of the formal education setting. The integration of an international education mindset also has been seen in traditional school subjects as well as peace education (Shaklee & Baily, 2011), e-learning (Aguirre & Quemada, 2012), global media exchange (Lam, 2006) and in early childhood education where two-to-five years old can enroll in an international curriculum for language and creative arts (Gilmore, 2011).

However, international education should not be limited to international schools or western-only contexts. In his recent publication, Hill (2012) elaborated on how international education has evolved from the once-dominated western construct, as now it has begun to include eastern concepts. Though more research is certainly needed to explore this relationship, the need for 21<sup>st</sup> century interconnectedness has allowed more societies to intersect and collaborate as international education takes upon a global process rather than something specific to a place or institution (Hill, 2012). According to Hill, defining international education has progressed to understand the process of international mindedness, a concept that he views as being embedded in international education. Thus, he has updated his definition of international education to the following:

Education for international minded-ness is the study of issues which have application beyond national borders and to which competencies such as critical thinking and collaboration are applied in order to shape attitudes leading to action which will be



conducive to intercultural understanding, peaceful co-existence, and global sustainable development for the future of the human race. (p. 260)

Despite the aforementioned research, international schools in western contexts still garner much of the research attention when it comes to exploring and examining various concepts of international education.

Exposure to international education for students and teachers is critical for our contemporary context to understand how the world is moving and communicating outside the immediate surroundings of one's home area that may seem removed from an international world. Because of this, such schools and their teachers are often mistakenly, or inadvertently, left out of the conversation about international education, despite the call for teachers to develop students as global citizens (Longview, 2008; Wang, Lin, Spalding, Odell, & Klecka, 2011; Zhao, 2010). Additionally, it is becoming more and more important for teachers to be aware of and develop an understanding of international education as their classrooms become more culturally and linguistically complex entities (Ball, 2009).

Whereas schools and school districts in isolated areas of the U.S. and the world may have previously been considered monocultural, these same communities are becoming more culturally and linguistically diverse (Capps, Fix, Murray, Ost, Passell & Herwanto, 2005). For example, between 1990-2000 the central plains region of the U.S. experienced some of the highest influx of immigrant children and English language learners, and one of the states represented in the current study saw a 350% increase in its preK-5 ELL population in during the last decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Capps, Fix, Murray, Ost, Passell & Herwanto, 2005). Yet limited literature has examined how teachers and students perceive international education in the breadbasket of the U.S., nor does the literature address the most effective teaching practices that might foster

intercultural competence and the development of international mindedness for K-12 learners in these classrooms. These concepts become very important as the demographics are rapidly changing in this area. In the particular area where the current study took place, the demographics are only beginning to change, whereas other areas of the state have experienced large changes in a short period of time due to the type of work offerings available to immigrant workers. [These changes are indicated at the Mapping the Nation web site (<http://mappingthenation.net/map.html>) at the county-level for each of the two states involved in the current study.]

## **Method**

### **Setting**

The current study took place in two adjacent counties located in neighboring states in the central plains region of the U.S. Each county has similar population demographics, though the county that participated in the survey research (County 1) exhibits higher percentage of whites (94%) than its neighboring country (86%; County 2). This population percentage difference is largely due to three Native American reservations that are located in County 2. Also, in each of the two counties, the population of the citizens five years and older who speak a language other than English at home (2007-2011) is low compared to each county's state statistic. County 1 has 1.7% of their population speaking another language other than English in the home as compared to the state's 9.9%. Similarly, County 2 is 3.4% compared to the state's 10.7%. Despite these low numbers, these states are experiencing a dramatic increase of immigrant children, with one state seeing a 125% increase between 1990-2000 (Capps, Fix, Murray, Ost, Passell & Herwanto, 2005).

The school located in County 1 participated in the web-survey research. Its enrollment for the 2011-2012 academic year was comprised of 207 students in K-12, with 90% of the

students identified as white. The student-teacher ratio at this school is approximately 10 students to 1 teacher. There are six public schools in this county, of which two are elementary, two are middle schools, and two are high schools. There is an additional, preK-12 private school in the county, and this school was used for this study. The school's student population largely parallels that of the surrounding public schools, with 91% of the school population being white.

The teacher who participated in the interview lives in County 1 but teaches in County 2. This teacher works in a public middle school composed of 247 students in grades 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>, with a student-teacher ration of 10 to 1. Eighty-one percent of the students in this school are identified as white, while the largest minority student population represented two or more races (7%) and American Indian/Alaskan (6%). Forty-nine percent of the students are eligible for free and/or reduced lunch. Furthermore, there are six public schools and one private school found in this county, of which three are elementary schools and three secondary schools. There are no private schools, but there is one K-12 Native American school that enrolls 68 Native American children; it is located on a reservation and is considered a public school. The school district of County 2 is 84% white.

### **Participants**

**School 1.** Each school, participant, and county were chosen through a selection process that involved both purposeful and convenience sampling to gain general information about small-town teachers' perceptions about international education in the central plains of the U.S. Though not used to generalize results, convenience sampling "can provide useful information for answering questions and hypotheses" (Creswell, 2012, p. 146), which is extremely useful information for this study.

Eleven PreK-12 teachers from a private, parochial school found in a farming region in the central plains of the U.S. participated in a 28-item web-based survey. All full-time and part-time teachers associated with the school were asked to participate in the survey, which took approximately 20 minutes to complete. Four males and seven females answered the questions in the survey. Ten of the participants identified themselves as white, with one teacher indicating “American” as other. The experience level of the teachers ranged from 10 to 46 years, with a mean of 24. The combined teaching experience of the 11 teachers equaled 262 years, with 198 of those years reported as teaching in the same school. Two teachers were in their 30s; two in their 40s, and two in their 60s; four teachers indicated that they were in their 50s; and one teacher was in his 70s. Seven teachers hold a bachelors degree while the remaining four teachers had earned a master’s degree.

The teachers involved in the study served many roles at this school. Largely due to the fact that the school’s population is small, the participants’ teaching roles overlap in elementary and secondary settings and often across disciplines. The employment status data indicated: full-time teachers (n=8), part-time teachers (n=2), and those in leadership and administrator roles (n=1).

**School 2.** To gain access for an interview, one teacher was conveniently selected from County 2, whose border is approximately five miles from the school that participated in the web-based survey. Although convenience sampling in qualitative research carries low credibility unless this strategy is used for practice (Glesne, 2011), this sampling technique was implemented due to the strict time line of this study, as well as the previous relationship of the teacher and researcher, which had been established through an international, pen-pal exchange program during one of the researcher’s time in the U.S. Peace Corps. Additionally, the white female

interviewee is a current public middle-school teacher who teaches keyboarding, world geography, life skills, and state history to a broad representation of her school's students. The interviewee holds a bachelors degree in elementary education and has taught for 20 years at the same school. All research procedures followed the university's Human Subject Review Board regulations. Before the study began, permission and consent forms from various groups were obtained.

### **Data Sources**

Data sources included a web-based survey composed of 28 questions (see Appendix A) and an interview (see Appendix B). School 1 teachers participated in the web-based survey while one teacher from School 2 participated a semi-structured interview.

**Survey.** The International Education Perspectives Study (IEPS) protocol designed for this study was influenced by and adapted from existing literature with strong influence from two studies: Duckworth, Levy, and Levy (2005) and Hayden & Thompson (1995b). The questionnaire developed by Duckworth et al. examined components of international mindedness for international teachers who were enrolled in a master's degree in education program. Though this study focused on international mindedness and not international education, specific questions were adapted to focus more on international education rather than international mindedness. This seemed appropriate given that Hill (2012) has defined international education as an education that promotes international mindedness. Additionally, the outline of the Duckworth et al. survey provided structure in how to adapt the demographic data for this study's local context.

The Hayden and Thompson (1995b) study examined undergraduate students' perspectives of what it means to be international and hold international attitudes. These students

previously had been associated with international schools prior to enrolling at the University of Bath (U.K.), though international and/or “overseas” was not defined. The Hayden and Thompson study provided insight into the development of the survey used in the current study by focusing on international education rather than international attitudes.

The IEPS was created by adapting these two resources to focus on international education in the context of teaching and learning. The IEPS is web-based survey that utilized the university’s web survey program. Teachers were asked 28 questions consisting of an opening question requesting their consent to participate in the study, three demographic questions, eight questions regarding professional experience, and 16 questions about international education. For the questions highlighting international education, four questions were open-ended, while the remaining 12 questions used a five-point Likert-scale (see Appendix A). All open-ended questions were coded by hand for salient themes. Quantitative data were collected through descriptive statistics.

**Interview.** The interview followed a semi-structured protocol and lasted approximately 40 minutes. The topics of the interview sought to understand how the teacher not only perceived international education, but how the teacher implements international education in the classroom through teaching and learning. Other “suggested questions” on the semi-structured interview protocol guided the researcher during the interview (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, p. 130). A pseudonym was assigned to the interviewee (Teacher 12) to maintain confidentiality. The interview was conducted in a safe and quiet meeting room at the local library and was digitally recorded and transcribed by the researcher. During the interview, the researcher notes recorded whenever emotions and/or actions were displayed. According to Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) “real meaning” sometimes can lead one astray so the researcher tried to be cognizant of the

power of her interpretation of the such meanings without compromising the exploration of the interview (pp. 217-218).

### **Procedure**

An e-mail was first sent from the superintendent to the entire faculty/staff of his school to introduce them to the intent and purpose of the study. Informed consent was obtained from the participants, who were then provided with the full description of the study prior to asking for consent by checking yes or no. Additionally, all participants were informed that their participation in the survey was voluntary and that they could stop the survey at any point without penalty. Participants were informed that all identifiable information would be assigned a pseudonym, thus making an individual's information confidential. Of a total of 21.5 FTE faculty at the school, 11 teachers provided consent to participate in the survey.

Consent was also obtained from the interviewee before the interview was conducted. Notes were taken during the interview that later aided in the transcribing process and served as a check on the content of the interview and informed the analysis process. The interview was transcribed verbatim. The power of qualitative research lies in the ability to see and understand the interview content at much deeper level through immediate transcription of the interview (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). The interview was transcribed within one week of administering the protocol, which enabled the researcher to maintain a fresh memory of the interview dynamic and content and thus support the data analysis.

### **Data Analysis**

**Quantitative.** Descriptive statistics from survey were computed using SPSS. Demographic information on gender, age, ethnicity, professional experience, and language acquisition were gathered and reported. Additionally, frequency counts were recorded and

reported to indicate the possibilities of any missing data from the 12, five-point Likert-scale questions that were used in the survey.

**Qualitative.** The qualitative data were first hand coded by the first author. The interview transcript was coded using an open coding process that was used to obtain a “general sense of what was being explored” (Creswell, 2012, p. 236). Though partially noted through the transcription process, the data content then formed initial categories and subcategories that evolved from the general reading/open coding process. To ensure accuracy of interpretation, after first coding the researcher asked Teacher 12 to review the transcription and her codes. The member checking allowed for additional validity in Teacher 12’s responses as well as accuracy of the report. Additional qualitative data were drawn from the open-ended survey responses of the eleven teachers from School 1. These responses were hand coded to look for emerging themes. The codes that emerged from the survey responses and interview revolved around international education and collapsed into the following themes: defining international education, implementing international education, and challenges to implementing international education. Researcher bias was carefully considered throughout all components of the study, as it was important to note that the way the teachers answered questions and statements in the survey and the interview may have been affected by a pre-existing acquaintance with the researcher. As one of the researchers was previously acquainted with many of the participants at the school, a second researcher served as a data check throughout ongoing analysis in an effort to carefully consider and address researcher biases that might be present.

### **Findings**

Discussion of the findings will be presented with the quantitative measures first, followed by the qualitative.



## **Quantitative Measures**

Descriptive statistics from the survey can be found in Tables 1 and 2. Table 1 provides information regarding preparation and professional development for teachers using international education. These data suggest that many of the teachers (n=8) did not participate in an international education curriculum during their preservice teacher education preparation. Also, to date, no teacher at this school has received professional development specific to the topic of international education (n=11). These discoveries parallel the findings in other studies where international perspectives or program components are not part of the educational context for preservice teachers. Fostering and supporting teachers' development of international perspectives for classroom implementation is critical to their ability to prepare their K-12 students for an increasingly intercultural world (Dooley & Villanueva, 2006; Levy, 2010; Zhao, 2010). Levy (2010) has suggested that educator preparation programs should embrace conceptualization and pedagogy of international education, along with intercultural learning. Providing intercultural interactions for future teachers is a movement that is slowly gaining momentum in both the U.S. and the U.K. (Dooley & Villanueva, 2006; Cushner, 2011; Zhao, 2010), though American teacher education programs tend to be less internationalized compared to other programs on college and university campuses (Longview, 2008). However in order for true intercultural learning to occur, stakeholders at the local and university levels must collaborate in providing such experiences (Dooley & Villanueva, 2006).

Examining the individual questions and statements in Table 2, mixed perceptions emerged, especially in questions 7-12 where global competency for teachers and learners is the focus. Here, most teachers (n=9) indicated the importance of being globally competent and to prepare their students to be globally competent, yet not many teachers are finding self-motivated

avenues to explore international education (n=9). Additionally, questions 3 and 4 elicit that the majority of these educators want to use international education in the classroom but have not been prepared in how to do so and/or find it difficult to do in a small-town atmosphere (n=10). The answers from the aforementioned questions parallel the results of the Dooly and Villanueva (2006) study of future teachers. Dooly and Villanueva (2006) stated that many future teachers found intercultural awareness as a very important skill to have, yet few future teachers knew how to transmit the skill to their future pupils. Zhao (2010) also asserted that teachers need to see themselves as the ones who will prepare their students with globalized skills.

Table 1  
*Likert-Scale Survey Results*

Question Stem	Yes, very much so	Yes, but only a little.	Not, not all.	I have no idea.	<u>Total</u>
A. Were you prepared in your pre-service teacher education on how to use an international curriculum?	0	3	8		<u>11</u>
B. During any in-service teacher development workshops in the past five years, was the topic of international education addressed?	0	0	11		<u>11</u>
Question Stem	Very diverse	Somewhat diverse	Little diverse	Not diverse	
C. How culturally diverse are your students?	0	0	6	5	<u>11</u>

Table 2  
*Likert-Scale Survey Results*

Statement Stem	SA	A	UC	D	SD	<u>Total</u>
1. International education is a must for my students.	1	6	2	1	1	<u>11</u>
2. "International education" is just a buzz word used by educational policy makers.	0	1	6	4	0	<u>11</u>

3. I wish my teacher education programs (both pre-service and in-service would have prepared me for a better understanding of international education.	0	8	2	0	1	<u>11</u>
4. I wish I could learn more about international education and how it can be used in the classroom.	1	9	1	0	0	<u>11</u>
5. If there is no/very little diversity in my classroom, then I don't need to use an international education approach	1	0	1	7	2	<u>11</u>
6. I'm certain that if I traveled abroad, I would have a better understanding of international education.	0	8	2	0	1	<u>11</u>
7. I have been self-motivated to learn more about international education in the past five years.	0	2	3	5	1	<u>11</u>
8. It is important for me to be globally competent as a teacher.	2	7	0	1	1	<u>11</u>
9. One of my main duties as a teacher is to prepare my students as global citizens.	1	8	0	1	1	<u>11</u>
10. Teaching global competence is difficult in a small community because exposure to other cultures/countries/communities is rare.	2	8	0	0	1	<u>11</u>

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### Qualitative Measures

Open-ended questions in the online survey and the interview data comprise the data for qualitative analysis. Four open-ended questions included in the survey were coded and analyzed for content; the fourth open-ended question allowed participants to add any supplementary comments they might wish about international education. The three questions were:

- How do you define international education in 300 characters or less?
- List three ways in which you use international education in the classroom.
- What are the greatest challenges of using international education in the classroom?

Different themes arose from each aforementioned question. Additionally, the interview data provided extended information that supported the themes that emerged from the open-ended questions.

**Defining International Education.** Studies have shown that international education can take on multiple meanings (Hayden & Thompson, 1995a; Hayden, Rancic, & Thompson, 2000; Hayden, Levy, & Thompson, 2010). Marshall's work (2010) also has indicated that a similar term, "global education," is often used interchangeably with other terms, such as international education, world studies and education for an international understanding. Given this background in the literature, it was assumed that there would likely also be conflicting understandings of international education by the teachers in this study. However, analysis of the responses to the open ended questions indicated that 10 of the 11 educators had a collective understanding of international education. Ten teachers described international education as the incorporation of concepts of diversity and awareness of cultures, as well as implying that international education fosters interconnectedness with others from around the globe. Teacher 9's response suggested that he held a broad meaning, stating that international education is "the education of all peoples...the world as one community" (Question 1, Teacher 9). Additionally, Teacher 11 spoke of accessibility when defining international education:

International education is having the access available to learn first hand about many different cultures; countries; and nationalities. Just think how you could make certain international holidays come alive for your students because you understand the culture of that country. (Question 1, Teacher 11)

Interview data from Teacher 12 indicated that international education might encompass several phases of understanding. She had traveled broadly and stated that she was able to use personal travels to better understand international education in regard to teaching and learning, as well as the students' learning. To this educator, international and global education is more than teaching and learning about culture, but teaching and learning about the world. Teacher 12

spoke of appreciation and acknowledgment of others as a means for understanding international education, which can serve as basic tenets of ICC.

Alternately, Teacher 2 defined international education differently from her peers:

I think International Education falls into one of two categories: 1) teachers teaching either students whose parents are either in the military or are working for an international corporation and are stationed in a foreign country; or; 2) a US teacher who is teaching in a foreign country. (Question 1, Teacher 2)

Teacher 2's response suggested that international education is something that does not particularly exist within the U.S. borders, but at the same time, seems to be something that is very U.S.-centric. She viewed the U.S. educational system to be just as good as other systems but also seemed perplexed on how on international education role in teaching and learning. "We can learn and utilize what they [other countries] do but I do not make international education a vital part of my curriculum" (Comments, Teacher 2).

Responses to question 1 provide insight into what the teachers in a central U.S. school believe about international education: that it is important but not actually a part of their active curriculum. Though 10 of the 11 teachers, as well as the interviewee, shared similar perceptions in how they viewed international education, participants did not actually define international education with any clarity. This finding supports the study by Marshall (2010) where findings pointed to the fact that defining concepts such as international education, is a complex task because of the multiple facets and interpretations in the way it is recognized (p. 49). On the other hand, Bray (2010) posited that perhaps it is the ambiguity itself that makes it valuable because its application is left to be implemented individually and contextually in meaningful ways.

**Implementation of International Education.** The data showed that implementing concepts of international education in the small-town classroom took on various forms, which may speak directly to how broadly international education can be defined, as was previously determined by Bray (2010). Here, teachers were asked to provide examples of three ways in which they could implement or are implementing international education components in their classrooms. Again 10 of the 11 teachers who participated in the survey found an array of international education components to be transferrable throughout many subjects taught at the school (see Table 3), showing that they viewed international education as transferrable to multiple subjects and contexts (Hill, 2012).

Table 3

*Number of Subjects/Resource in which International Education can be Implemented*

Subject/Topic	N	Resource	N
Church History/Religion	6	E-Pals	1
Social Studies	3	Guest Speakers	1
Economics	2	Internet	1
Reading	2	Second Step Program	1
Science	1		
Language	1		
Government	1		
Ethics	1		

Not surprisingly, given the school's context, the subject of church history and religion were often addressed in the teachers' answers. For example, one teacher addressed how the word "Catholic" is derived from the meaning of "universal" and through this, the teacher emphasized the importance of connecting religious context to appreciating different cultural perspectives (Question 1, Teacher 1). Teacher 10 spoke of comparing and contrasting not only religions, but governments, and people in how they relate to each other (Question 2, Teacher 10). Teacher 12 also practiced comparing/contrasting of different cultures in her middle school world geography

and history classes. She indicated that where geography is the perfect way to teach world culture, in “keyboarding,” a skill-based class, Teacher 12 had not introduced any concept of international education. Social studies, reading and economics were also avenues that the educators viewed as collaborative subjects that allowed them an easy transfer of international education components.

Additionally, some teachers found external resources as modes of bringing international education into the classroom, such as the resources on the internet, e-pals, and guest speakers.

I try to promote tolerance and respect for other cultures within my religion curriculum. I also use a program called "Second Step" which helps students to empathize with others. There is role playing and discussion to nurture good social interaction. The Social Studies course has several sections on customs; religions; and cultures throughout the world. Through discussion and on-line research we address these issues. We are in the process of setting up e-pals through National Geographic. This coordinates students throughout the world working together on various projects. (Question 2, Teacher 7)

On the contrary, Teacher 2 shared, “I do not use international education in my classroom. To be truthful; I do not even know how international education is a tool to use in my classroom” (Question 2, Teacher 2). These individual perceptions of international education and its implementation as seen in the responses to question 2 provide insight into not only the complexities of defining international education, but of how individual teachers chose or not chose to implement international education in their classrooms. Teacher 2’s response raises the challenge of the importance of identifying the appropriate professional development approaches that will help teachers understand and implement various aspects of international education in their classroom practice.

**Barriers/Challenges to Implementation of International Education.** Contextualizing international education through teaching and learning in small-town classrooms involves some expected and unexpected barriers and challenges. Seven teachers articulated that barriers existed to the implementation of international education, such as the lack of exposure to other cultures in the small-town setting. Teacher 7's response articulated this challenge: "I also feel that living in a small, rural town that has very little diversity is a challenge because we are not exposed to other cultures and nationalities" (Question 3). This was further supported by Teacher 9's statement that most children in the small community not only have limited exposure to other cultures, but they also have not been exposed to those of "different racial, religious and socio-economic class other than white; Catholic; middle-class families they come from" (Question 3, Teacher 9). This aligns with Dooly and Villanueva's (2006) study where implications included the importance of finding intercultural interactions for students so they can become interculturally aware of the changing world context.

During her interview, Teacher 12 shared that she went "the extra mile" to ensure that her students were exposed to students outside the 60-mile radius of their community. In her interview, Teacher 12 spoke about how she purposefully brings current events from around the world into the classroom. This teacher spent more than four years in the U.S. Peace Corps' Paul D. Coverdell World Wise School program, which connected her classroom with a U.S. Peace Corps volunteer living and working in another country's culture(s). Teacher 12 stated that she now feels confident in ways to bridge the knowledge into the classroom, unlike the results Lee (2007) found in which the international e-pal program for a small-town Texas school was not successful largely due to the teacher's lack of knowledge and understanding in how to bring this



international education component into the classroom meaningfully and in ways that developed her students' international awareness.

Some teachers expressed that their lack of traveling or teaching abroad has been a challenge for them in their ability to implement international education. Teacher 1 and Teacher 7 highlighted how traveling influences different perspectives, and if they had had such opportunities, they would come to see different perspectives more easily. Teacher 10 stated that most students in the school have also not traveled much “so they don't have any experiences to draw from when talking about the different nationalities or cultures that make up so much of the United States” (Question 3, Teacher 10). To provide additional responses, question number 6 in Table 2, further shows how the 11 teachers viewed the importance of traveling in relation of understanding international education. Furthermore, Teacher 12 mentioned how traveling has assisted in her developing understanding of other cultures:

...I know going back to India, bringing that, bringing the fact that I understand better now how cultures are different, my expectations were not met, that helped me learned that other places still have the traditional cultures and not every place is westernized kind of like I thought they were. That has helped me bring the cultures of Mexico...helps me understand them better and bring that to the classroom better. I have learned a lot more about all cultures just by going to India. (Interview, Teacher 12)

Teacher 10 posed a connection that no other teacher directly made, which is seeing international education at a national-level rather than only considering the international-level to be in another country. This particular response suggests that international education can be domestic and how important it is to think and act both locally and globally.

Another major theme that emerged from this question was resources, which included time constraints and limited knowledge of how to best use international education in the classroom. For teachers, time is a limited resource and implementing international education in core subjects that lack appropriate international references in the curriculum present enormous challenges. Teachers 3 and 6 both articulated their concerns of meeting the mandatory curriculum before adding components of international education. Teacher 2 acknowledged that knowing international education and how it will benefit students was her biggest challenge and the reason why she does not currently implement any international education concepts in her classroom.

Unexpectedly, a few teachers mentioned language as being a barrier. This was unforeseen by the researchers, as only 1 of 11 teachers completing the survey had indicated that they were fluent in another language. Thus, it is important that language barriers emerged as a challenge to implementation. Both Teacher 1 and Teacher 6 discussed the importance of language acquisition, which suggests that these teachers recognized that relationships and interconnectedness/interdependence of language and culture play a role in fostering an understanding of international education. Byram's research (2012) has stressed the importance of language learning as part of critical cultural awareness as well as a means to promote true intercultural interactions (Byram, 2008; Byram & Feng, 2005). Finally, student motivation and interest combined with the fear of stereotyping concluded the challenges for teaching within an international education context (see Table 4).

Initially, Teacher 12 stated that she saw no barriers to implementing international education in the classroom. However, Teacher 12 did come back to the issue and concluded the

interview by stating that biggest barrier she saw was understanding other cultures that might encompass one's own culture's ethical beliefs:

The only real problems that I come across is when I am teaching a culture that hurts people. Because I always say who's culture is better...theirs or ours? The answer is neither culture is better. Until I get to the place where there is a culture that's forcing women to wear burqas when they don't want to or not allowing people with other people that they want to be with...there are laws [that] are unfair and illegal and then I have to say, neither culture is better unless it hurts someone. So that's the biggest barrier is coming across a culture is hurting it's own citizens. When I come across that, I have to say that these laws are not right. These laws are not good so we have to understand most of the culture is okay except for these laws that are forcing women to be who they don't want to be...that is the biggest barrier. (Interview, Teacher 12)

Table 4

*Number of Barriers/Challenges in Implementing International Education in the Classroom*

Name	N
Exposure (i.e., Travel, Textbooks, Community)	7
Resources (i.e., Time, Knowledge)	4
Language (i.e., Understanding, Ability)	3
Student Motivation	2
Stereotyping	2

### **Putting It All Together**

Although the sample was small, through their responses to the survey and interview protocol, these twelve educators provided a snapshot of the perceptions and beliefs held by a group of educators from the central plains region of the U.S. about globalization, international education, and their preparation for such aspects of education. The questions did not specifically

address international-mindedness, but some of the responses demonstrated a desire to create students who are internationally-minded and prepared to be successful in a globalized world. Many of the responses articulated several of the challenges revolving around globalization and international education. The responses also suggest that the educators in this study had not been formally prepared to educate students for a future in today's multicultural, global, and international context, but have rather learned on the go and if it was necessary. Some educators stated the importance of becoming more knowledgeable about working with students from various cultures and who speak other languages, but unfortunately have not been provided an opportunity to do so. Almost all of these responses closely follow what researchers like Zhao (2010), Wang et al. (2011), Tate (2012), and Hill (2012), among many others have researched and reported.

### **Conclusions and Implications**

Survey and interview data showed that teachers' perceptions of international education varied among the participants. The responses about international education perceptions were varied and ranged from to not ever encountering the term, to learning about different cultures and languages besides your own. One participant even stated international education is "teachers teaching either students whose parents are either in the military or are working for an international corporation and are stationed in a foreign country, or a US teacher who is teaching in a foreign country" (Teacher 2). Discovering these U.S. teachers' perspectives about international education furthers our understanding of how teachers perceive international education and captures many of their ideas about how to implement international education in their schools and instructional practices. The teachers also identified several barriers as preventing their inclusion of international education in their classrooms. Intersecting themes

were identified from the open-ended questions on the survey (Likert scale questions), and several, yet tentative considerations might be made about international education based upon these answers. However, there are a few outliers that seem to have a different views and/or lenses on international education, which seems to be heavily influenced by previous life experiences as well as a lack of knowledge of what international education is and what it can provide for students.

The researchers could locate no substantive research on international education that has been previously conducted with teachers in the central plains of the U.S. If pre-service teacher education and ongoing professional development in the area of international education are to be effective, it is imperative that researchers continue to explore research outside of the setting of international schools in the U.S. and in other countries to include our international students who are studying in U.S. schools. International education is no longer “abroad” – rather, with an increasingly changing demographic, it has come to encompass the domestic environment as well. However, we must remember that international education is complex because each setting involving diverse cultures and languages that take on contexts that may not be easily understood (Allan, 2010). Although the current study contains a small, nonrandomized sample of teachers from one central region of the U.S., these insights provide us with further understanding of how small, central, U.S. teachers’ view international education and can lead us to further research. As such, the understandings and results that have evolved from this small perspectives study are not to be generalized but used to further research in the field in understanding how teachers perceive international education.

**Recommendations and Future Steps.** While limited in scope, this study nonetheless contributes new information to the international education literature. The findings are not

generalizable, but what is learned from this study is that it can be applied to further enhance research in the field and provide input for teacher education programs and school districts in this region, and other similar ones, seeking to provide professional development in their schools. Expanding this research to a larger, randomized sample would be extremely beneficial to add quantitative measures to the analysis and a broader scope, to include multiple regions of the U.S. Despite limited research on this population of teachers' perspectives, developing an understanding for all teachers, worldwide, in a variety of similar settings (urban, suburban, rural and remote) is an important area of research to be considered, as each context brings forth different interpretations and meanings (Allan, 2003).

Finally, the teachers who participated in this study requested tools and strategies that allow them the ability to add an international component to their curriculum. In such, providing scaffold techniques in understanding international education and implementing it in their classrooms is needed, especially if we are to foster intercultural skills, attitudes and interactions for those less culturally exposed. Results suggest that most of the teachers in this study were interested in embracing and implementing "international education." However, because of the context in which they live, few were wary about how important or viable it would be to provide international perspectives to their students at this time. Teacher 1 summarizes this point:

Ideally, I think this international education is a good thing. But I think realistically at a small school, it is almost impossible to do. We are stretched pretty thin the way it is.

Many students will not leave the state to work, maybe not even leave town. While I think know about the world around us is important, I don't see international education as being a realistic priority in a curriculum. (Comments, Teacher 1)

It is becoming increasingly important for teachers to develop a working understanding of international education as their small, culturally homogeneous communities are becoming more diverse. Iowa, Nebraska and South Dakota experienced some of the highest influx of immigrant children between 1990-2000 (Capps, Fix, Murray, Ost, Passell and Herwantoro, 2005). These states have seen an increasing amount of diversity coming into their schools. With most teachers being monolingual and having limited experience with a foreign culture, teaching and incorporating an international perspective can be daunting and frustrating. Therefore, it is important that teachers are prepared to teach not only for the diversity found in their classrooms, but for an interconnected world.

### **Addressing the Challenges of Globalization**

In order to move forward, the challenges of globalization, whether perceived or actual, must be addressed. The survey and interview of current educators from the central U.S. used for this study pointed to several challenges that include keeping up with the fast-paced changes in technology, access to relevant language and cultural curriculum for students, and the lack of resources (including time) available to respond to globalization and incorporate international education and perspectives. It also appears that a current reality in our U.S. schools is that education is not responding to the needs of every student in schools across the country due to multiple factors, including but not limited to the need for updated professional development provided to educators to work with an increasing number of diverse learners from multiple backgrounds and perspectives. Not only must educators recognize and be able to respond to students from multiple backgrounds, but educators must also be able to help their K-12 students develop their own identities and abilities as they prepare for a globalized world. This is yet another challenge that international education must address (Tate, 2012).

Education is already an intricate system that is influenced by language, society, culture, policy, and local and national politics. The added complexity of globalization may seem to be an overwhelming task for educators to take on (Engel & Olden, 2012) because it requires a different way of thinking, and an enhanced approach to teaching and learning. This, in turn, also calls for a different approach to educator preparation and professional development (Osterling & Fox, 2004).

This study specifically sought input from in-service teachers, but it draws us as teacher educators to consider the importance of including the development of international mindedness and targeted work in international education at all levels of teacher education. Preparing pre-service educators for an international context in a domestic setting can be complicated, but is only one aspect of teacher education. Working with in-service teachers to build on their existing knowledge is also essential. It is also essential to consider the ways in which teacher educators themselves are seeking to advance their own international knowledge (Hayden, 2007). Results from the current study point to the importance of working with experienced teachers to develop enhanced curriculum that encompasses international perspectives. With careful planning and purposeful curriculum that infuses culture, critical reflection, discussion, practical and real-life learning experiences in various contexts, and other international education components, pre- and in-service teachers can become more competent in their ability to teach in an environment with various cultures and languages.

The results of this study suggest that the building of background knowledge for teachers through reflection and critical practice, as well as focused discussions and curriculum development that include international perspectives can be beneficial to K-12 educators in their journey toward becoming internationally-minded. Internationally-minded educators then have



the capacity to prepare their K-12 students with the skills and knowledge necessary to be successful in a changing, globalized world.

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### Appendix A: International Education Perspectives Study Survey

Dear Teachers:

You are invited to participate in the International Education Perspectives Study (IEPS). The IEPS is 28 questions and will take you approximately 20-30 minutes to complete. Please complete the survey by Monday, November 26, 2012.

#### **Why is the survey being conducted?**

This research is being conducted to explore small, central US teachers' perspectives of aspects of international education. The study seeks discover the perceptions and expectations teachers have in regard to international education in the context of teaching and learning in their educational setting. This study is a part of the requirements for the EDUC 853: World Perspectives in Teacher Education course in the Ph.D. International Education doctoral specialization curriculum.

Additionally, please note that there are no risks or benefits to you as a participant in this study, and completion of this survey is voluntary. You may withdraw from completing the survey at any time.

#### **What is the due date for my response?**

Survey responses are requested by Monday, November 26, 2012.

#### **Will my results be confidential?**

Yes. Confidentiality will be remained through the use of pseudonyms for any identifiable information. Additionally, the survey administration tracking system will only be able to tell when you have completed the survey.

#### **How will the results be used?**

A summary of survey results will be compiled by XXX graduate student at XXX, with the guidance from her advisor, XXX. Your name or school affiliation will not be used in conjunction with any information.

If you encounter problems or have questions about taking the survey, please contact XXX at XXX or XXX at XXX.

Thanks for your participation and for furthering research in meeting the needs of teachers and learners in small communities.

**I give my consent to use data from this study for research purposes.**

☐ YES ☐ NO

DEMOGRAPHICS  
GENDER

☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Prefer Not to  
Answer other:

**Ethnicity : Please check all that apply**

☐ Hispanic or Latino  
☐ American Indian or Alaska Native  
☐ Asian  
☐ Black or African American  
☐ White  
other:

**What is your age?**

☐ 22-30  
☐ 31-39  
☐ 40-49  
☐ 50-59  
☐ 60-69  
☐ 70-79

**PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE****What is your highest degree earned?**

☐ Associate's Degree  
☐ Bachelors Degree  
☐ Master Degree  
☐ Ph.D.  
☒ other:

**How many years have you taught?****How many years have you taught at this school?**

**At this school, you are currently a: (Please check all that apply).**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Full-time teacher     | <input type="checkbox"/> School Counselor  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Part-time teacher     | <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership (Principal, Assistant Principal, Superintendent) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Librarian             |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Extracurricular Coach |  |

Other:

**What grade level have you taught/are teaching? (Please select all that apply).**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Kindergarten     | <input type="checkbox"/> Grade 9-12            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kindergarten-Grade 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> AP Courses            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grade 4-Grade 6      | <input type="checkbox"/> IB Courses            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grade 6-Grade 8      | <input type="checkbox"/> College-credit course |

**What language, other than English, do you speak at a conversational level? (Please select all that apply).**

- |                                  |                                   |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Spanish | <input type="checkbox"/> Russian  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> French  | <input type="checkbox"/> Filipino |
| <input type="checkbox"/> German  | <input type="checkbox"/> None     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Italian |                                   |

Other:

**1. Have you taught outside of the United States?**

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No

**2. If you answered "yes" to teaching outside of the United States, for how long did you teach abroad? Please type N/A if not applicable to you.**

#### INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

**How do you define "International Education" in 300 characters or less?**

**List three ways in which you use international education in your classroom.**

**What are the three greatest challenges of using international education in the classroom?**

**Were you prepared in your pre-service teacher education on how to use an international education curriculum?**

- |   |                                      |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Yes, very much so.      | <input type="radio"/> No, not all.   |
| <input type="radio"/> Yes, but only a little. | <input type="radio"/> I have no idea |

**During any in-service teacher development workshops in the past five years, was the topic of international education addressed?**

- |   |                                       |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Yes, very much so.  | <input type="radio"/> No, not at all. |
| <input type="radio"/> Yes, only a little. | <input type="radio"/> I have no idea. |

**How culturally diverse are your students?**

- ☐ Very diverse.
- ☐ Somewhat diverse.
- ☐ Little diverse.
- ☐ Not diverse.

*Next, please rate the following items based on your teaching beliefs of international education. For each of the following questions, please indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with each statement below by selecting the appropriate letter to the right of each statement. SA = Strongly Agree A = Agree UN = Uncertain D = Disagree SD = Strongly Disagree*

**1. International education is a must for my students.**

- ☐ SA = Strongly Agree
- ☐ A = Agree
- ☐ UN = Uncertain
- ☐ D = Disagree
- ☐ SD = Strongly Disagree

**2. "International education" is a just buzz word used by educational policy makers.**

- ☐ SA = Strongly Agree
- ☐ A = Agree
- ☐ UN = Uncertain
- ☐ D = Disagree
- ☐ SD = Strongly Disagree

**3. I wish my teacher education programs (both pre-service and in-service) would have prepared me for a better understanding of international education.**

- ☐ SA = Strongly Agree
- ☐ A = Agree
- ☐ UN = Uncertain
- ☐ D = Disagree
- ☐ SD = Strongly Disagree

**4. I wish I could learn more about international education and how it can be used in the classroom.**

- ☐ SA = Strongly Agree
- ☐ A = Agree
- ☐ UN = Uncertain
- ☐ D = Disagree
- ☐ SD = Strongly Disagree

**5. If there is no/very little diversity in my classroom, then I don't need to use an international education approach.**

- ☐ SA = Strongly Agree

- ☐ A = Agree
- ☐ UN = Uncertain
- ☐ D = Disagree
- ☐ SD = Strongly Disagree

**6. I'm certain that if I traveled abroad, I would have a better understanding of international education.**

- ☐ SA = Strongly Agree
- ☐ A = Agree
- ☐ UN = Uncertain
- ☐ D = Disagree
- ☐ SD = Strongly Disagree

**7. I have been self-motivated to learn more about international education in the past five years.**

- ☐ SA = Strongly Agree
- ☐ A = Agree
- ☐ UN = Uncertain
- ☐ D = Disagree
- ☐ SD = Strongly Disagree

**8. It is important for me to be globally competent as a teacher.**

- ☐ SA = Strongly Agree
- ☐ A = Agree
- ☐ UN = Uncertain
- ☐ D = Disagree
- ☐ SD = Strongly Disagree

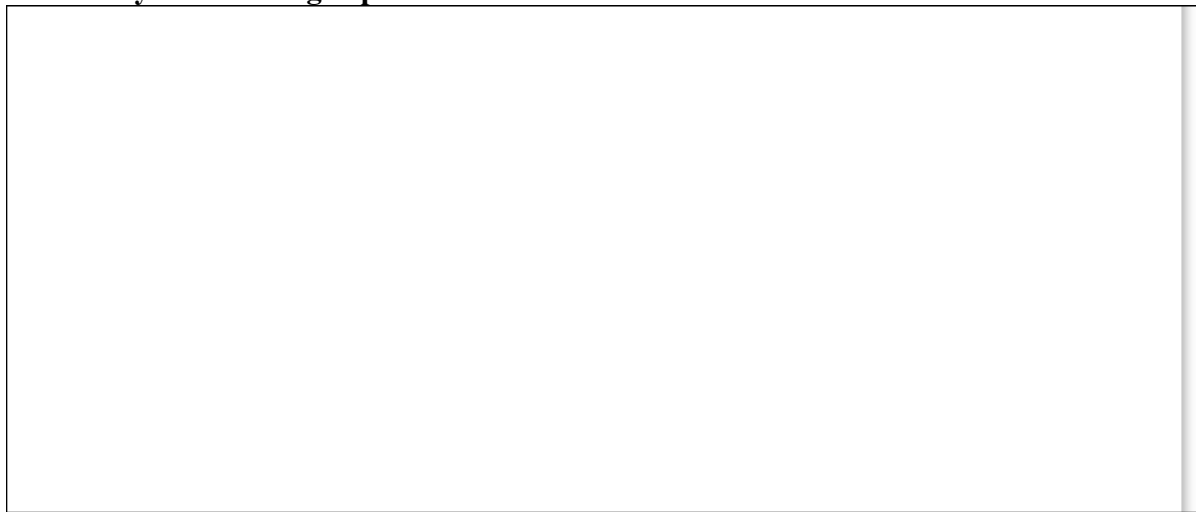
**9. One of my main duties as a teacher is to prepare my students as global citizens.**

- ☐ SA = Strongly Agree
- ☐ A = Agree
- ☐ UN = Uncertain
- ☐ D = Disagree
- ☐ SD = Strongly Disagree

**10. Teaching global competence is difficult in a small community because exposure to other cultures/countries/communities is rare.**

- ☐ SA = Strongly Agree
- ☐ A = Agree
- ☐ UN = Uncertain
- ☐ D = Disagree
- ☐ SD = Strongly Disagree

**11. What other comments would you like to add about international education and how it relates to your teaching experience at this school?**

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the respondent to write their comments. It occupies the lower half of the page.



## Appendix B: Interview Guide (Semi-Structured)

***Creating A Rapport—Warming up***

1. Would you please tell me about your educational background? And about any professional background you have as an educator?
2. Why did you decide to make teaching your career?
3. Have you had the opportunity to travel or to study abroad?
  - a. If so, where did you go?
  - b. How long did you go?
  - c. Why did you go?
4. What was your experience with the culture(s) of the countries where you traveled?
5. What perceptions or expectations did you have about the culture(s) outside of the US before you travelled there?
6. Have you had the opportunity to study other languages, or do you speak another language?
  - a. Do you know how to communicate in the language of any of the countries you have visited? If so, did you find that helpful? And if so, in what ways?

**MAIN QUESTIONS**

1. Would you please tell me how you would define intercultural education? What does it mean to you?
2. What are your expectations of international education?
3. How might you define the term international mindedness? What does this term mean to you as an individual and an educator?
4. Would you please provide details about how you bring “international education” into your classroom.
5. Are there any specific barriers or hesitations you might have to teach using an international education curriculum in your classroom? If yes/no, please explain.
6. How do you prepare yourself for teaching through such a curriculum?
7. How do you prepare your students for globally-minded curriculum?

8. After a rear-view mirror reflection, do you think you were well-prepared to teach about other cultures and countries other than your own when you first arrived in the classroom? If not, how do you think that you could have better prepared?
9. Has anyone or anything else assisted you in exposing your students to a international curriculum or to concepts of international mindedness? Would you explain or elaborate, please?
10. Do you believe that knowing your own culture helps you understand others? Why/why not?
11. How do you incorporate self-understanding when teaching your students?
12. What experiences do you have working with children of other cultures?
13. Would you like to add anything else about intercultural understanding, international mindedness, or working and living in a culture different from your own?