

WHAT KANSANS HAVE TO SAY

■ 97 percent believe that knowledge of international issues will be important to the careers of young people.

■ 95 percent agree Kansas high schools should require courses that include international topics.

■ 99 percent think that understanding international trade and economics is important to compete in the global economy. A total of 98 percent said the same about a knowledge of customs and cultures.

■ They rank the most important areas of the world to learn about as, in order, Asia, the Middle East, Western Europe, Canada and Mexico.

Source: 2003 survey by Kansas Committee for International Education in the Schools

A message from the Governor

Dear Kansans,

As our state defines its role in the 21st century, we must prepare our children for a world that is different from the one in which many of us grew up. Today, technology has shortened the distance between countries and nations, bringing us closer to people all over the world. We must use this technology to our advantage and understand that this new world is not one to fear, but one in which we must prepare our children to compete. Our children have access to so much more information and opportunity about their community and communities across the globe.



Governor Kathleen Sebelius

What you can do

- Attend a site council meeting at your child's school and urge staff to include international material in a variety of subjects. Urge your school board to do the same.
- Encourage state lawmakers and education officials to support international education by including it in state standards and by providing teachers with training in international topics.
- Support the teaching of foreign languages.
- Host exchange students and encourage your child to be an exchange student.

LEARN MORE ON THE INTERNET

■ www.kansasintheworld.org — The web site of the Kansas Committee for International Education in the Schools has profiles of successful international education efforts in Kansas, resources for teachers, survey results and much more.

Also see:

- www.globaled.org
- www.internationalled.org

A FEW THINGS TO CONSIDER

- An Asia in the Schools survey found teachers spent less than 5 percent of class time on Asia-related topics.
- Asia is Kansas' largest export market — about \$2 billion in 2002.
- Kansas' foreign-born population more than doubled from 1990 to 2000, with about 130,000 residents identifying another country as their birthplace.

Just what is international education?

Definitions of international education can be as broad as the globe itself. But basically, as one motto says, it is "putting the world into world-class education."

In our fast-paced world, learning about Asia, Africa, the Middle East and their people, history and politics can't wait until college. It is an education that must start early, so Kansans will see how events overseas affect life on the Plains.

So it's not enough to know Cuba is in the Caribbean if you don't know Kansas couldn't sell wheat there because of the nation's Cold War role. And that if wheat has more markets, farmers prosper and keep communities vital.

International education goes beyond studying a language. It can be taught in math, English, history, geography, science, and business classes. If students read books from other countries, if they study customs and government structures, they'll find similarities between people, not just differences.

By teaching our kids more about the world — and by giving teachers the tools to do it — we don't have to give the "basics" short shrift. Instead, we redefine what the "basics" of education include. Because our world is redefining the basics, we must do so as well to have a vital role in that world.

To request copies of this brochure, see www.kansasintheworld.org



www.kansasintheworld.org

KCIES

The Kansas Committee for International Education in the Schools consists of educators, businesspeople and others who advocate teaching our children more about the world at large.

There's a **world** of **opportunity** out there.

KANSAS



WORLD

Kansas has long provided children with a **first-class education.**

Now, it's time to give them a **world-class** one.

WHY A WORLD OF KNOWLEDGE?

- It's important to understand the causes and effects of world events since the U.S. plays such an active role.
- Our society is increasingly diverse, and we need international perspectives.
- The Internet and technology are making the world a smaller place.

Source: Top choices from a survey of 3,000 Kansans by Kansas Committee for International Education in the Schools

Going global

Most Americans say students need to know more about the world's cultures. Studies also tell us that schools are where students learn about Asia and other regions. Some of Kansas' best teachers say they'd like to teach children more about the world but a lack of training and materials, more so than money or time, makes it difficult.

Fortunately, Kansas isn't starting from square one. Some schools are taking steps to prepare students for our ever-changing world. Their efforts prove an international education can be part of an education that doesn't scrimp on essentials. What's essential, say educators and businesspeople alike, is making such efforts the norm.

New world of farming

Steve Baccus farms 1,000 acres in Ottawa County and always looks for new crops and ways of doing things, a philosophy that's helped keep the family farm profitable.

Going back to his schooldays, he's always tried to broaden his horizons. That urge helps as **president of the Kansas Farm Bureau**, a 127,000-member group that touts Kansas agriculture worldwide. It's a post that's taken him overseas several times.

"You get out of your small town and meet some of the people you read about and have the chance to sit down and talk. You learn they're normal people. They get up and get dressed and have the same problems that we do. ... That draws you out of your shell and you focus on issues that are larger."

He's also reflected on what his education could have taught him.

"There was hardly any emphasis on the interconnectedness of Kansas and the United States to the rest of the world," he says. "If a child doesn't know we're living in a world economy or culture, we're doing ourselves a huge disservice."



"We have a tendency to think that people who speak a foreign language or do things differently ... produce an inferior product. You can go to Brazil and find out that they can beat the pants off of American soybean producers. Now we have to learn how to compete with that."

STEVE BACCUS,
KANSAS FARM
BUREAU PRESIDENT

"If you only understand yourself, you are at a distinct disadvantage in working with other people."

A Kansan responding to survey

A night to show months of learning

The world can't be crammed into a single class or one-day festival.

That's why for seventh-graders at **Lawrence's Southwest Junior High School**, Asia Night is the culmination of months of research and hard work, not just one evening exploring a continent.

By Asia Night each March, 200-some students have chosen countries to study and an area of focus — be it Japanese animation or the Great Wall. They've written reports and given speeches and created costumes. And they've learned lessons about their own culture, too.

"Kids discover they're pretty much the same, at least on the values aspect," Principal Trish Bransky says.

The program fits Southwest's emphasis on using core subjects



— English, math, social studies, science — to together teach a topic. That way students learn how things are connected, a powerful skill in our world. So when they put together a Mount Fuji volcano, they've learned geography and geology and had a blast.

To Bransky, the best lesson is one that will serve students in years ahead: "If you find something that's totally awesome about a culture, you'll be far more open to other parts of that culture. You'll be far less likely to pass judgment on them."

A diploma showing they're worldly

Starting as sophomores, students in **Olathe's four high schools** can take classes designed to give them the skills to work and communicate with people all over the globe.

The International Studies Program — with focuses on business, arts and cultures, or international relations and diplomacy — goes beyond learning a language. Students study other nations and peoples, read literature from around the world and



At an international fair, Olathe students show what they've learned.

examine issues nations share, such as pollution, health and trade.

In a business class, students learn the implications of conducting commerce overseas, culminating in an export

or import simulation. Students study Latin, Spanish, Japanese, French, German or, soon, Chinese.

Community service is a big part, with students helping immigrants get settled or hosting international visitors. Independent study is another piece.

Students who finish the three-year program will get a notation on their diplomas, showing they've opened their minds to the world and are ready to venture into it.

"International education shouldn't be an add-on. International content can be integrated into ... many subjects."

U.S. Secretary of Education Rod Paige