

International School Partnerships

The world
is your
classroom

For more information on how to develop and sustain an international school partnership, visit:

www.education.alberta.ca

Under Programs and Services, click on International Education.

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we explore
explorer



**Government
of Alberta** ■

From Algeria to Zimbabwe

The world is your classroom

Truly understanding our own community, province, and country requires a deep understanding of the interdependent relationships we have with the rest of the world. In an effort to give students such global insight, many schools and classrooms across Alberta—and indeed across the world—are engaging in international school partnerships.

International school partnerships add an exciting, unique, and far-reaching dimension to the traditional learning experience.

They can:

- Build global awareness
- Introduce new perspectives
- Provide students studying a particular culture or place with a native resource
- Create a forum for dialogue between teachers
- Encourage the development of intercultural communication and collaboration skills

“Our kids can talk with kids all over the world all the time with MSN, over all these different media. But to take it to the next level, where it’s a learning experience, I think we start to see the kids get into these real conversations that I think are pretty valuable.”

Terry Godwalt, teacher and director for the Centre for Global Education at Queen Elizabeth High School, Edmonton, AB

Life-long lessons

In a society bombarded by stereotypical images and dramatic media, international school partnerships provide students with the opportunity to learn about other countries or cultures from the people who know it best—those that live it every day—and with people with whom they can relate—other students.

As students and their teachers engage with their international counterparts, they begin to:

- Question previously held assumptions
- Evaluate media biases
- Develop a greater appreciation for difference

While learning about another place and way of life, students begin to reflect upon their own lives. International school partnerships provide opportunities for Alberta students to research, discuss and consider their own identities.

“That Zimbabwe project was one of the most well-put-together and life-changing projects I have ever taken part [in at my school]. I don’t remember the exact name of the school, but I will never forget the name of my pen pal. I was young, never really understood what the world was about nor the dire position that Zimbabwe would soon find itself in. I can’t help but read every article I find on Zimbabwe [and think], whatever happened to my friend?”

Jordan Foo, former student, Hillhurst Elementary School, Calgary, AB

Partnership options

Partnerships vary in scope and focus. They may be short-term projects between classes or long-term relationships between schools.

Participating students may:

- Explore a curricular topic with another school
- Practise their second-language skills
- Share information through regular mail, email, video-conferencing and travel

