Connecting
Ohio Classrooms
to the World

Ohio | **Department** of Education

Acknowledgements

Let Us Know About Your Projects

If your school is engaging in an international project with students in another country please send a short summary of the project to donna.nesbitt@ode.state.oh.us.

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Introduction

Ohio schools are preparing students for the international context in which they will be living and working. It is a world where people are connected economically, technologically, biologically and politically. Working with people from another hemisphere in real time is becoming the norm for the workplace. While the interaction requires travel, technology often offers quicker and less expensive options.

Students who have had experience in communicating internationally will be better prepared for careers in many fields. Helping students connect globally makes school exciting. Students who know more about the world have a broader outlook and imagine greater possibilities. They are excited about learning, so they are motivated to work harder and challenge themselves to learn new skills. They also feel that their learning is relevant as they make connections between the real world and the information in their classes.

Educational leaders realize that students need to learn about the world, but few have explored the possibility of having students learn with people from other countries. Until recently, the opportunities have been limited and costly. Travel is a wonderful way to bring people of different cultures together, but it's not always necessary to leave home to talk with people who speak another language and have a different world view. Local connections are good alternatives. Schools may have opportunities to work with people from many cultures living in their own communities. Contacts can be made by networking with businesses and community groups in the region. Many nationalities have cultural associations, particularly in urban areas. Universities also are places where many cultures meet.

This document is designed to help teachers find ways to bring the world into their classrooms. It includes information on how to maximize the impact of classroom speakers, school partnerships and travel. It also includes technology options like key pals, conference calls, collaborative Web sites, Web conferencing and videoconferencing. New options continue to develop.

Ohio schools are providing exciting opportunities for students to connect. For example:

- In Tipp City, fifth-grade students connected with classes in Canada to discuss their carbon footprints and how they can reduce them.

- Sixth- and seventh-grade students in the Columbus Diocese who are studying Mandarin have had videoconferences with schools in China to learn about music in Chinese culture.

- Students at Glen Oak High School in the Plain Local School District have been videoconferencing with Arab and Israeli students in Acco, Israel for several years.

- Teachers at Park Street Intermediate School in the South-Western City School District used a phone conference with a partner school in South Africa to plan a visit. The South African seventh-graders came to Ohio in October 2008 to share their citizenship projects. They also are planning more joint projects in the future.

- Brunswick High School students learning Spanish communicated with international students enrolled at Kent State's Department of Modern and Classical Language Studies using SKYPE, an Internet connection that transmits both voice and video.

- Students at Hathaway Brown Primary School in Shaker Heights worked on a peace education mural with students in Italy as part of a project called Art Miles Mural. Half of the mural was painted by Ohio students. Then it was shipped to Italy where the Italian students painted the other half. The mural has been displayed at both schools and will be displayed at a children's art exhibit in Egypt in 2010.

Curriculum Connections

What about Standards?

Ohio's academic content standards include the content and skills that educators in Ohio have agreed are important for all students. When teachers consider an international project that will engage and excite students, they may feel that the obligation to help students meet academic standards and prepare for tests is a competing priority. Actually, the standards contain many topics that could serve as the basis for projects. Possibilities include:

- Culture/daily life;
- Environment/climate/plants and animals;
- Technology, design and innovation;
- Opportunities of civic participation;
- Historic or current events;
- Political or social issues;
- Art/architecture; and
- Literature.

The Curriculum Tool, *Ohio Teachers Going Global* contains specific international content within the standards, as well as instructional strategies and other resources.

There also are many standards that could be learned in a number of different contexts, including those that are international. Principles of design, ratios and main ideas can be learned with a variety of contexts, including some that are international. Students who engage in a joint project in which they are writing for an audience, explaining an idea to someone whose first language is not English or using metric measurements will address many standards and experience relevance that worksheets cannot provide.

Project Ideas

Joint projects furnish a structure for shared learning with students in another country. Teachers considering an international connection need to have a clear idea of their objectives. Projects should be planned to focus on information or insights that could not be obtained from a library or online research. Students can find basic data about a country in reference materials, but they need to talk with individuals to explore their perspectives on a particular issue. Projects can be short-term or provide purpose and direction to sustain communication and partnerships over a longer period.

Good planning is the key to success. To benefit students in all classes involved in the project, goals and agendas should be decided jointly by the teachers involved. Including students in the planning, where possible, will increase student buy-in and ownership. The project timeline should include time for students to complete research, readings, data collection or other work that they will be sharing.

One way to find project ideas and partners is to join an existing network. Schools can use the Web site www.epals.com to match students with key pals in other countries. The site has a blog space with project ideas for e-mail exchanges. Those same ideas could be adapted to collaborative work that also

includes video and voice. Structuring exchanges around particular topics can help students develop their communication skills and learn content at the same time. For example, students in two or more countries could produce a magazine around a common theme like after-school activities, favorite holidays, a novel, music or a global issue.

Another network is the Global Nomads Group (GNG), an international organization that creates interactive educational programs for students based on global issues. GNG's educational programs are fee-based and include several types of videoconferences where students learn about and discuss subjects with their peers from around the world in live, facilitated sessions.

iEARN is another source of project ideas. It allows teachers to join collaborative projects in subjects across the curriculum with schools in other countries. Joining an existing project is a good way to get started. Teachers can exchange ideas in a forum designed for collaboration. iEARN online projects usually do not involve face-to-face connections but teachers sometimes develop contacts that enable a Web or videoconference. Most projects are in English, but there are some in other languages.

Developing your own project with a classroom abroad allows for a more customized interaction, but requires more planning. Partnerships can be initiated in multiple ways. A teacher may have a project idea and get assistance in locating a partner through Web sites like The Center for Interactive Learning and Collaboration (CILC), which allows teachers to post invitations in their Collaboration Center. (The number of teachers from the U.S. accessing this site is greater than those from other countries.)

In other cases, a relationship between teachers or schools exists first and the parties work out the details of a collaborative project. Teachers find partners by continuing relationships with individuals they have visited in other countries or with educators who have visited their schools. Individuals from Ohio who are teaching English abroad through programs like the Japan Exchange and Teaching Program (JET) also can provide contacts to schools. There may be a business, community organization or individual in the community with a connection in another country that could facilitate introductions to a teacher abroad. Returned Peace Corps workers are often interested in continuing connections to the country where they served.

For the project to be successful, teachers will need to contact their partner school to plan via e-mail or phone. The project should be designed to benefit all of the students involved, not just one class. It also needs to take into consideration the technology available to all of the classes involved. While some schools have access to a classroom computer or videoconferencing equipment, many do not. Motivated teachers have found ways to overcome obstacles, sometimes transporting students to sites where they have computer access.

Practical Considerations

Consider the calendar and holidays of both countries in your planning. Schools in some countries begin their school year in different months and have different breaks. In Japan, for example, the school year begins in April, with a shorter summer vacation in August. In Australia, there is a two-month summer break beginning in December. This can determine the timing and duration of projects.

For real-time connections, consider the time zone. Most international locations in the Western hemisphere are within three hours of the Eastern time zone. With some flexibility in scheduling, classes should be able to connect during a school day. Some European, African and Middle Eastern locations could be scheduled during the early morning in Ohio, which would be at the end of the school day for the partner school. Real-time connections with East Asia or Australia will require one or both parties to schedule outside of the normal school day. Some creative educators have turned these projects into family events in the evening.

Be clear on specifying and calculating time zones during scheduling. Most of the world uses a 24 hour clock so 3:00 in the afternoon is 15:00. Online time zone calculators might be helpful. If you are scheduling during late spring or early fall, remember that Daylight Saving Time is not universal.

Dates also can be a source of misunderstanding. Many countries write dates with the day before the month. So May 12 would be written 5/12 in the U.S. but 12/5 in other countries. Avoid confusion by writing out the name of the month.

Likewise, U.S. students need to be aware that almost all countries use the metric system. If students are collecting scientific data, the data that partner schools supply will be metric. Conversion tools are available on the Internet.

Communication Tips

Students should approach the conversation or correspondence realizing that both sides can gain from the exchange. Appropriate greetings in the primary language of the partner school can break the ice, even if the conversation will proceed in English. Students need to take time to build rapport. If students are corresponding in writing, make sure they understand that names may not be familiar so they and their partners won't necessarily know the gender without being told. Abbreviations, slang and idioms also may cause confusion. Most of the world learns British English rather than U.S. English, so students may encounter a difference in the spelling of some words like "colour."

If the communication will use technology involving the spoken word, students should be prepared to listen closely and respond appropriately to accents that may be unfamiliar. It's important that the students have the opportunity to talk to each other, rather than listen to a conversation led by adults. Students need to speak one at a time and realize that there may be a slight time delay to the responses. They may need to speak a little more slowly if partners have a different first language. It is a good idea to start conversations by focusing on

positive aspects of the schools or communities, even if the goal is to eventually discuss issues that are problematic like disease or pollution. Focusing on a small number of key points allows for greater depth of discussion.

Language teachers or immersion schools may want to communicate in a target language. While this provides authentic practice, it also presents some challenges. Most students in Ohio begin a second language in middle or high school. They may have limited proficiency for discussing topics that are age-appropriate. Students in other countries may speak English as a first or additional language, but skill levels will vary, depending on how much instruction and practice they have had. Creative pedagogy can bridge the gaps by limiting the scope of the conversation, using visuals and providing key vocabulary in advance. If an interpreter is involved, remember that translation will decrease the amount of time for information exchange.

New technologies allow students to see each other over webcams or videoconferencing equipment, so appearance is another consideration. Students should be aware that videoconference partners may be dressed in school uniforms or clothing specific to their culture. Likewise, they should give some thought to what they will wear on the day of the conference. Solid color clothing works best for video. Face painting or unusual costumes for a school spirit event can be an unnecessary distraction that partners might not understand. In cultures where more modest dress is important, students should choose their own clothing carefully so that they demonstrate respect.

Bringing the World into the Classroom

Class Speakers

Hosting visitors in the classroom is one way to bring students into contact with other cultures. Individuals can be invited through connections with families and exchange students in the district. Community organizations that are the members of the National Council for International Visitors or a heritage organization for a particular nationality can help to identify potential speakers. Businesses that have international employees, arts councils or sports teams that have international players also might be helpful. Many countries also have consulates in Ohio. To see a list, check the interactive map on www.thinkglobalohio.org.

Colleges and universities in Ohio have many international students and are currently working to increase international enrollment. The Ohio Valley International Council at Ohio University is active in its outreach efforts with surrounding schools. When class schedules and travel time limit the availability of international students during the school day, video or Web conferencing could be used.

A visit is usually a one-time event, but can be linked with other activities over the course of a school year. Debriefing afterward is important to check student understanding and to help them process what they have learned. It is important to thank the visitor. Notes or artwork from students can let the visitor know what students gained from the visit. Having a series of visits from different individuals or groups can deepen student understanding.

School Partnerships

Several schools in Ohio have international partnerships. Partnerships sometimes begin with individual teachers or administrators who have traveled or have contacts abroad. They begin the partnership and reach out to colleagues to share their experiences. The most robust and lasting partnerships tend to be those that involve an entire school. Support from administrators and a majority of teachers keep the project alive over the years. As ties deepen, involving the community helps sustain the program by providing host families for visitors, organizing welcome events, providing publicity and raising funds.

Schools searching for an international partner might try contacting offices of international affairs, federally funded Title VI Area Studies Centers and other centers within Ohio's universities. A list of contacts who have agreed to assist in seeking a partner school/class is available in the Resource section of this document.

Many Ohio cities have one or more sister city programs that may be helpful in setting up school partnerships. For a list of sister cities in Ohio, go to http://www.sister-cities.org/ or click on the map in the International Connections section of www.thinkglobalohio.org to find sister cities in your area.

Setting up an international partnership takes time and patience. To find a mutually beneficial partnership, partners need to clearly communicate their goals, school context, time constraints and other important information.

The school partnerships that are most successful over a period of time involve face-to-face visits. Often there is an agreement or a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to define expectations for exchanges including:

- Exchange of students, teachers or administrators;
- Responsibilities; and
- Cultural or curricular focus.

While partner schools in some countries may have government support for their travel, schools in other countries may need to raise their own funds. Support for school partnerships in the U.S. has usually come from fundraising in the local community.

Travel

Student travel abroad has many benefits that cannot be achieved in any other way. Students can gain perspective on their own culture as they learn about others. Their horizons and expectations broaden and they see possibilities they may never have considered before. To get the most benefit from travel, participants need to invest time studying the culture and the language before they travel. A series of preparation classes, readings, videos and Web resources can provide background knowledge that will maximize opportunities for learning during the trip. Debriefing during and after the trip will help students gain a deeper understanding of their experiences.

Cost of travel is a challenge for many students. While a local foundation, individual or business might make a contribution, grants for travel by student groups usually are not available. If school visits and home-stays with families in a partner school are the focus of the trip, costs are limited to the passport, visa and airfare, as well as food and cultural activities.

Planning for an international trip should start a year before the travel date. Some schools have developed detailed guidelines to help teachers and administrators plan safe and productive trips. Among the guidelines are the following:

- Working with a travel agent to make arrangements for air and ground transportation, lodging and excursions;
- Securing liability insurance;
- Providing informational meetings and materials for families;
- Tracking funds for the trip;
- Preparing for medical emergencies;
- Securing passports and making multiple copies for advisors and administrators;
- Screening chaperones;
- Obtaining international cell phones or calling cards for group leaders.

Novice trip sponsors will want to consult with experienced colleagues to make sure that their planning is thorough enough to provide a safe and meaningful experience for students.

Technology Options

This section contains information about using technology to make international connections. There are various types of communication technologies that can be used and a number of products within each category. This guide will describe them in general terms, since specific products change constantly and there is no intent to endorse a particular brand.

Communication technologies have the advantage of being cost-effective when compared to travel. While there are some limits to the sensory information that can be conveyed, technology provides a vehicle for sharing information and viewpoints that was unavailable in the past.

Choosing the Technology to Fit the Project

Questions to help determine which technology that will best support the project goals

1. Will students exchange ideas through text, images, video and/or sound?
2. Will students in different locations be sharing their own projects or working to create one project together?
3. Will students need to communicate in real time or can they provide information and wait for a response?
4. What resources are available to the partner schools?

	Text	Still Images	Video	Sound	Real time
Key pals	✓	✓			
Conference calls				✓	✓
Wikis	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Forum sites	✓	✓			
Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP)			✓	✓	✓
Web conferencing	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Videoconferencing		✓	✓	✓	✓

Key pal connections are similar to the pen pal services that have existed for decades. Exchanges are usually asynchronous so time zones aren't a factor. Students can e-mail at any time but they must wait for replies. Key pal connections can be a primary focus or used to supplement face-to-face connections. Working through a trusted source to match key pals will provide safeguard for students.

Requirements for participants and partners include:
- Student e-mail accounts;
- Subscription fees;
- Computer time;
- Internet connection.

Although the telephone has rarely been used in education, ***conference calls*** can allow for more give-and-take of information than e-mail. Challenges include the inability to see verbal cues and the awkwardness of breaking into a conversation without interrupting. Charges for international calls are affordable and vary depending on the service used.

Requirements for participants and partners include:
- The ability to make long-distance calls from a school location;
- A speaker phone.

Optional:
- A calling card.

A more powerful form of communication would be sites that allow classes in multiple countries to collaborate on joint projects. **Wikis** allow multiple authors to contribute text, media and links to construct a knowledge base on a given subject. Wikis can be used by anyone with Internet access. Some are password protected. Students could work together to create a wiki with text, images, video and sound on any topic in the curriculum. Teachers could create a wiki with strategies and resources for teaching a particular topic.

Online **forum sites** provide a space to discuss topics and share ideas. Some are available at no charge and the level of security may vary. iEARN is a password protected site designed for collaborative international projects. Students may participate in projects and upload their writing or scanned artwork to a forum for that project. Facilitators monitor projects by reviewing postings sent and received by students. Students can provide feedback to students in other schools who have completed the same project. Teachers find that having an international audience for writing or other student work increases student motivation to submit a quality product. While U.S.schools pay a modest fee to participate in iEARN, Teachers in developing countries are encouraged to participate at no cost.

Requirements for participants and partners in wikis and forums:
- Computer
- Internet connections
- Membership fee (in some cases)

Optional:
- Scanner

Connections through **Voice over Internet Protocol** (VoIP) are available using free software available on the Internet. Many options support video as well. Multiple sites can be connected at one time.

Teachers may need to work with the school's technical staff to receive permission to download the software. Some of the new services allow connections through software on a remote server, so there is no download required. This is an advantage when connecting to partners who have limited computer equipment or ability to download.

Newer computers often have built-in webcams and microphones, but older models will need auxiliary equipment, which is relatively inexpensive. Computer-delivered connections are more effective with individuals or small groups rather than whole classes because of limitations to the microphones and cameras. However, the image on the monitor can be projected to allow more students to see the screen.

Requirements for participants and partners include:
- Computers;
- Webcams;
- Microphones;
- Software (in some cases).

Web conferencing allows for live meetings via the Internet. Participants see a shared workspace or live video and also have the ability to write messages to members of the group in the chat area during the conference. The conference moderator controls what others see on their screens. The chat feature can be helpful for raising questions or sharing thoughts as well as checking sound and video connections. A Web conference might include a slide show presentation, video, voice, a whiteboard, text chat, and screen or application sharing.

Web conferencing requires a site provided by the vendor, who usually charges for the service. Some free conference space is available with limitations. Web conferences usually can be recorded to playback later.

A Web conference has the advantage of allowing more information and perspectives. Multiple schools can participate and see each other but there are trade-offs. Students can share presentations, music, photos, and other visual materials. Increasing the number of sites limits the time for active participation for each class. It also can be distracting if all classrooms appear on the screen at once.

Moderators should test the technology before the scheduled conference. Even then, a few minutes are needed to make sure that everyone is logged in, can see the screen and hear the conversation. Only one microphone should be turned on at a time to avoid feedback. Participants also should try to limit distracting sounds and movement. Some users find it useful to have a dial-in number for voice connection and a speaker phone as a back-up if sound is a problem. (Some software provides access to free phone conferencing as part of the conference.)

It takes practice to become a competent moderator using the technology and keeping the agenda on track. Teaming with another teacher or the district technology coordinator may be helpful.

Requirements for participants and partners include:
- Computers;
- Access to conference software;
- A log-in and password;
- Webcams;
- Microphones.

For more than a decade, **videoconferencing** has been used by schools for live, two-way interactive communication. Many school districts have videoconferencing equipment (cameras, monitors and high-speed phone lines or broadband connections) or may be close to a site that does. The eTech Ohio Web site lists almost 900 locations in Ohio with 600 of them in K-12 schools. Like most technology, videoconferencing equipment has improved in quality and old equipment needs to be updated. Informational Technology Centers (ITC) in Ohio provide technical assistance for their schools using videoconferencing. New technology has improved the quality of the audio and video as well as the reliability. Internet Protocol (IP) has become the standard means of connecting and all public school districts have access to IP. Most IP connections can be made at no cost or for the cost of a long distance phone call.

In some districts, the equipment has been used to connect students to video distance learning opportunities furnished by content providers like hospitals, museums and zoos. The equipment often sits idle. The same equipment could be used to connect students with people from other cultures if the partners have access to similar equipment.

Videoconferencing equipment has some advantages over computers for connecting classrooms of students. Cameras have more functionality and large monitors allow students to have a good view of the partner sites.

Videoconferences are sometimes "point-to-point," involving two sites, and usually can be dialed directly. Calls with more than two sites connected at once are "multi-point." Depending on the equipment being used, these may require a bridge which can be scheduled through eTech Ohio.

A successful conference requires good technical support on both ends of the connection. It is difficult for a teacher to monitor the technology and supervise a class. The teacher who facilitates a conference usually needs the assistance of the school's technology staff who can make sure that the equipment is functioning.

It's a good idea to schedule a dry run a day or two ahead of a planned conference to test the equipment and the connections. Even when connections have been tested ahead of time, there is the possibility that the technology will have a glitch. Having the cell phone number of the person you are connecting with, will allow the technology staff to get information they need to address the issues.

Sound can be one of the most challenging aspects of a videoconference. Locations with carpeting and other acoustical features will enhance sound quality and prevent sensitive microphones from picking up extraneous noise.

Make sure that microphones are well placed near the students who are going to speak. To cut down on distracting noise, microphones should be muted when not in use.

Students may need to practice what they are going to say. Their listeners on the other end may use English as their second language. If so, students should speak slowly and clearly pausing to allow their listeners to process what they are hearing. If students are going to engage in a dialogue they need to prepare questions ahead of time. Open-ended questions will stimulate conversation. The value of the conference comes in the ability to solicit information or opinions not available through other sources. Students should avoid factual questions that can be researched online or in the library.

The camera should be positioned so that the group of students can be seen, but it is recommended to have the camera zoom in on individuals when they are speaking. A distant shot of a large class reduces the amount of facial expression that can be seen and is less interesting than shots that show interest and engagement. Any visuals that will be used should incorporate colors that are camera friendly (like blue). They also should be in a horizontal (landscape format) to be compatible with a TV screen.

It is a good idea to get students comfortable with the equipment so that they can concentrate on the purpose and content of the conference. Students should understand what their roles will be and should be located so that time is not wasted moving to be near a microphone. Students can serve as hosts and do introductions. The more they participate and feel ownership of the conference, the more they will benefit. Conferences dominated by adults are less interesting for students.

Requirements for participants include:
- Monitors;
- Cameras;
- High Speed Connections;
- Tech support.

Processing and Reflection

What happens after a conference or visit can be as important as what happens during a conference. Scheduling pressures often leave little time for reflection and processing the learning that has occurred. It is important to discuss the event as soon as possible after it occurs to clarify information. Students should engage in follow-up activities that utilize the information that they gained. Possible guiding questions are:

- What did you like about it?
- Did you find anything you would like to learn more about?
- What did you learn?
- Did the experience raise new questions?

After the event, students should thank their conferencing partner as well as all of those involved in making the arrangements such as technical support staff or administrators.

A videoconference with a school in another country is a newsworthy event in most communities. It's a wonderful opportunity for a newsletter article or some press coverage. Too often, the community may be unaware of the wonderful learning experiences that students have. Publicity can help build community support for a program.

Security

No matter what avenue is chosen for communication, student security and safety need to be priorities. Teachers need to check on school policies. For students to be included in a video or Web conference they must have a photo release. Many schools now require parental approval on acceptable-use policies and photo releases at the beginning of the school year. If students don't have a release, they need to be seated so that they will not be on camera. Keeping parents informed about the purpose and scope of projects can help them understand the benefits to students and assure them of their children's safety. Teachers might want to get permission from everyone involved to record a conference session so that it can be played back for further discussion.

School district technology personnel have the responsibility for keeping both the students and the computer network safe. Policies sometimes restrict a teacher's ability to download applications, purchase equipment or use certain types of software. Teachers who have strong plans that demonstrate the benefits of a project to their students can make the case for an exception to a policy. Depending on the school context, the request may require the support of an administrator. Successful projects can help make the case for a policy change that benefits students.

Conclusion

Students in today's classrooms will be working with colleagues throughout the world during their careers. One of the best ways to prepare them is to give them opportunities to learn with students around the world during their K-12 experiences. Personal connections can invigorate curriculum and give students new insights into the content and skills they are learning.

University Programs That May Assist in Locating Partner Schools

University Contact	Country Partnerships
Center for African Studies Yamada International House Ohio University Athens, OH 45701 Phone: (740) 593-1834 Fax: (740) 593-1837 african.studies@ohio.edu	**African countries**
Center for Middle East Studies Melinda Wightman, Assistant Director Middle East Studies Center Office of International Affairs 321a Oxley Hall, 1712 Neil Ave. Columbus, OH 43210-1219 Phone: (614) 292-5897 Fax: (614) 292-4273 http://mesc.osu.edu/	**Egypt and Turkey**
Center for Slavic and East European Studies Lance Erickson , Assistant Director 303 Oxley Hall, 1712 Neil Ave. Columbus, OH 43210-1219 Phone: (614) 292-8770 Fax: (614) 292-4273 lerickson@oia.osu.edu	**Eastern European countries**
Center for International and Intercultural Education Dr. Linda Robertson, Director 215 White Hall Kent State University Kent, OH 44242 Phone: (330) 672-0563 Fax: (330) 672-2879 lfrobert@kent.edu	**China, Taiwan and Turkey**
International Democratic Education Institute 529 Education Building Bowling Green State University Bowling Green, OH 43403 Phone: (419) 372-7325 Fax: (419) 372-3998 www.bgsu.edu/idei	**Morocco, Poland, South Africa and Ukraine**

Resources

*The inclusion of a specific resource should not be interpreted as an endorsement of that particular resource, or any of its contents, by the Ohio Department of Education. The Ohio Department of Education **does not** endorse any particular resource. The Web addresses listed are for a given site's main page, therefore, it may be necessary to search within that site to find the specific information required. Please note that information published on the Internet changes over time, therefore the links provided may no longer contain the specific information related to a given lesson. Teachers are advised to preview all sites before using them with students.*

Center for Interactive Learning and Collaboration (CILC)

The mission of the CILC is to support and advance learning through videoconferencing and other collaborative technologies. A fee-for-service nonprofit, CILC offers access to quality professional development and student educational content (interactive videoconferencing programs).

http://www.cilc.org/

ePALS Classroom Exchange

ePals is an entirely Web-based, match service designed for school district and classroom use. ePals links classrooms across the world to promote cross-cultural collaborations and allows students to e-mail, blog and interact with their peers worldwide. The tools include ePALS SchoolMail™ and SafeBrowser™ as well as built-in language translation designed for schools.

http://www.epals.com

eTech Ohio

eTech is the state agency dedicated to enhancing instruction through educational technology. Use the room directory to access information about videoconferencing sites.

http://www.etech.ohio.gov/videoconferencing-services

Global Education Motivators (GEM)

GEM is a non-governmental-organization (NGO), in association with the United Nations Department of Public Information, to help schools emphasize human rights and human responsibility. GEM offers packaged videoconferencing programs and customized programs to meet the individual classroom situation.

http://www.gem-ngo.org/

Global Connections and Exchange Programs

This site is an online resource from the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the U.S. Department of State. It includes links to classrooms worldwide through a range of programs. The Youth Programs Division is committed to establishing long-lasting ties between the U.S. and other countries through exchange programs and institutional partnerships. Programs focus primarily on secondary schools and promote mutual understanding, leadership development, educational transformation and democratic ideals.

http://www.exchanges.state.gov/education/citizens/students/worldwide/connections.htm

Global Gateway

A database for schools and community colleges looking for partner schools anywhere on the planet to develop international education projects. It is managed by the British Council, but it is open to all schools.

http://www.globalgateway.org.uk/

Global Nomads

Global Nomads Group (GNG) is an international NGO that creates interactive educational programs for students about global issues. GNG's educational programs (annual fee) include videoconferences where students learn about and discuss subjects with their peers from around the world in live, facilitated sessions and videos and learning content on a variety of international issues.

http://www.gng.org/home.html

Global School Net

Global School Net has a registry of collaborative projects organized by topic, grade and project date.

http://www.globalschoolnet.org/

International Education and Resource Network (iEARN)

iEARN is a non-profit organization made up of schools and youth organizations in more than 125 countries. There are more than 150 projects in iEARN. Teachers and students enter online forum spaces to meet one another and get involved in ongoing projects with classrooms around the world who are working on the same project. There is a membership fee for U.S. schools.

www.iearn.org

International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE)

ISTE is a membership organization for educators interested in the use of technology in the classroom.

http://www.iste.org/

International Studies in Schools (ISIS)

ISIS offers K-12 educators a diverse range of international studies programming opportunities. Programs are available free-of-charge to K-12 teachers in Indiana or any states whose schools have access to interactive audiovisual technology. ISIS presenters include Indiana University international students, both graduate and undergraduate, visiting scholars, academic specialists, and world area study centers' outreach staff. Each is selected for his or her special expertise regarding a requested program topic.

www.indiana.edu

National Council for International Visitors

The National Council for International Visitors (NCIV) is a national network of program agencies and more than 91 community-based organizations. These nonprofit groups design and implement professional programs as well as provide cultural activities and home hospitality opportunities for foreign leaders, specialists and international scholars. Member organizations in Ohio are:

Akron International Friendship . . . . http://www.acorn.net/aif/

Cleveland Council on World Affairs . . . . http://www.ccwa.org/

International Visitors Council of
    Greater Cincinnati . . . . http://www.ivccinti.org/

International Visitors Council, Inc.,
    Columbus . . . . http://www.columbusivc.org/

Ohio Distance Learning (OhioDL)

OhioDL's mission is to promote and foster the formation of partnerships among schools and affiliates to further the effective use of distance learning. The purpose of the Web site is to share information regarding video distance learning in Ohio by linking users to exemplary resources and providing them with a forum for discussing current issues relating to video distance learning.

http://www.ohiodl.org/

TakingITGlobal

An online community provides space for youth expression, connection to opportunities, a platform for youth voice and support for action. The site has featured themes that are updated on a regular basis. Through the site, young people can connect directly with their peers from more than 200 countries, read their profiles and debate common concerns through active discussion boards, instant messengers and personal blogs.

http://about.takingitglobal.org/

ThinkQuest

Think Quest is an international student competition, sponsored by the Oracle Education Foundation. Teams of students and teachers are challenged to create Web sites on educational topics and compete for exciting prizes. The completed Web sites are published in the ThinkQuest Library.

http://www.thinkquest.org/

Two Way Interactive Connections in Education (TWICE)

TWICE is Michigan's organization for videoconferencing in K-12 education. TWICE promotes and supports collaborative connections for the benefit of all students by using two way interactive video.

www.twice.cc

The World Clock Meeting Planner

The World Clock Meeting Planner helps you find a convenient time call to someone far away. It also can help arrange a videoconference, telephone or net-based meeting with several people around the globe, so that no one has to be up during the middle of the night. You can show the timetables for up to six different cities for any given date.

http://www.timeanddate.com/worldclock/meeting.html

Ohio | Department of Education

Ted Strickland, Governor

Deborah S. Delisle,
Superintendent of Public Instruction

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