



# Focus on International Schools

Advertisement

## Corporate investment in the future of our schools

There are no longer blanks on the world map. Old atlases with areas of pink indicating uncharted land have been replaced by satellite pictures that have literally opened the eyes of the world. Only, what we now see in the form of daily news reports on climate change, religious and cultural intolerance, the spread of poverty and the impact of rapid social change causes us to respond with a mixture of bewilderment, misunderstanding, confusion and, often, a growing sense of injustice. The task of educating the next generation has always been pressing, but perhaps now more than ever.

There have been a plethora of articles recently in the world's press, outlining the future needs of companies in this 'brave' new world, as well as the need for schools to begin to redefine teaching and learning accordingly. The task of education today, it is argued, is to equip young people with a world-view by which they can succeed, thrive and, above all, make good choices in the new global economy.

Multi-national companies, which have long appreciated the value of international schools to recruit and relocate employees around the world, are now seeing these institutions as leading the way in redefining the formative learning experience of their future workforce. Many international schools have therefore gone beyond simply serving global-mobile families, to engaging them in meaningful partnerships that begin to transform what is going on inside the classroom.

As John Valeri, Vice President of Human Resources Department at UPS, remarks:

'Organizations are eager to have employees with a set of traits that enables them to succeed in complex business environments that have become the norm in the new world order. International Schools' programs provide students the impetus to open their minds to a greater set of diverse possibilities and opportunities. Students who are exposed early on to values and ideas from other cultures develop a strong sense of concern and adaptability to a host of environmental conditions that they take with them into their careers. These educational experiences equip students to better

understand global conditions and how situations across geographies and different cultures can vary. Great competencies in any walk of life, these traits are very conducive for success in business - enabling individuals who possess them to thrive once they enter the work world.'

Of course, the costs of providing a world-class international educational experience are high. Increasingly, however, many companies are seeing the direct benefits of investing both intellectual and financial resources. Take, for example, the experience of Atlanta International School. Several leading organizations, such as The Coca-Cola Company, Kimberly-Clark, Bain and Co., Porsche North America, and UPS, have operations in Atlanta, Georgia and have developed strong ties with the school. Initially, they saw the school simply as a benefit to some of their employees, who needed a place for their children to go to school while they were assigned to the city. After observing the learning environment, with its emphasis upon developing tolerance, risk-taking, a broader perspective of social reality and language acquisition within a milieu of teachers and students from a myriad of countries, these businesses saw greater potential. And so new partnerships were born.

It is our belief that corporate partnerships are and will continue to be integral to the success of international schools. The nature of the partnerships may take many different forms and is not just about the 'dollars' that companies might contribute. It is much more to do with a relationship in which together, for the sake of our children, we can begin to make sense out of a complex set of economic and educational realities.

**Robert Brindley**  
Headmaster, Atlanta International School

**David Willows**  
Director of External Relations, International School of Brussels



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**"IF I COME LATE TO CLASS  
I WANT TO FEEL LIKE**

**I'M INTERRUPTING  
SOMETHING IMPORTANT."**

(ISB High School Student)

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