



# NICE

NEWTOWN INTERNATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION

## Connections of Purpose and Rationale

Through our program framework, we see that the learning experiences and support that NICE provides not only aligns with our district's beliefs and values, but joins with national goals of the United States Department of Education in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

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### **The Purpose of NICE**

To prepare students and teachers to be culturally and globally literate citizens, enhancing student engagement and learning through: dimensions of academic learning opportunities and real-world experiences; through culture; and through global issues.

### **Rationale:**

1. Schools teach literacy, but two important dimensions of literacy pertinent to future success are DIGITAL LITERACY and GLOBAL LITERACY. NICE works to promote and enhance these further learning opportunities.
2. Global learning stretches into learning through: History, World Languages; Current Events; Literature; Science; Mathematics; The Visual Arts; The Performing Arts; and Physical Education – All facets of education and co-curricular activities.
3. With a global dimension to their education, learners have a chance to engage with complex global issues and explore the links between their own lives and people, places and issues throughout the world.
4. Teachers that develop global dimensions in their teaching develop skills in students to:
  - a. critically examine their own values and attitudes.
  - b. appreciate the similarities between people everywhere, and learn to value diversity.
  - c. understand the global context of their local lives.
  - d. develop skills that will enable them to combat injustice, prejudice and discrimination.
  - e. develop as contributing members of a global society

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### ***Newtown Public Schools Strategic Plan*** **2012 MISSION**

The mission of the Newtown Public Schools, a partnership of students, families, educators and community, is to INSPIRE EACH STUDENT TO EXCEL in attaining and applying the knowledge, skills and attributes that lead to personal success while becoming a contributing member of a dynamic global community.

We accomplish this by creating an unparalleled learning environment characterized by:

- \*High expectations
- \*Quality instruction
- \*Continuous improvement
- \*Civic responsibility

**In connection with the NICE *Purpose and Rationale*, district beliefs, and national priorities, we believe that our efforts support students to be:**

**INQUIRERS** as they develop their natural curiosity. They acquire the skills necessary to conduct inquiry and research and show independence in learning. They actively enjoy learning and this love of learning will be sustained throughout their lives.

**KNOWLEDGEABLE** as they explore concepts, ideas and issues that have local and global significance. In so doing, they acquire in-depth knowledge and develop understanding across a broad and balanced range of disciplines.

**THINKERS** as they exercise initiative in applying thinking skills critically and creatively to recognize and approach complex problems, and make reasoned, ethical decisions.

**COMMUNICATORS** as they understand and express ideas and information confidently and creatively in more than one language and in a variety of modes of communication. They work effectively and willingly in collaboration with others.

**PRINCIPLED** as they act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness, justice and respect for the dignity of the individual, groups and communities. They take responsibility for their own actions and the consequences that accompany them.

**OPEN-MINDED** as they understand and appreciate their own cultures and personal histories, and are open to the perspectives, values and traditions of other individuals and communities. They are accustomed to seeking and evaluating a range of points of view, and are willing to grow from the experience.

**CARING** as they show empathy, compassion and respect towards the needs and feelings of others. They have a personal commitment to service, and act to make a positive difference to the lives of others and the environment.

**RISK-TAKERS** as they approach unfamiliar situations and uncertainty with courage and forethought, and have the independence of spirit to explore new roles, ideas and strategies. They are brave and articulate in defending their beliefs.

**BALANCED** as they understand the importance of intellectual, physical and emotional balance to achieve personal well-being for themselves and others.

**REFLECTIVE** as they give thoughtful consideration to their own learning and experience. They are able to assess and understand their strengths and limitations in order to support their learning and personal development.