



**Global
Connect**
CHRISTIAN SCHOOLS

Guidelines for
**Effective
School
Partnerships**



Introduction

Christian Schools Global Connect exists to further Christian Education globally in a range of ways including school partnerships. While Global Connect does not operate a formal school partnership program, we encourage these relationships and offer some guidelines for schools to consider as they consider a partnership arrangement.

We are delighted that students and teachers in Christian schools worldwide have expressed a desire to be more closely linked with one another to provide greater cultural understanding, opportunities for service, and to share the Gospel. School partnerships can also lead to the achievement of educational outcomes, such as:

- » Students gain a critical appreciation of languages and cultures of other peoples, dispelling prejudice, promoting intercultural harmony, and encouraging Biblical hospitality for the 'stranger'
- » Students personally respond to carrying out the Great Commission locally and around the world in a culturally sensitive manner
- » Students understand the worth of every human being as created in the image of God
- » Students learn to know, understand, and apply God's Word in daily life
- » Students understand, value, and engage in appropriate service-learning activities
- » Students embrace and practice justice, mercy, and peacemaking in family and society. A school partnership is intended to develop into a deep and genuine relationship that is mutually beneficial to the growth and ministry of each school.

Global Connect offers the following 5 guidelines to schools considering such a relationship between two Christian schools.



GUIDELINE 1

There should be agreement between the schools about the purposes of the partnership



GUIDELINE 2

Identify the desired outcomes and benefits for both schools



GUIDELINE 3

Establish a timeline including a clear duration of the intended partnership



GUIDELINE 4

Develop broad 'ownership' of the partnership



GUIDELINE 5

Carefully consider your commitments and communicate them clearly



There should be agreement between the schools about the purposes of the partnership

The purpose of the partnership should be in line with the mission, vision and values of both schools. Possible purposes for a school partnership might include:

- » To promote understanding and an appreciation for the people and the educational programs of other regions or countries who have a differing socio-economic standing, culture, or language.
- » To foster a sense of Christian unity on a global scale, upholding one another in prayer and service.
- » To provide opportunities for sharing material and human resources with each other.



Identify the desired outcomes and benefits for both schools

Possible benefits might include:

- » Opportunities for each school to contribute to each other's mission objectives and service learning goals
- » Specific, lasting and meaningful prayer support and mutual encouragement in the faith
- » Students and teachers are stimulated to have a lifelong interest in missions and overseas service
- » Students gain empathy, compassion and an increased understanding of other cultures through the sharing of photos, stories and videos between schools
- » Opportunities for student-to-student and teacher-to-teacher communications that provide a cross-cultural or international dimension into the classroom and the school
- » Opportunities for administrators and teachers to contribute significantly to the professional and spiritual growth of teachers in the partner school as well as to their own growth as Christian professionals
- » An open channel of communication that provides information on best practice in curriculum development, educational methodology and technology
- » Opportunities for student or teacher exchanges between the schools
- » Opportunities to design and deliver professional development in-service programs
- » Opportunities to design and implement collaborative project-based learning activities with one another to enrich the educational experience of students from both schools
- » Potentially provide financial assistance when appropriate, whether as a one-time gift or as a regular commitment.



Establish a timeline including a clear duration of the intended partnership

School partnerships are designed to promote a mutually beneficial, nurturing relationship between two schools in different communities. It is valuable to have an end date identified from the beginning of the relationship, or at least some clarity that the relationship will be reconsidered at a certain time, perhaps in one or two years.

By establishing the partnership's duration there are no hard feelings if interest wanes or priorities change. This is not to be viewed as an unbreakable covenant between the schools; otherwise a lessening of involvement might be viewed as a breach of trust. A lack of clarity around partnership duration can lead to false hopes and even a sense of betrayal.



Develop broad 'ownership' of the partnership

School partnerships are most fruitful when they are not dependent solely on one contact from each school, although a coordinator is recommended. If only one person is the driving force in a partnership, it has less likelihood of being sustained. Be creative in engaging your entire school community in your cross-cultural partnership.



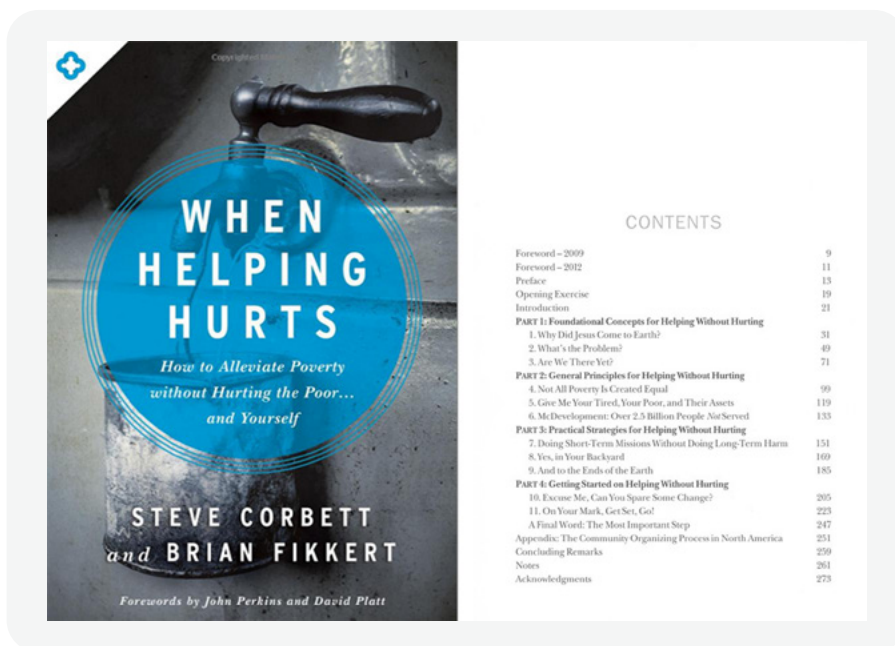


Carefully consider your commitments and communicate them clearly

For example, are both schools willing to:

- » Participate in an administrator exchange?
- » Participate in or potentially fund development projects to assist the school in greatest need?
- » Commit to the partnership for a minimum of one or two years?
- » Establish a plan with the partner school for further activities in the partnership? This plan could include an annual visit by teacher(s) and/or students, sharing resources and pen pal relationships. This would ensure a continuing relationship that has significant benefit for both members in the partnership.
- » Christian Schools Global Connect is able to assist schools seeking to initiate a partnership on a case by case basis, however we encourage schools to utilise their organic connections when determining with whom to form a partnership. Often the links emerge from contacts through school families, events and directories, or church missions' committees. The Global Connect team are happy to assist when possible in identifying potential partners although we leave the communication of the partnership to the initiating school.
- » We encourage all schools to consider how they might utilise the strategy of school partnerships to accomplish their desired student outcomes.

USEFUL RESOURCES



The book, "When Helping Hurts" by Steve Corbett and Brian Fikkert is a great resource that provides a biblically-based framework outlining the root causes of poverty and its alleviation, with the aim of equipping churches and Christian organisations to effectively help the poor.

[click here to purchase](#)

