

Citizenship Competencies in Colombia: Learning from Policy and Practice

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This article provides an in-depth look at Colombia's national policy on national citizenship competencies designed to foster the peaceful resolution of conflict, promote the understanding of differences, and involve young people in mutual decision making and democratic engagement in schools. It also provides a brief overview of similar efforts in the United States in social and emotional learning and the development of civic engagement and compares and contrasts these efforts. Finally, it offers suggestions for school systems that wish to engage in similar processes to ensure the future of democracy and peaceful coexistence using education as the vehicle of change.

A school in La Guajira, Colombia, with a population of wayuu children and non-wayuu children, located outside the indigenous community, realized it had privileged the "occidental" culture. The wayuu children seemed ashamed of their origins and participated little. The school underwent a process of systematic transformation: the curriculum changed to replace teaching French as a second language to teaching the wayuu language (wayuunaiki). The student council body was complemented by a wayuu mediation council (*putchipus* are the mediators of the wayuu culture). Festivals to celebrate the wayuu culture were put in place where the non-wayuu children would dress as wayuu. The significant experience of the recognition of diversity was one of the two experiences of La Guajira to represent the region at the National Forum on Citizenship Competencies in Bogotá, Colombia.

*Regional Forum of La Guajira,
Colombia, 2004.*



In 2003, Colombian educators and policymakers took a courageous step. They developed standards and assessments in citizenship competencies to guide educators in implementing programs and practices that would develop critical life skills in their children and youth. These standards were designed to provide young people with the opportunity to learn how to make decisions, respect differences, express emotions, resolve conflict, and participate in social action to better their schools and communities. This growing awareness of the influence of education in the development of responsible, active, and peaceful citizens is, in fact, part of a cultural revolution in favor of peace in Colombia. Colombia views this educational movement as a very strong step in ongoing efforts to reduce violence and build cultural norms that promote peaceful coexistence.

In the fall of 2004 in Bogotá, Colombia organized a national forum that was designed to promote and learn from the successes and challenges that educators were experiencing on implementing the recent national policy on citizenship competencies. In addition to math, language, science, and social studies policy, acquisition of the social, emotional, and civic engagement skills of young people was placed on par with academic achievement.

This article explores Colombia's education-based preventive approach to violence and to the development of civic engagement in Colombian youth, referred to as citizenship competencies. It provides insight into how national education policy is positively affecting effective implementation and discusses the successes and challenges that Colombia is encountering in this process. It then shares a brief account of similar efforts in the United States. Finally, it provides suggestions for other school systems that are dedicated to institutionalizing the social, emotional, and civic development of young people into the heart of their schools.

The Colombian Context: Particular Issues

Colombia, the fourth-largest nation in Latin America, has maintained a democratic government for many years. Economic growth has also been steady, and artistic achievement has been notable (Bushnell, 1993).

However, Colombia has been known for its high rate of violence: 13,259 homicides were registered in 2005 (although this statistic represents a decrease from 15,685 in 2004) (Vice Presidencia de la República, 2005). The context and the sources of this violence are complex. Although it can be traced to sociopolitical events not linked to illegal drug traffick-

ing, in recent years, violence has been linked to years of confrontation between groups that have vied for power, control of illegal drug trafficking, and control of land.

The multiple dimensions and faces of Colombian violence have led researchers and practitioners, as well as social activists, to reflect on the educational component of this violence. The educational system of Colombia, once primarily an autocratic, government-run system, now encourages its public and private schools and universities to be autonomous. Colombia's national policy is based on the premise that schools should have the internal capacity to develop and evaluate their own curriculum and teaching practices. Because the government recognizes that the needs of each Colombian community are different, it believes that each region needs to determine its own educational approaches. To guide communities with their educational initiatives, the Ministry of Education has established national standards for educational quality in competency development in five critical areas: mathematics, language, social studies, social sciences, and citizenship competencies.

Central to the dissemination and systematization of the Ministry of Education's standards for curriculum and content is the fostering of creative initiatives across subject areas. Due to this democratic approach, accountability measures are essential. Schools are responsible for demonstrating accountability in the standard areas for what they are teaching and how they are teaching it.

Origin and Framework of Citizenship Competencies

The citizenship competencies standards were formulated by a group of experts from various regions of Colombia, including researchers, school teachers, nongovernmental organization leaders, and policymakers. After many months of reflecting, writing, coming to collective consensus, and revising, the standards were published in 2003. These standards are defined as public criteria of the minimums each student must develop in all Colombian schools. They apply to educational communities, administrators, teachers, and parents in a total of 30,442 educational establishments in the country (Ministerio de Educación, 2004).

The notion of *competency* implies a shift from merely transmitting knowledge in schools to an educational approach that favors the development of applicable knowledge articulated with the necessary abilities and attitudes

that allow students to face new problems in daily life flexibly. That is, not only to know, but to know how to do and to be. *Citizenship competencies* are understood as the articulated combination of basic knowledge, along with cognitive, emotional, communicative, and integrative competencies that allow a citizen to act constructively in a democratic society (Ministerio de Educación de Colombia, 2004; Ruiz-Silva and Chauv, 2005).

The conceptual framework of the standards included outreach to both public and private spheres that influence human interaction in all spaces, across disciplines. The theoretical underpinnings are intended to foster a comprehensive, holistic school approach that moves away from a traditional approach to civic education and toward citizenship education.

Although Tibbitts and Torney-Purta (1999, p. 3) do not distinguish between civic education and citizenship education, stating they are “used interchangeably to refer to the teaching of specific knowledge, skills, and/or values deemed necessary for life in society,” other authors have clearly differentiated them. *Civic education* focuses on knowledge transmission regarding a country’s system of government, history, and other subjects. *Citizenship education* goes beyond this informational aim to enhance understanding and participation. It develops skills and dispositions through a more interactive learning process (Kerr, 1999). The evolution of “civic education” to “citizenship education” represents a “shift in paradigm” stemming from the notion of competency (Cox, Jaramillo, and Reimers, 2005, p. 17).

The Colombian citizenship competencies standards certainly embody this conceptual evolution. They are organized by developmental level within three areas defined as dimensions: living together (*convivencia*) and peace; participation and democratic responsibility; and plurality, identity, and value of differences.

These dimensions are based on a fourth, transversal dimension that is present throughout the standards: respect and defense of human rights.

The three dimensions are further refined by types of competencies, appropriate developmental level for one or more types of citizenship competencies, and more specific standards that provide details of the general standards. An example of each dimension area with sample citizenship competencies and developmental levels are listed in Table 1.

The standards identify several types of citizenship competencies: emotional, cognitive, communicative, integrative, and knowledge-based. Explanations of these types, with examples of how they interrelate within dimensions, follow.

Table 1. Examples of Colombian Citizenship Competencies Standards

<i>Dimension</i>	<i>Grade-Level Example</i>
<p>Convivencia (living together) and peace: These standards refer to the competencies needed to build peace and coexist with others, as well as with nature.</p>	<p>Fourth to fifth grade: The general standard is: <i>I address, in a peaceful and constructive manner, the daily conflicts in my school and family life and contribute to the protection of children's rights.</i></p>
<p>Participation and democratic responsibility: These standards refer to the competencies needed to understand and participate actively in democratic contexts, within the parameters of social pacts (for example, class agreements, national laws).</p>	<p>First to third grade: The general standard is: <i>I participate, in my immediate context (with my family and classmates), in the construction of basic agreements about norms for the achievement of mutual goals and I follow them.</i></p>
<p>Pluralism, identity, and appreciation of diversity: These standards refer to the competencies needed to understand and value diversity as an opportunity to avoid discrimination and prejudice.</p>	<p>Tenth to eleventh grade: The general standard is: <i>I expressly reject all forms of discrimination or social exclusion and make use of democratic mechanisms to overcome discrimination and demonstrate respect for diversity.</i></p>

Source: Adapted from Ministerio de Educación de Colombia (2003, pp. 16–25).

Emotional Competencies

These are the necessary knowledge, attitudes, and skills to identify emotions and respond constructively to them. In the fourth and fifth grades, within the Convivencia dimension, students would strive to achieve the following attitude: *I use mechanisms to manage my anger (such as ideas to calm myself, breathing deeply, distancing myself from the situation, counting to ten, and more).*

Cognitive Competencies

These include the necessary knowledge, attitudes, and skills to carry out mental processes that are important to citizenship, such as critical analysis and perspective-taking. For example, eighth and ninth graders striving to meet the Participation and Democratic responsibility standard might focus on this thought: *I critically analyze the information provided by the media.*

Communicative Competencies

These are the necessary knowledge, attitudes, and skills to establish constructive dialogue, such as active listening and assertiveness. For example,

students in the eighth and ninth grades within the Pluralism, Identity, and Appreciation of Differences dimensions would strive to master this concept: *I argue and debate dilemmas related to exclusion and recognize the best arguments, even if they don't coincide with my own.*

Integrative Competencies

These competencies articulate the other competencies in action. For example, students in the sixth and seventh grades within the Convivencia and Peace dimensions would strive to master this concept: *I promote respect for life, facing risks such as ignoring traffic lights, carrying guns, driving at high speeds or under the influence of alcohol; I know which measures to take to act responsibly in the event of an accident.*

Knowledge

Knowledge is the basic information students must know and understand as citizens, such as the organization of the state, or national and international laws. For example, students in the ninth and eleventh grades within the Participation and Responsibility dimension would strive to master this concept: *I understand that when corrupt actions are undertaken and public goods are used for personal benefit, all members of society are affected.*

Implementation Plan: Successes and Challenges

There were many concerns that needed to be addressed when the Ministry of Education began thinking about how to implement citizenship competencies. Primary concerns were how to reach all teachers and schools and encourage them to make the project their own, how to foster and monitor the quality of teaching and the school environment, and how to involve other actors to support this work. These goals are being addressed through multiple strategies and tools.

Implementation Successes

Here are a few of the achievements in the past three years:

Initial Awareness-Building with the Educational Community. In 2004, the ministry carried out three-day training workshops with approximately one hundred twenty educators from each Department in Colombia. These

workshops were to be multiplied in each region by the departmental secretaries of education. An awareness campaign was also aired on national television.

Recognition and Support of Significant Experiences. The Regional and National Forums recognized and allowed the exchange of significant experiences, many of which were grassroots initiatives. Financial and technical support for these initiatives via the multi-organization partnership of the Educational Alliance for the Construction of a Culture of Peace is also in place. The production of documentaries of significant initiatives to be aired on national television is also underway.

Initial Training and Pilot Studies. A wide variety of training in structured programs and teaching methodologies, as well as pilot studies, is being carried out by multiple organizations in the country. (For a listing of the programs the Ministry of Education has identified, see the Citizenship Competencies Portfolio of Programs at <http://www.colombiaaprende.edu.co>.) The ministry has also led multiple initiatives, among them a pilot to compare program results, a human rights education pilot, and an online in-depth training on teaching for understanding (Stone Wiske, 1997). In 2006, efforts were begun to train and support the secretaries of education.

Initial Resource Publication. Several publications have been made available in print and online at <http://www.colombiaaprende.edu.co>. One example is a book on how to achieve the standards in the classroom (Chaux, Lleras, and Velasquez, 2005); in addition, significant experiences were recounted by journalists (Ministerio de Educación Nacional and Fundación Empresarios por la Educación, 2004).

Incorporation of Other Sectors. The ministry has worked to establish partnerships and cross-fertilization with universities, nongovernmental organizations, international organizations, the media, and the business sector. Many of the initiatives mentioned were carried out as a result of this collaboration.

Implementation Challenges

There have also been challenges deriving from the following conditions.

The Cultural Context. Many educators believe in violence and authoritarian methods of teaching and resolving conflicts. Teaching citizenship competencies overtly may be perceived as dangerous by teachers in areas where illegal armed groups operate.

Not Enough Previous Training. The standards were published before much of the necessary training was in place. Thus, there was a large gap between the goal and current practice and means. The government of Northern Ireland, for instance, published the standards only after all of the nation's teachers had been trained to develop them.

Changes in Policy. Education policy in Colombia changes frequently, with little record or continuity between previous initiatives and current ones. Teachers, as well as others, frequently perceive new initiatives as temporary.

School Accountability. One difficulty with school curricular autonomy is how to monitor and ensure that the curriculum is of high quality and that it meets national standards. One of the ministry's ways of addressing this challenge is through national evaluations.

The Tests: Assessments of Citizenship

Too often, what gets tested gets taught. Conscious of this inevitability, the ministry decided to implement a full range of assessments to monitor the progress of developing citizenship competencies in children. Approximately every two years, fifth- and ninth-grade progress is monitored at the end of the elementary and basic school cycle. The first test of citizenship competencies—SABER test, 2003—was applied before the citizenship competencies standards were published. The ninety-minute test was completed by a national total of just over one million students (about 60 percent of whom were fifth-graders and 40 percent were ninth-graders), in more than 90 percent of Colombian municipalities. (In some areas, the application of the test was boycotted by the teacher union to protest evaluations of teachers, students, and schools.) The second test—SABER test, 2005—was applied approximately one year and a half to two years after the standards were published, depending on the regional calendar in use.

The initial evaluation in 2003 served three main purposes:

- To provide a baseline or “pretest” regarding the level of national achievement of citizenship competencies in all of the schools in the country. This baseline would ideally help monitor the effectiveness of this new policy.
- To act as an educational planning tool that would help each school, municipality, and region identify strengths and weaknesses.

- To provide an incentive for schools to prioritize citizenship competencies development, as they would math or language development.

The test was structured to evaluate six main areas: actions, attitudes, knowledge, context, cognitive competencies, and emotional competencies.¹ The first four areas included questions pertaining to each of the three groups of citizenship competencies standards and human rights. The initial 2003 test was not designed to evaluate all of the standards, as some of the citizenship competencies were difficult to evaluate with a paper-and-pencil test. Communicative competencies were not evaluated, and only a portion of cognitive competencies were measured (Chaux, 2005).

Citizenship Competencies Test Content

The following areas were measured by the 2003 Saber test (the 2005 test was structured somewhat differently, which posed several challenges for result comparisons; 2005 test results are available at www.mineducacion.gov.co/saber/). The 2003 test consists of 98 questions for fifth-graders and 103 questions for ninth-graders), using “closed” questions of different types (yes-no, multiple choice, and Likert scale for grade nine). (Complete tests and correct responses are available in Spanish at http://www.icfes.gov.co/cont4/saber/nov_2003.htm.)

Actions (*twenty-four items*). These items measure the behavior of students and suggest citizenship competencies development level.

Attitudes (*twenty items*). The students’ approach toward citizenship-relevant notions.

Knowledge (*twenty items in fifth grade, twenty-five in ninth grade*). Student’s knowledge of citizenship-related topics.

Democratic Environments (*fourteen items*). The perceptions of students regarding how inclusive, democratic, and peaceful their community, school, and family contexts are.

Cognitive Competencies. Interpretation of intentions (two items): in ambiguous situations, a student’s ability to refrain from attributing a hostile intention to another’s actions. Coordination of perspectives (three items): student’s level of perspective-taking regarding varied perspectives of different people about the same situation.

Emotional Competencies. Emotional regulation (five items): student's perceptions of their ability to regulate their own emotions. Also measured is empathy (ten items): sharing another's emotion or other moral feelings, such as guilt.

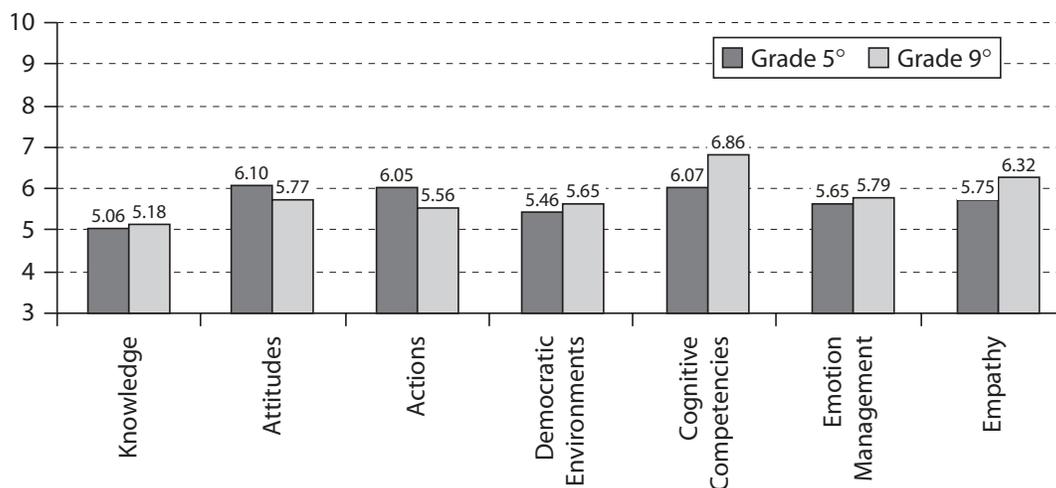
Initial Findings

The means of the 2003 test areas oscillate between 5.06 and 6.10 for fifth-graders and 5.18 and 6.86 for ninth-graders (scale of 0 to 10), as shown in Figure 1. Citizenship-related knowledge is the weakest area for both grades. Attitudes to citizenship-related issues were the highest national average for fifth-graders and cognitive competencies was the highest national average for ninth-graders. (The results by institution for 2003 and 2005 are available at www.mineducacion.gov.co/saber/.)

Because there are no current systematic national data on which schools have implemented citizenship competencies programs, it is not possible to evaluate the national impact of the citizenship competencies program based on the SABER tests. However, pilot tests and comparative analysis of specific programs are currently underway, as are comparative studies of the results of the 2003 and 2005 assessments.

There are, however, some trends worth mentioning. For example, preliminary multiple regression analysis suggests that aggression² was not

Figure 1. 2003 National Citizenship Competencies Means for Fifth- and Ninth-Graders



Source: Adapted from Ministerio de Educación Nacional (2004).

related to poverty; instead, as shown by data drawn from a database compiling several sources (Center for Research on Economic Development, Universidad de los Andes, Colombia), among fifth-graders, it is related to the unequal distribution of educational resources. Although fifth-graders' aggression was not related to any of the indicators of violence in their context, such as homicide rates or the presence of combat, ninth-graders' aggression was related to the frequency of combats between illegal armed groups. In addition, according to Chaux (2005), "aggression was higher in more populated municipalities and lower where results in the science test were better" (p. 9).

Mediation analysis indicated that for fifth-graders, emotional competencies (anger management and empathy) and aggressive attitudes (for example, "the one who does it to me has to pay for it") were significant mediators of the relationship between the municipal context (socioeconomic conditions and level of violence) and the students' aggression. Aggressive attitudes were also found to be significant mediators for ninth-graders (Chaux, 2005). In other words, the development of certain citizenship competencies may diminish student aggression in contexts of violence and unfavorable socioeconomic conditions.

Although these preliminary analyses should be taken with caution, they suggest that these competencies, developed through educational initiatives, could be understood as protective factors for children, in particular those exposed to high levels of violence. Comments Chaux (2005), "This opens the possibility for the educational system to have a significant impact on the prevention of aggression, even in a highly violent context" (p. 14).

Impact of Teaching Citizenship Competencies

The teaching of citizenship competencies may be an important step in breaking the cycle of violence, which may not be sufficiently diminished by a successful political peace process. For instance, El Salvador and Guatemala, despite negotiated ends to their national conflict thirteen and nine years ago, respectively, have some of the highest rates of violence in the world (Chaux, 2005). Even in a post-political-conflict scenario, in Colombia or elsewhere, education holds a key role in transforming aggressive attitudes and practices that have been learned by the population over years of prolonged violence.

A Perspective from the United States

The United States has taken efforts over the past three decades to address the issues of violence and lack of civility of their nation's children. Besieged by multitudes of inequities ranging from poverty to racial and gender discrimination, violence in the form of drug and alcohol abuse, sexual offenses, and child abuse and neglect, programming and government funding provide resources for schools to address children's issues. However, despite the multitude of efforts to educate the nation's children, only Band-Aid approaches are consistently offered to address problems as they arise. Three reasons are offered for this seemingly disparate approach to grounded, needed pedagogy and content. First, although research-based programming efforts emerging from a variety of theoretical and knowledge-based studies that result in comprehensive schoolwide efforts in conflict resolution, bullying prevention, service learning, social and emotional learning, and character education are available to schools, none of these are consistently promoted, funded, or exalted nationally. As education is the purview of each of the states, each state has the right and responsibility to implement its own efforts to create safe and caring schools.

Second, most programmatic efforts are designed to build prosocial skill development in young people so that they are able to manage their emotions, address conflict nonviolently, make healthy decisions, accept and celebrate differences, build positive relationships, and take responsibility for improving their schools and communities. Yet historically, the United States school movements in competency development have been spotty and incomplete at best. For example, following the rash of tragic school shootings in the 1990s, conflict resolution and prevention arose as a much-needed element of the school curriculum. However, measures have come and gone and have not been sustainable. A return to the basics to meet the No Child Left Behind legislation of 2003, for example, has placed the need to improve mathematics and literacy test scores front and center. Pressure to comply has driven caring educators away from prevention programming.

Despite these driving forces, research studies continue to make the case for addressing our attention to prevention efforts in social and emotional learning. Hundreds of young people stay home from school daily for fear of being bullied. As a result, in many states bullying prevention programs have emerged as requirements for schools to focus on creating safe havens for victims of bullying, consequences for school bullies, and skills for

bystanders to be allies to young people who are being victimized. Simultaneously, in an effort to bring values back to education, character education programs continue to emerge in the United States. Initially designed to bring a schoolwide focus on the development of values, many character education programs now also include a more comprehensive approach to prevention.

Of noteworthy mention is a movement to put all these different efforts under one umbrella begun in 1994 by a group of scientists and researchers called CASEL, the Collaborative for Academic Social and Emotional Learning (<http://www.casel.org>). Its mission has been to advance the field of research and practice that supports the inclusion of social and emotional learning (SEL) into everyday school curriculum and life. CASEL has begun to have an impact on state legislation. So far, two states have passed legislation to create standards in SEL: Illinois and New York. Educators and policymakers in Illinois have taken the lead and are currently experimenting with not only how to implement, but also how to sustain such content and pedagogy in schools. A meta-analysis of more than two hundred seventy-three studies supports the hypothesis that social and emotional development improve social and emotional skills, school bonding, prosocial norms, self-perceptions, positive social behaviors, and academic achievement. SEL also reduces behavior problems and substance abuse (Durlak and Weissberg, 2005).

But what about initiatives to advance the understanding of, and participation in, democratic practices among North American youngsters? Colombian initiatives clearly include the development of social action strategies as an integral part of their citizenship competencies. U.S. efforts in this area are best known as service learning efforts. Service learning integrates academic instruction with the ability of a school-age youngster to improve the social conditions of their schools, community, and local government through volunteerism and leadership.

Approximately half of U.S. high schools offer service learning opportunities to young people. Prolonged service learning programs improve academic engagement in school, valuing of school, attachment to school, enjoyment of academic subjects, civic knowledge, and community attachment (Billing, Root, and Jesse, 2005). Young people extend beyond simple civic understanding to involvement in projects that build efficacy and create differences in the lives of others.

Prompted by the decrease in participation in civic and political institutions among Americans, including the voting process, a movement has

emerged in the United States to develop citizenship competencies from kindergarten through grade twelve (Education Commission of the States, 2006). Civic competencies fall into three strands: civic-related knowledge, cognitive participative skills, and core civic dispositions. Much of this work is relatively new but growing quickly. Thus, what Colombia has done with its citizenship competencies, the United States is working to achieve through its efforts in institutionalizing social and emotional learning standards and citizenship competencies standards.

Conclusions and Recommendations for Worldwide School Systems

There is a growing desire on the part of many educational systems around the world to institutionalize social, emotional, and democratic practices into the core of their education policy and practices. In fact, in July 2005, as part of the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict initiative of the United Nations, forty countries came together in New York City to pledge to establish ways to create a more peaceful world through education (see www.disputeresolution.ohio.gov/creworld.htm).

As educators, we continue to learn best practices from one another within the context of our individual histories and challenges. As educators deeply steeped in these practices in our own countries, we offer the following summary as guidelines to be considered by others who are on a similar journey:

- It is possible to integrate social and emotional skill development with cognitive development. In fact, doing so not only enhances healthy life choices, it also prevents aggressive actions and increases academic achievement.
- National policy can be, and is being, implemented that fosters competency development that is critical to youth development. Essential to this process, however, is providing communities the resources and abilities to construct initiatives that are relevant to them.
- All pedagogical changes require teacher development. Nations need to consider the inevitable need to put resources into teacher development if change is to happen at the classroom level.
- To change student behavior, young people need to receive direct instruction in social skills such as expression of emotions,

self-management, social awareness, relationship management, and decision making.

- To be prepared not only to appreciate living in a democracy, but also to know how to participate in and engage in appropriate social action, young people need multiple experiences to invent solutions to pressing problems. An accumulation of such experiences builds self-efficacy and altruistic tendencies, as it provides a sense of purpose and meaning along with reasons to be connected to school.
- Standards and the measuring of the implementation of such standards are inevitable and essential as we implement citizenship competencies. Measurement of student competencies implies that students' social and emotional development are just as important as the subject matter they learn in other curricular areas.
- Explicit teaching about diversity and cooperation among all people must be incorporated throughout P–12 education.
- School climate and culture must be reflective of citizenship competencies. To do so means that the relationships among adults and young people must be thought about and developed.
- School communities need to celebrate successes and promote recognition of positive, prosocial behaviors on the part of young people. Blue ribbons for caring learning communities should be on par with rewards for academic achievement.
- Nongovernmental agencies and civil society offer critical support to these efforts and should be sought out whenever possible to work with P–12 efforts in schools.

In this article, we have shared the Colombian initiatives in citizenship competencies in the hope that other nations may learn from them and seek ways to implement their own efforts. Although this national implementation reform is still in its early stages, there is much we can learn from Colombia, as it continues to bravely move forward in unprecedented waters to secure peace and tranquility through an education process. We have also briefly reviewed similar efforts conducted in the United States, highlighting efforts in SEL and citizenship competencies. Finally, we have offered some recommendations to other nations hoping to move this agenda forward.

Notes

1. The structure and questions of test were the same for the fifth- and ninth-grade versions, except for the knowledge section. A pilot test in two culturally different municipalities and an expert evaluation served to correct conceptual and language issues in the final version. The test was applied by the national institution for tests and evaluations (ICFES), which depends on the Ministry of Education, but in most schools, the test was administered by school staff. According to Chaux (2005), “a preliminary analysis . . . indicated that the extent of cheating was not as high as initially suspected” (p.7).

2. Student aggression levels were calculated by averaging their responses to four questions about aggression frequency among classmates (for example, “During the last week, how many times have you seen a fight with punches, kicks, slaps, or pushes among classmates?”).

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