



**"Greater energy and greater passion is more extraordinary than greater genius."
— Lt. General Arjun Ray, (Retd.), PVSM, VSM**

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Dear Friends,

International Education - From Local to World Citizenship

There are three questions which we must revisit each day,

- What is the purpose of education?
- Are international schools preparing students to be transformational leaders with the vision and determination to deal with the challenges of sustainability and serve humanity?
- Will they be able to live with and celebrate diversity?

I believe that the purpose of education is preparation for life – our life, our planet, our water, our forests, our minerals, and the air we breathe. As future *engaged citizens*, our children must understand and appreciate their local *culture*, i.e., religion, language, and traditions, and the *aspirations of their people*.

Children must eventually become *transformational leaders*, servant-leaders, who are ethical, pro-life, pro-poor, and who believe that means are as important as the ends.

Some vital questions regarding education in international schools:

Do school children have a vision of their life? or even of oneself?

What have schools done to remove poverty and illiteracy in their neighbourhood?

Are children sensitised about the aspirations of the under-privileged?

Do they know enough about their local culture?

Whole-education with its emphasis on the spiritual, emotional and social competencies to deal with an unknown future, emphasis on engaged citizenry and servant leadership will provide answers to these crucial questions.

Globalism and Internationalism

Globalism and internationalism are two distinct approaches to international education. Globalism, a sub-set of internationalism and an economic concept about a free market economy. It structures everything in terms of Economics. By itself, this produces faceless individuals, all of whom wear identical masks of greed and self-promotion.

Humanism is the bedrock of internationalism. International education teaches the first principle of change and transformation. When you change, the world around you changes. The immutable truth is that being a local citizen is a basic prerequisite for becoming a world citizen. Localism, which gives us sensitivity, cultural identity, and a reference point to appreciate other cultures, sensitises us to empathise with what is happening in other countries.

Being a citizen of India first (or whichever country to which one belongs), gives me the power to involve myself in shaping the future of my country.

Living with diversity is an extension of localism. However, the greater challenge today is living with homogeneity, being at war with our own people. Rising intolerance and raging conflicts abound in most countries.

Reconciliation and peaceful coexistence is the need of the times, amidst our heterogeneous cultures, beliefs and values. Only experiential and secular education can help in living with homogeneity.

International schools provide the ideal learning ground to combat this kind of thinking and consider it their mission to provide an assimilative sort of curriculum and social structure. Surely this is the most advantageous foundation for world citizenship.

Transformation is the bottom line in leadership and requires three conditions to be fulfilled: First, transforming others; then, being transformed by others; third, love and compassion to become the key and universal values of our lives. Privileged youth and children must learn to empathise with the underserved. Experiential learning or Servant Leadership, beyond the school campus, is the only way to inculcate values and transform our learners.

Transformational Leadership

Apart from text book knowledge, International education is more experimental in nature. To know about and to be are different. To know about is to be inquisitive; to be is transformational, experiential.

In classrooms we teach learners about sustainability, about leadership, about science, whatever. We must extend these studies into the realm of Experience. To *know about* is to be inquisitive, informative. To *be* is experiential, transformational. Only out of experiences does a school set a moral compass into the minds and hearts of its future youth.

Most of us are a work in progress. To enable children to become transformational leaders, teachers must teach what Google cannot teach: Servant-leadership, mentoring, unlocking the child's potential, creativity, values, relevance, and applications to solve real-life problems, all of which will come through genuine experiential learning, led by teachers in school.

The biggest crisis the world faces is the severe deficit in leadership. Leadership must be taught as a stand-alone subject in schools. Urgently needed is leadership "development," directed towards unlocking one's potential, purpose and meaning, vision, values, and creativity.

It is not enough to be good, one must do good. There has to be a shift from I to We and from Tomorrow to Now.

With warm regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Arjun Ray". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single horizontal line.

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Chief Executive Officer
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