



NICE

NEWTOWN INTERNATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION

As our world becomes more interconnected it is imperative that we offer students the tools and leadership skills to communicate across boundaries of language and culture. The Newtown International Center for Education (NICE), an initiative of the Newtown Public Schools, is leading the way with a forward looking approach to international education and preparedness at the K-12 level. Working from the belief that it is our responsibility to prepare our children for their world, NICE brings learning opportunities and real-world experiences to its students, teachers and the community. The NICE program is recognized by the State of Connecticut and The Connecticut Association of Schools as a model program for aspiring districts in the region. In addition, the NICE program is recognized in the United States as one of the “Top 50 of 100” Chinese cultural programs as a Hanban-Asia Society Confucius Classrooms Program as well as one of two programs selected to partner with Japan Society as a Japan Society Partner Alliance School.

NICE is a K-12 learning program that is unique in three facets: 1) Student Learning and Real World Experience; 2) Professional Development and International Experience for Educators; 3) Community Learning and Citizen Outreach. The strength of the NICE program is built on key partnerships with its sister schools in Europe and Asia, international non-profit alliances such as the Asia Society and Japan Society, academic institutions including Yale University, Boston University and University of Bridgeport, State Departments of Education, community members, and corporations. NICE also has an established parent group, the NICE PCO, committed to supporting the three facets of the NICE Program. It is through the material and financial support of like-minded individuals and organizations like these that make our program possible.

These important connections allow NICE to provide students a distinct advantage presenting them with an endless stream of firsthand connections and real-world learning that goes well beyond what many others are offering in the world of education today. Our younger students have an opportunity to learn about different cultures and languages through workshops and to interact with students in one of our growing number of sister schools. Middle School students may partner with international students to investigate and understand real world problems, working out practical solutions for issues that influence populations across the globe. At the High School level, students have the opportunity to travel to our sister schools overseas, host visiting students, or actively participate in delegation visits. Since the program’s inception over 100 students have traveled abroad on our study tour programs and over 100 families have welcomed international delegates into their homes. Newtown is a pioneer in exposing its students to an unparalleled level of cultural diversity, building understanding of foreign places and their people and discovering mutual interests and ideas.

Over 200 educators have participated in the NICE program through our international and development workshops, hosting dignitaries, traveling overseas to teach and learn in our international sister schools, as well as help to establish international relations and programming. Our NICE team and district educators are dedicated and believe in this program. So much that they volunteer their time as well as pay their own way when they participate in the study tour programs. In addition to our school programs, NICE offers community learning experiences to Newtown residents including educational workshops on language, culture, art, and film.

The NICE program is funded solely by grants and corporate and community donations.

Contact us at nice@newtown.k12ct.us