



Center for International Virtual Schooling

International Virtual Elementary/Secondary Classroom Activities (IVECA)

IVECA is an online classroom exchange program in which K-12 school students in different countries share their thoughts and ideas through a web based, content management system (CMS). With the school curricula integrated with the IVECA program, students in different countries perform individual and group projects in their classrooms according to the weekly activity topics provided in the IVECA program. Completed projects are posted using the CMS communication and collaboration tools. Students from each country exchange their feedback and information with each other once a week. Depending on the needs and objectives of local schools, communication and collaboration platforms may include text messages, and images as well as synchronous audio and videos. IVECA is an integrated form of intercultural education facilitated by the effective use of ICT.

Spirit of IVECA

It is designed to promote young students' ability to live together with people in different cultures and countries as friends and to work cooperatively for the prosperity of the global society.

"Ahm... (He moves to sit closer to me—interviewer) It's like you and me how close we are together... uhm... but then I could touch you like that (He touches my shoulder), but then, if we are this close, that is like a IVECA. You are in Korea and I'm in America. We are this close though, but I can't reach out to you (He tries to touch my shoulder again but stops right before his hand reaches me), but we can interact everything else."

– An American 5th grade student's comment on the meaning of IVECA for him, 2007

Such children understand their friends' feelings and thoughts, as they understand themselves. These friends also know appropriate ways to treat each other and effective ways to express their considerations to each other. To build this friendship, children do not need to live in the same area in this global society connected via ICT. When people in the world build such authentic relationships, the world will more likely become peaceful. Education should provide children with ways to experience such cross-cultural interactions so that they become capable and willing to make a better world. Such people have intercultural competence.

Center for International Virtual Schooling (C4IVS)

Through the internationally connected public school system, C4IVS seeks to implement IVECA into regular school curricula around the world. The goal is to produce interculturally competent global citizens who are capable of understanding and reconciling cultural diversity, utilizing knowledge and information, and working collaboratively with people in different cultures using different languages.

It is well known that the integration of culturally diverse students at a young age contributes towards dispelling many of the prejudices and stereotypes they would otherwise hold in their adult life. The differences in culture, including languages and religions, have all too often resulted in conflicts due to intolerance, prejudice, and misunderstandings, among peoples and nations. Appropriate interactions with different cultures, and the prompt and creative utilization of new knowledge, can become a powerful resource for international solidarity and economic prosperity.

Increasing globalization and the continued advances in ICT technology has provided us with the tools necessary to work towards greater intercultural familiarization. Integral system of International Virtual Schooling (IVS) will ensure **on-going dialogues** among (pre-service) teachers, administrators, policy makers, scholars in education to advance IVECA and the IVS system. Thus, C4IVS focuses on providing intercultural exchange programs, training, and academic dialogues. Continuous and collaborative **research** on the programs and implementation is axis of the center's activities.

The international exchanges and dialogues consist of:

- Elementary and secondary student IVECA
- Teacher and school administrator communications and professional development for IVECA
- Course exchanges of pre-service teachers and college students in education program (Internationalization of teacher education)
- Professional and academic dialogues among scholars in the field of education, culture, and policy

C4IVS suggests and strives to establish international network with scholars and universities for the academic exchanges and intercultural dialogues, in collaboration with the United Nations, UNESCO, international NGOs, and technology firms.