

Let's develop global citizens

To the Editor:

In last week's issue of the Journal, Alfred F. Chase Jr. criticized the SAU 41 mission for being too globally minded. A school, he said, should function to educate its students, not to develop global citizens. He then praised capitalism and the Constitution for a while, before thrillingly concluding that these domestic institutions were the true proper subjects of study so that students might understand their "special role in the world."

As a proud alumnus of SAU 41 I dispute Mr. Chase's first premise: that a global perspective is in-

compatible with a proper education.

Indeed, as the unresolved internal tensions in Mr. Chase's own letter demonstrate – after all, what is our "special role in the world" if not a function of our global citizenship? – they are in fact inseparable.

When students graduate from SAU 41 the vast majority of them leave home for school or work. Outside of our small, safe, sheltering community, they confront actual problems in the world: problems of the poor, the disadvantaged, the subaltern. And they become members of a broader, interconnected

society that operates locally, nationally, and globally.

What are we educating students for if not to prepare them for this world in which they will live? For that matter, what meaningful distinction is there nowadays between "education of students" and "development of global citizens," beyond a knee-jerk reaction against anything that sounds vaguely un-American?

Mr. Chase calls his opinion "old-fashioned." It isn't. It is merely ill-considered, with more good snark than good sense. It is of a kind with the sentiment to sanitize our schools of any

allergens from the actual world that may have contaminated the curriculum.

Both do much more damage to the development of our students than any global education – or banned book – ever could.

Hollis/Brookline is pastoral in its landscape, but it need not be provincial in its perspective. Our small towns should not be small-minded. Whether Mr. Chase likes it or not, graduates of SAU 41 will become citizens of a global society. It is the duty of the schools to prepare them for it.

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