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Dear Colleagues and Fellow ENIRDELMers,

It is late Spring in Dublin, the sap is rising and there are green shoots everywhere. The underlying current of new growth and energy is almost palpable. Since Vantaa 2014 the ENIRDELM Board has met, considered and deliberated. The very relevant Conference Theme: "Leading "Future-Focused" Education and Learning for All: Implications for Education Policy, Teacher Education, School Leadership and Practice" has been decided. The Dublin 2015 Committee have inspected, dissected and built a framework.

The Conference website- [www.enirdelm2015.net](http://www.enirdelm2015.net)- is up and running, if not quite finally finished. Even as you read this the Keynote Speakers are pondering and polishing their contributions. The first bookings for the conference and Boyne Valley tour have been made. All is ready?—not quite. One significant element, one key element is still to be put in place…..YOUR presence, your contribution to the conference. After all, and above all, it is your presence and contribution that has made, and will make into the future, ENIRDELM and its Conference such a positive, pleasant and productive experience over the years. The successful past is past, and is now only a springboard for the future, and now is the time for you again to dive into ENIRDELM.

All the organisational details are on the website. The deadline for proposals for papers, presentations and workshops is May 11th next, and is coming up very quickly. The quality and success of ENIRDELM 2015 is in your hands, in the hands of friends old and friends new. That gives us great grounds for optimism and confidence.

I am looking forward to receiving your proposals and to your presence in a really successful Conference in Malahide in September,

*Tim Hurley, Conference Chair, ENIRDELM Dublin 2015*

**CONFERENCE DETAILS**

ENIRDELM 2015 Dublin Conference September 17-20, 2015
“Leading Future-Focused Education and Learning for All”

Online information and participants' registration now open at:

**Website:** [www.enirdelm2015.net](http://www.enirdelm2015.net)
Or: link from [www.enirdelm.net](http://www.enirdelm.net)

- Early bird registration deadline - July 1, 2015
- Final Paper submission - Monday 19 October, 2015
Keynote Speakers

Harold Hislop is Chief Inspector at the Department of Education and Skills, Ireland. He previously taught at primary and university level. Since 2010 he has led a series of educational reforms in Ireland, and has lectured internationally on evaluation and inspection. He is a current member of the Governing Board of the Centre for Educational Research and Innovation at the OECD.

Sharon Todd is Canadian by birth, and before becoming Head of Department in the Education Department of Maynooth University worked in the Canadian and Swedish University systems, in the latter as Professor of Education at Stockholm University. With experience across a wide range of disciplines, she has a particular interest in cultural influences on educational policies and practices.

John West Burnham is Professor of Educational Leadership at St. Mary’s University, Twickenham, England. He has held posts in five universities and is Visiting Professor of Educational Leadership at the University of Bristol. He has a very wide experience of the challenges around leading education and learning, having worked in almost 30 countries as a government programme advisor and independent consultant.

EDITORIAL – DAVID OLDROYD, POLAND

As usual, the newsletter for April invites readers to make plans to join us at our annual ENIRDELM Conference, this year in Malahide, just to the north of Dublin as our Chairperson’s message informs us. Against expectations, we shall no longer enjoy the warm company and the creative intellect of Jaroslav Kalous who died in February 2015, a sad event reported below. Markku updates us on the ENIRDELM website and reprises the Vantaa conference as well as his ‘marketing’ visit to Japan. Signe Neimane, our Chairperson-elect, sends us news from the Baltic region and regular contributor Eileen O’Connor from the far west updates us on Irish concerns. There is further news from around the continent in “What’s happening in …?” including an item from Danuta, our original Board member, who is mobilising retirees to engage with primary school students. We feature several ‘old ENIRDELM friends’, including three from Iceland, in our “What’s happening to …?” section and update readers on ENIRDELM members’ projects and publications, although I am sure many colleagues are too modest to share their outputs.

We have two original feature articles from ENIRDELM friends: Kamran Namdar has written about the success of new headteacher and ENIRDELM member Ingela Netz’s ‘future-creating’ Swedish primary school (very relevant for this year’s conference theme) and Gerald Dunning, our newsletter co-editor, has provided a lengthy feature article on educational reforms in Wales that continues the critique of the impact of the continuing overkill of accountability procedures and their stress-raising effect on teachers and students, a critique that so many ENIRDELM colleagues share. We also include three other feature articles on big themes – gender equality; educating the world’s impoverished children and reconnecting education to the natural world. The latter is my own passionate concern. Retirement has allowed me to deepen my scholarship about the planetary scale of the Anthropocene crises and my work on the ENIRDELM/CASE initiative (page 15) and comments on a new book (page 33 below) demonstrate my sense of urgency.
The newsletter only appears twice a year, so we hope that there is enough here to update, inform and entertain you for the next six months or until we meet again in Ireland in September.

**ENIRDELM MATTERS - DAVID OLDROYD, VOLUNTARY PERMANENT SECRETARY**

**Jaroslav Kalous, 15.05.49-17.02.15**

It was a terrible shock for many ENIRDELM friends to hear of Jaroslav Kalous’ sudden death from heart failure while returning to his flat in Prague on the afternoon of 17 February. He was only 65 and was at the peak of his professional powers, a highly creative and loved teacher at Charles University in Prague and in the process of finishing his latest book on the theme of alternative education. It was a particular shock to me as I had three days before spent our usual hour talking to him on our weekly Skype ‘seminar’, always a joyful and instructive exchange of ideas. He was full of wise words, enthusiasm and plans as always.

Jaroslav was one of many stalwarts of our network. He organised the Prague ENIRDELM Conference in 1995 at which he gave a memorable keynote presentation on ‘Transition and Transformation of Education’ just a few years into the great changes that followed the demise of the USSR. His most recent keynote, vividly visually illustrated, was given at the Antalya ENIRDELM Conference in 2012. At that conference he filled in for me, presenting my workshop at the last minute when I was prevented from attending by a slipped disc. Last year in Vantaa, along with Kamran Namdar, he and I planned and ran another of the workshops in the continuing series on educational leadership for a sustainable future. He had a great interest and knowledge in the broader inter-disciplinary issues that relate to future trends. Like me, he was alarmed at the general denial and neglect among educational and world leaders of the dangers facing a planet that has already overshot its capacity to sustain the Great Acceleration of human impact since WWII. One of his most challenging and provocative articles was entitled “Why we are not sustainable” (in Novacek, P, 2010 *Learning from the Futures*). His passing means that his students will not be able to be the first to use the website, a resource platform and blog, that ENIRDELM colleagues have developed to support ‘Community Action for Spaceship Earth’.

We are planning an in memoriam symposium in Spring 2016 that will be dedicated to Jaroslav. It will be a sequel to the June 2012 Symposium held at the Centre for Ecological and Environmental Education at the Silesian Botanical Garden in Poland at which Jaroslav led the debate in support of the motion that “A sustainable future is science fiction”. He will be greatly missed but long remembered.

**FROM OUR WEBMASTER – MARKKU ANTINLUOMA**

1) Statistics from 2014 conference site and the new ENIRDELM site: 9000 visits to the ENIRDELM 2014 blog; 1500 visits to the new ENIRDELM site.

Thomas has closed the old ENIRDELM site and I have deleted all links to that now non-
existent site. Photo archive from previous conferences is not available now, but I will open a new photo archive after I have decided the location for it.


Irmeli Halinen, from the National Board of Education, gave us a great presentation in Vantaa about the curriculum reform. Here is a link to hers latest blog text: [http://www.oph.fi/english/current_issues/101/0/what_is_going_on_in_finland_curriculum_reform_2016](http://www.oph.fi/english/current_issues/101/0/what_is_going_on_in_finland_curriculum_reform_2016) International discussion will go on.....

3) After the Vantaa conference I visited Japan. I was invited there by the Hyogo University of Teacher Education which is partnered with the University of Helsinki. In February their delegation visited Finland for the fourth time. This time they had meetings at University of Helsinki and visited the city of Porvoo (my city and school). [https://www.hyogo-u.ac.jp/english/](https://www.hyogo-u.ac.jp/english/) They organise principal and superintendent training in addition to teacher education, programmes. [https://www.hyogo-u.ac.jp/english/](https://www.hyogo-u.ac.jp/english/). I told them about ENIRDELM and they are seriously considering participating in the next conference in Dublin.

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**LETTERS FROM THE REGIONS**

**Latvia: Creativity week Radi! 2015**

The goal of radi!(create!) as a social movement is to promote public awareness and interest about the sector of creative and cultural industries, creativity-promoting education, innovations, the knowledge economy and creative management by demonstrating the experience and achievements of Latvia. Among other events ([http://www.radilatvija.lv/en](http://www.radilatvija.lv/en)) on March 13 an International Education Forum “Schools in the Digital Age" was held. The technological possibilities allow students to acquire knowledge more effectively, to extend cooperation, to create innovative solutions locally and globally for a prosperous and inclusive society in various spheres of life. But the development of digital competence must go hand in hand with self-regulation and self-implementation and the ability to solve problems and to find balanced, society-, environment- and economy-friendly solutions to advance sustainability. Therefore the educational system must function to help an individual to acquire self-knowledge and how to make a dialogue with the world to strengthen the pillars of the 21st century education: to learn to learn, to learn to change and to learn to become.
The Forum offered an opportunity to hear speakers from the United Kingdom - Niel McLean, Head of Education at e-skills UK and Nikky Smedley, Co-Director, changing cultures, to learn about the best practices in development of digital skills and use of learning technologies as well as to engage in the debate with foreign and local experts. Leo Pahkin, Counsellor of Education, Finnish National Board of Education gave an overview of Curriculum reform 2016 in Finland. A video from the Forum could be seen here: http://www.radilatvija.lv/lv/radi-hronika/18

A special place and time was devoted to Stand Presentations where best practices in development of digital skills and use of technologies in the learning process were presented by teachers and school heads. The Forum was organised by the Ministry of Education and Science of Republic of Latvia, British Council Latvia and Riga Education and Information Centre.

**In the future, Estonian school leaders can learn from colleagues abroad**

On January 27, 2015 the Ministry of Education and Research of Estonia, Tallinn University, the University of Tartu, the Estonian School Directors Association and the Estonian Rotary Centre signed a cooperation agreement for the development programme for Estonian school leaders, which will send at least five school leaders to gain experience abroad every year.

The programme - “Support for Estonian Educational Reform” - offers school leaders the opportunity to practise in schools that have been acknowledged and appraised globally and where innovative teaching and management models are used. The agreement between the state, the private sector and universities provides the chance to broaden the international competence of Estonian school leaders and value them as the leaders of educational reform. The programme was initiated upon the suggestion of the Estonian Rotary Centre, which unites the Estonian Rotary Clubs. The Centre provides at least 5 stipends every year in 2015–2020.

According to Minister of Education and Research, Jevgeni Ossinovski, the role of the school leader is of crucial importance in educational reforms. “It depends on the school leader whether the school values, motivates and supports the students and develops the student’s potential, whether the professional development of teachers is supported, whether the school is engaged in productive cooperation with parents and the community. This programme is a good example of the cooperation between the state and private sector to ensure that Estonian schools are led by competent and motivated school leaders,” said Minister Ossinovski.

For more about the programme see here: https://www.hm.ee/en/news/future-school-leaders-can-learn-colleagues-abroad

_Signe Neimane_
Ireland: Post–primary Junior Cycle Reform in crisis?

The traditional Junior Certificate - a state-wide exam taken by all students at the end of their 3rd year in secondary school and externally examined - is being replaced by the Junior Cycle Student Award (JCSA) across the Irish Post-primary Education System. The key principle underlying the Junior Cycle Framework Document, published in October 2012, by Mr. Quinn, the Minister for Education and Skills at that time, was to change the focus of the first three years in secondary school from exams and results to what and how students learn. The JCSA will replace the Junior Certificate from 2017 and it is intended that eventually all subjects will be marked by students’ own teachers.

In response to teacher concerns, an extra day and a half of continuous professional development (CPD) over three years was planned by the Department of Education and Skills (DES) above that already underway since late 2013 for teachers of English. Theirs is the first subject for which a new curriculum is being rolled out. It commenced in September 2014, with assessments beginning in 2016 and final written exams in summer 2017.

The DES is also allowing up to four days of CPD for teachers of each other subject as they are being introduced, to cover the new curriculum for a subject as well as school-based assessment requirements, although teachers remain of the belief these provisions are inadequate. A further one day per year will be allowed, during which schools may close, to facilitate whole-school training on the wider issues around the new assessment regime.

While the proposed reforms have received wide backing, including that of teachers, serious anxieties and opposition remain about the school–based assessment to be carried out by teachers themselves, and also about concomitant aspects of resourcing the reforms in general. Traditionally the Junior Certificate was externally examined and opposition to the proposed in-school assessment aspect of the JCSA is now causing serious disruption both to the day to day work of schools (2 days of teacher strikes across all secondary schools so far this year) and to the proposed upskilling of teachers in preparation for the new classroom practices and modes of assessment.

In fact the issue of assessment is becoming a serious stumbling block to the success of this Reform with both post-primary teacher Unions - The Association of Secondary Teachers Ireland (ASTI) and Teachers’ Union of Ireland (TUI) announcing plans, at their recent Easter conferences, to picket regional Education Centres where training for teachers of English is due to take place this academic term. Teachers who want to take part in training for new junior cycle programmes may be blocked by pickets as union leaders seek further changes to reform proposals. Lunchtime protests at 720 schools will also be held later this month rather than further school strikes that might disrupt Junior or Leaving Certificate students, but work stoppages before June have not been ruled out. Teacher unions say they are in favour of reform and welcome many of the elements contained in the new JCSA. But, they insist, they do not want to change the external method of assessment. In other words, they want to keep a high-stakes externally assessed State run exam for 15-year-olds. However, evidence shows that unless the assessment model is changed, nothing else will change.

The current Education Minister, Jan O’Sullivan, has ordered the resumption of continuous professional development for teachers of English as she wants to proceed with final compromise proposals that emerged in February this year. But unions are keeping industrial action in place as they want talks on resourcing schools for the changes as well as having project work assessed externally.
The battle over assessment continues but it is hoped, particularly for the sake of the students currently in the first year of the new English programme, that a resolution will be found during consultations due to take place between the Unions, the Minister and DES officials over the coming months.

For further information on the JCSA and The Framework Document see:

- www.juniorcycle.ie
- www.ncca.ie/juniorcycle

Eileen O’Connor, Emtoc52@gmail.com

**WHAT'S HAPPENING IN …?**

**Denmark**

The suggestion by the Danish People's Party, or DF, that Denmark's universities should stop offering courses in English was roundly criticised by political opponents and readers, who said that the real losers would be Danish students. Offering university courses in English “makes no sense” according to the anti-immigration DF, which has once again called for Danish universities to abandon teaching in a second language. DF’s education spokesman, argued that eliminating English-language courses would put an end to foreign students coming to Denmark and receiving a student stipend from the government. This statement comes at a time when English-language education in Denmark has exploded. According to the Ministry of Higher Education and Science, the number of students enrolled in English-language courses at the nation’s institutions of higher learning has gone from 4,653 in 2009 to 7,376 in 2014 – an increase of 58%.

*The Local, 20.02.15*

**Hungary**

The state secretariat’s new higher education strategy reveals that the government is considering the introduction of a tuition fee for several popular university programmes, while other programmes, such as degrees in communication, would be abolished completely. The Ministry of Human Resources had recently informed university and college deans of the plan, which includes the cancellation of several popular programmes, such as degrees in communication. Other courses – such as andragogy – would be available only to students prepared to pay a tuition fee. Other popular programmes will be available only at the National University of Public Service if the strategy, which foresees a 15% reduction in the total number of courses, is implemented. Changes are expected to take effect in September 2016 if the strategy is adopted.


**Italy**

In Rome on 12 March, protesters marched in four of Italy's largest cities holding banners reading '12 March, a generation that will not surrender' and 'Stop Good School, a step backwards.’ The student demonstrations in Italy took place ahead of the school reform bill
being discussed in parliament later in the day. The reform known as 'the Good School,' was initiated by the government of Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi in autumn 2014. In particular, it is aimed at introducing private sector funding of schools, maintaining the system of increase in wages for teachers based on job seniority and bringing in unpaid apprenticeships for students studying technical subjects. Opponents of the reform blame the government for attempting to privatize the school system.

http://education.einnews.com/article/254467861/eGMt_o0P5W16JqfB

The Netherlands

The Netherlands government last year introduced a bill that would convert student grants into loans from 1 January 2015, freeing up €1 billion (US$1.1 billion) from the state higher education budget. After a month of occupation of university buildings, University of Amsterdam students are increasingly winning support for their protest against pressure on universities to focus on ‘effectivity’ – producing measurable products as efficiently as possible. They are also demanding a reversal of planned cuts in courses, particularly languages, and a greater say for students in the running of the university, as well as opposing changes in student financing. Meanwhile, nationally, university and doctoral student representatives are protesting against an experiment in ending PhD candidates’ employee status. At the University of Amsterdam the occupied Senate House is filled every day with hundreds of students, lecturers, cultural events and continuous discussions with university authorities.

http://www.universityworldnews.com/article.php?story=20150313224103532, 13.03.15

Norway

The Norwegian government has begun the biggest series of higher education reforms since 1994, when 98 higher education institutions were merged into 26 university colleges. Minister of Education and Research Torbjørn Røe Isaksen said he expected significantly fewer universities and university colleges would result from the reforms than the 33 Norwegian institutions today. Under the changes, 14 universities and university colleges are to be merged into five new universities or university colleges. A national commission of experts delivered a report on reforming the higher education system in 2008, but this was shelved. The present government released a white paper setting out the new reforms. It appears to have based its structural change on similar reforms in Denmark, Finland, Sweden, England, the Netherlands and Switzerland, where the focus was on turning university colleges into universities, often through mergers. A major aspect of the Norwegian reforms is extending teacher training to a five-year masters programme. This will require greater collaboration between the universities and university colleges.

Jan Petter Myklebust, University World News, 30.03.15

Poland

The idea of networking can be spread in many ways in education. Recently, due to the reform of CPD, networks are being promoted among Polish teachers and schools. Thanks to that idea of networking has become more and more comprehensible and accepted in educational system. Bearing that in mind, I took an effort to organize a network of retired teachers and
professionals in order to help an underperforming elementary school in a deprived suburb of one of big cities in Upper Silesia region. This action is mutually beneficial. Retired people can be helpful in many ways. They assist pupils with learning difficulties; support the school in looking for sponsors; collect books for the school library and help to organize school events or excursions and even a school theatre. On the other hand they can be proud playing an active role in school development and highly appreciate the children’s company which makes them feel younger and happy.

This type of activity is not very common in Poland. Pensioners are seldom volunteers (except for their own family members or for neighbours) nor do they often join non-government organizations to help the needy. Therefore we would like to serve as a model to follow by others educators.

Danuta Elsner.

Russia

The Russian government will cut its spending on national universities by at least 10% this year. This is a result of the current economic crisis and devaluation of the national currency, the ruble. The government’s plan is for universities to fill the gap created by the planned cuts through allocation of private funds and investments, commercialisation of scientific research, and enrolment of foreign students. At the same time the cost of tuition will also significantly increase. The government will keep salaries of university teachers at the same level as in 2014 – which were increased by 20% compared to 2013 – and increase student scholarships. According to analysts, the decision to cut spending on higher education resulted mainly from an increase in military expenditure in the federal budget by RUB 3.3 trillion (US$53.4 billion) for 2015.

Eugene Vorotnikov, University World News 20.02.15

United Kingdom

Universities are planning to ban students from wearing anything on their wrists during examinations, for fear they may use smart watches to access the internet and cheat. The clampdown is because invigilators are unable to tell traditional watches from their digital counterparts, and it would be impossible to inspect every student before a test begins. Apple is preparing to launch its hotly-anticipated smart watch in April, and one university has already had two incidents where students have been caught referring to other smart watches during an assessment.

Sky News.

WHAT’S HAPPENING TO …?

Gunnar Berg

Since 2010 I have been professor in Education at the Mid-Sweden University with colleges in Östersund, Sundsvall and Härnösand situated in the geographical centre of Sweden. Since 2012 I have published two books in Swedish, one about school leaders and one about teachers.
as leaders. In general, the scope of action theory is nowadays well established also in the day to day activities in schools. Last year I participated in a state committee dealing with the issue of evaluating the decentralization reform in Sweden. I was very engaged in the application from Mid Sweden University for implementing the Swedish compulsory school leader training program and our offer was accepted. Our approach of implementing the program differs from all our competitors and we are in the initial stages of putting our unique concept of this program into action. Although I ought to think about my retirement I will be active in this implementation. Perhaps we can present our approach at the next ENIRDELM conference?

**Gunnar**

**Anne Gold**

I am living a quiet, retired life now. I am an Honorary Senior Research Associate at the Institute of Education, which because it recently joined University College, London, is now known as UCL IOE. I am working there on a project to develop in-country home-based doctoral programmes in East Africa and in Pakistan. Last year, we worked with eight East African universities in Nairobi and in May this year, we are going to have the launch programme in Islamabad with 18 state universities in Pakistan. I will also be working on Women in Leadership in Higher Education workshops this year in Sri Lanka, Malaysia and Kenya, as a consultant with the Association of Commonwealth Universities. My newer work is with a UK based women’s rights organisation for Iranian and Kurdish women – I am their (volunteer) training officer and we have developed and run training session for professionals in education, the law, medicine and social work, as well as young people, mainly around honour-based violence and forced marriage.

Three of my grandchildren live in East London – quite near us. Twice a week I stand at the primary school gates and pick them up to take them home at the end of school – you learn a lot, as a teacher, standing at the school gates! So you see, my life is very calm and peaceful now – no dancing at ENIRDELM parties any more!

**Anne**

**Jon Torfi Jonasson**

My main interest is to develop the idea that the curriculum in our schools should be substantially revamped in order to respond to ecological, technical and social developments in our world. Otherwise, young people are not empowered to participate fully in their future societies as knowledgeable and responsible democratic participants. I do not see the need for a universal standardised curriculum, but acknowledge that whatever it is, it needs to be a powerful one. In recent years, I have been interested in exploring the development of higher education on a global scale, showing inter alia, that small systems have the same growth characteristics and pains as bigger systems. I am currently arguing that the “gender gap” in higher education has been there for a long time (in the differential growth rates for males and females) and thus all the indications are that the imbalance in favour women will continue to grow for quite a while. More and more, I am attracted by the idea that education for a democratic society is the principal goal of education. I am using the history of education to
underpin this standpoint. This goal has been pushed aside temporarily, by powerful market interests in most societies but the democratic ground must be recovered. I am becoming quite active in the Nordic research programme, JustEd and in the European Council Pestalozzi programme. Their manifesto for teachers is particularly interesting, relevant and powerful. From a conference in 2014, there is a short video clip. I am currently developing the idea that we might perhaps turn the forceful idea of multicultural education into an even more powerful and central one, of multi-educational culture, acknowledging the many strands and goals of education.

Jon Torfi

Börkur Hansen

Börkur is currently participating in a Nordic research projects, LSP-Learning spaces for inclusion and social justice: Success stories from immigrant students and school communities in four Nordic countries, 2013-2015. The main objective of the project is to draw lessons from success stories of individual immigrant students and whole school communities at different levels that have succeeded in developing learning contexts that are equitable and socially just. Two main aims of the study are to 1) understand and learn from the experiences of immigrant students who have succeeded academically and socially and 2) explore and understand how social justice is implemented in equitable and successful diverse Nordic school contexts and other learning spaces. The project manager is Hanna Ragnarsdóttir, University of Iceland: hannar@hi.is

Börkur and Hanna have written a chapter about this project published in the book below:


Helga Steinunn Larussdóttir

Helga is currently participating in research which explores how education on gender and equality is being executed in the teacher education program at the School of Education, University of Iceland. This research is sponsored by RannKyn, Centre for Research on Equality, Gender and Education. The article below which draws on data from this research, focuses on student teachers’ knowledge, interest and attitudes to gender and equality: Guðbjörgsdóttir, G. & Lárusdóttir, S. H. (2012). Þotulið og setulið. Kynjafjarnrétt og kennaramentunt. [The jetset and the couchset: Gender equality and teacher education]. Netla Online Journal on Pedagogy and Education. http://netla.hi.is/menntakvika2012/006.pdf
Two other articles in relation to this ongoing research are being prepared. The first focuses on student teachers’ knowledge, interests and attitudes to gender and equality. The second explores the policy implications of this study on teacher educators and student teachers.

Helga

Pasi Sahlberg

Pasi is continuing his spell of teaching at Harvard Graduate School of Education and flying round the world as a keynote speaker following the second edition of his extremely popular book *Finnish Lessons 2.0*. International editions of the book are already made or imminent: Swedish, Dutch, Croatian, Serbian, Spanish, Chinese, Indonesian and Greek, Portuguese, Russian, Hebrew, Finnish, French in June 2015, Chinese (Simplified) in July 2015, Korean in October 2015, and in Turkish, Azerbaijani and German in 2016. At the same time as teaching and travelling, he is managing to offer educators a flood of high quality hyperlinks to progressive items about education on his Facebook page which I follow and strongly recommend. It can be reached via his website at http://pasisahlberg.com/

David Oldroyd

**ENIRDELM MEMBER PROJECT UPDATES**

**CALL FOR PAPERS**

*Studia paedagogica*  
21:2, 2016  
Monothematic Issue Intergenerational Learning

Milan Pol

The 2016 monothematic issue of *Studia paedagogica* will focus on intergenerational learning.

This theme has been chosen on the premise that intergenerational learning naturally accompanies us through all stages of life. Consequently, it is relevant to inquire under which conditions and circumstances intergenerational learning takes place and what its benefits are. Understanding this shapes our definition of intergenerational learning. EAGLE (European Approaches to Inter-Generational Lifelong Learning) defines intergenerational learning as “a process through which individuals of all ages acquire skills and knowledge, but also attitudes and values, from daily experience, from all available resources and from all influences in their
own ‘life worlds’.” If we think of intergenerational learning as a set of specifically created activities, then we can use Fischer’s definition viewing intergenerational learning as “a practice that aimed to bring people together in purposeful, mutually beneficial activities, which promoted greater understanding and respect between generations and could contribute to building more cohesive communities.”

Thematic areas:
These definitions help us to identify thematic areas relevant to intergenerational learning. We offer authors the following areas for possible topics.

Social consequences: How do demographic changes related to ageing populations influence intergenerational communication and learning? What space does society offer intergenerational learning within the framework of lifelong and lifewide learning? How are the processes of intergenerational learning influenced by the speed of (not only technological) changes? How do changes in family structures and alternative lifestyles shape the circumstances for intergenerational learning in the family?

Related concepts: Is intergenerational solidarity decreasing or, conversely, is intergenerational conflict increasing? How can this be prevented? Can intergenerational communication, support, understanding, and sharing play a role in this? What opportunities does the concept of active ageing offer seniors? Can the senior stage of life be considered the “crown of life”? In other words, can it be understood as the freest part of life because the choice of activities is up to the seniors, no matter whether the activities are related to work, education, or volunteering?

Participants in intergenerational learning: Who teaches us? Who are taught by other generations? Are they parents, grandparents, or adult children? Are they experienced professionals or mentors? Are they inducing teachers?

Environment of intergenerational learning and learning situations: What intergenerational learning processes take place in the family? How do the experiences of older employees and innovations of younger employees influence learning at work? Under what conditions can we think of intergenerational learning in communities? Under what conditions can we think of intergenerational learning between teachers at schools?

Conditions, contents, and directions of intergenerational learning: Which conditions support intergenerational learning and which prevent it? What exactly is being transmitted in the processes of intergenerational learning? Is it knowledge, skill, values, or tradition? Is such learning social, cognitive, sensomotoric, or affective? What role does intention in learning, relationships, and recipient acceptance have?

Benefits and risks of intergenerational learning: For whom is intergenerational learning beneficial and for whom is it risky? Is it accompanied by the risks or concerns of its participants?

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Theoretical framework: Which theoretical concepts enable thinking about intergenerational learning? Are there various theories of learning and education of adults? For example, is it possible to use Jack Mezirow’s transformative learning theory, Peter Jarvis’s understanding of learning as an existential process based on specific experiences, or the three-dimensional model of learning developed by Knud Illeris? Alternatively, can any other theory be used for this purpose?

While the staff of Studia paedagogica perceives the above areas in the light of pedagogical and andragogical perspectives, we realise that they are open to interdisciplinary inquiry and approaches. Consequently, we would like these areas to be understood as an inspiration for authors who would shape them with their own authorial interests and with lesser or higher degree of specificity. Studia paedagogica welcomes both theoretical and empirical papers.

This monothematic issue of Studia paedagogica will be published in English. Abstracts between 200 and 400 words should be sent to studiapaedagogica@phil.muni.cz by 15 October 2015. The deadline for full texts is 15 December 2015. Papers will be submitted to a peer-review process which will enable the staff to select papers for publication. This monothematic issue will be published in July 2016, edited by Milada Rabušicová and Petr Novotný. Further information can be found at the Studia paedagogica web page:

www.studiapaedagogica.cz

ENIRDELM/CoRk Community Action for Spaceship Earth (CASE) Initiative

The CASE website - resource platform and blog

The www.case4all.info blog and resource platform has greatly expanded in the last six months and now has 66 posts on the blog and 123 pages of resources and links for use in understanding and teaching global (Spaceship Earth) issues and implications for educators of the deficit of leadership in addressing these pressing matters that should be central to both school curriculum and public policy.

In an effort to broaden access and interest we now have a Twitter account https://twitter.com/DavidOldroyd2 that gives links to new material on the website.

CASE Study School in Sweden (See page 19 below)

Ingela Netz, Principal, Igelsta School, Södertälje, Sweden is continuing the innovative development at her “Global, Verbal, Digital, Future-creating” primary school that she presented at the Vantaa ENIRDELM conference and on the website at http://case4all.info/?page_id=562 . Kamran Namdar is providing her with consultancy support and has written the inspiring feature article below about the growing fame of Igelsta school. I am relying on Kamran to fill some of the gap in leadership and coordination for the CASE initiative that has been a consequence of the untimely death of our dear colleague Jaroslav.
Workshop for educational leaders at Jagellonian University, Krakow Poland

In April David Oldroyd and Pawel Kojs who had previously organised the Club of Reykjavik Symposium in Silesia, Poland were invited by Roman Dorczak, ENIRDELM’s newest Board member, to run two workshops at a major conference at Jagellonian University in Krakow for Polish school leaders and teacher educators. The materials for this 3-hour workshop (Theme: *Adaptive educational leadership in times of global crises: ‘The boiling frog problem’*) and several other designed within the CASE initiative, are now available on the CASE website. Three questions were addressed:

1. What are the multiple crises facing the coming generation and how urgent are they?
2. How might educational leadership adapt to respond to complex systemic crises of the Machine and Natural Worlds?
3. What are some examples of adaptive educational leadership for promoting personal and systemic resilience?

The 70 or so workshop participants in the 2 x 3-hour repeated sessions were shocked at their lack of awareness of the implications of exponential growth of the human (Machine World) impact on the planet’s life support systems (Spaceship Earth) and many agreed that their personal, professional and political action should give urgent attention to the ‘wicked problems’ that are destabilising our future. Otherwise, like the frog who feels comfortable in the heating pan of water, we will fail to act before the water boils!

Other ENIRDELM colleagues were invited to run workshops on other topics at the conference: Mateja Brejc, Milan Pol and Danuta Elsner. Roman’s concept of having workshops led by an academic and a practising educational leader proved to be very effective.

David Oldroyd

ENIRDELM MEMBERS’ PUBLICATIONS

Tapio Juhani Lahtero, Training and Development Centre Brahea, University of Turku, Finland & Lea Kuusilehto-Awale, Institute on Educational Leadership, University of Jyväskylä, Finland

*‘Possibility to Engage in Pedagogical Leadership as Experienced by Finnish Newly Appointed Principals’* American Journal of Educational Research 2015, 3(3), 318-329

[This is an Open Access, Peer-reviewed on-line publication]

Abstract

This qualitative research was based on the construct of broad based pedagogical leadership, which comprises not only technical, human and educational (pedagogical) but also symbolic leadership, the meanings interpreted from the principal’s ordinary activity by the school community, the web of which is understood as the cultural leadership of the school. The research purpose was to find out newly appointed principals’ views on what the most common situations of technical, human and educational (pedagogical) leadership were in their ordinary work and how they could enhance the realization of the pedagogical perspective. The data consisted of the written descriptions of the eighteen participants beginning an in-service training. The responses were analyzed with thematic analysis. The dominance of the technical leadership tasks with routine administration as the most common was the biggest obstacle to
advancing the pedagogical perspective. The most common human leadership task was interaction and that of pedagogical leadership was strategic leadership. Human and pedagogical leadership tasks were perceived to be partly overlapping. In contrast to studied international research, the respondents made no mention of leading quality teaching, a quality learning environment or strategic resourcing. The informants did not identify symbolic and cultural leadership components. The findings imply that school based management without an increase in managerial human resource in schools efficiently prevents enhancing pedagogical leadership, perceived as the core task of a principal’s ordinary work, that in studying leadership the context always needs to be considered, and that principals’ in-service training ought to comprise broad based pedagogical leadership to inculcate the holistic and integrative character of principalship. These issues merit further and comparative research.

http://pubs.sciepub.com/education/3/3/11/index.html#Cor

Icelandic Friends’ Publications


Börkur and Helga participated in a large research project (2009-2014) Teaching and Learning in Icelandic Schools. This research project deals with teaching and learning in 20 Icelandic schools for age level 6 to 15. There were 20 researchers, 9 master- and doctoral students, two companies and four school districts. In December 2014 a book (365 p.) in Icelandic with results of the research was published. We wrote the following chapter:


We also wrote the article below drawing on the same data:

Retrieved from http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00313831.2014.965788

This group of researchers has also written two articles in Icelandic on the impact of the economical collapse on Icelandic schools. The first one, *Economic meltdown and schooling in two Icelandic communities: A school crisis?* was published in 2012. The second, *The impact of the economical collapse on schools in Reykjavik*, will be published later this year. We do, however, plan to write an article in English and aim for publication in the year 2016.

**A new issue of Studia Paedagogica (4/2014)**

*Studia Paedagogica* is a peer-reviewed journal run by the Department of Educational Sciences at Masaryk University in Brno (Czech Republic) which publishes high-quality research papers in the fields of education, upbringing and learning from all spheres of social life. A new polythematic issue of *Studia Paedagogica* has been published in English and it contains five studies. In the first one, Klára Šeďová, Roman Švařiček, Martin Sedláček and Zuzana Šalamounová examine dialogic communication and the possibility of achieving change in teachers’ communication practice in class. The second study, written by Petr Novotný and Karla Brücknerová, addresses the issue of teachers at lower and upper secondary school and their interaction with colleagues as an indicator of intergenerational learning in schools. The next paper, authored by Maarten Penninckx, Jan Vanhoof and Peter van Petegem, examines Flemish teachers’ involvement in an ambitious development programme and comments on the programme’s efficiency. In the fourth study Francesca Gobbo looks into the world of voluntary workers who as clowns attempt to ease the situation of children patients in Italian children’s hospitals. Finally, Kateřina Zábrodská and Jiří Mudrák et al. survey how Czech academics at an important university perceive their work opportunities and duties, in so doing describing the milieu of higher education.

Besides these five studies, the issue includes a further two which are written by young researchers and published in cooperation with the European Educational Research Association (EERA). While the first one, authored by Georg Rißler, Andrea Bossen and Nina Blasse, examines school as space, the second, by Eliana Gallardo Echenique, is an integrative review of literature about learners in the digital era. Hence the new issue of *Studia Paedagogica* brings together different perspectives on adults and their relationship with the milieu of the school.

www.studiapaedagogica.cz

**Finnish Lessons 2.0**

Pasi Sahlberg has thoroughly updated his groundbreaking account of how Finland built a world-class education system during the past four decades. In this international bestseller, Sahlberg traces the evolution of Finnish education policies and highlights how they differ from the United States and much of the rest of the world. Featuring substantial additions throughout the text, *Finnish Lessons 2.0* demonstrates how systematically focusing on teacher and leader professionalism, building trust between the society and its schools, and investing in educational equity rather than competition, choice, and other market-based reforms make Finnish schools an international model of success. This second edition details the complexity of meaningful
change by examining Finland’s educational performance in light of the most recent international assessment data and domestic changes.

http://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/finnish-lessons-20-pasi-sahlberg/

Pasi also had an article in the Guardian newspaper on 31 March:

**Q: What makes Finnish teachers so special? A: It’s not brains**

Here is the link:
http://www.theguardian.com/education/2015/mar/31/finnish-teachers-special-train-teach

**INTERESTING WEB-SITES & LINKS**


http://www.tickld.com/x/wtf-is-wrong-is-wrong-with-americans-this-guy-nails-it - a trenchant cartoon comparison of the US with Scandinavian education investment

http://www.nature.com/wls - The World Library of Science, launched by UNESCO on 10.11.14, is a free online resource for the global community. This online Library offers short eBooks and articles, allowing easy access to online tools and networks to equalize access in all countries to high quality resources for science education. It will help train students and teachers, both in the content and cultural impacts of scientific discovery. Future plans involve translation of resources into multiple languages.

http://www.gse.harvard.edu/news/15/02/harvard-edcast-education-and-corruption - Harvard University’s on-line ‘edcast’ offers short broadcasts featuring prominent educators on a range of topics of general educational interest. Corruption in education is rarely discussed openly. On this broadcast, Stephen Heyneman outlines his lengthy international research on this theme.

http://education.einnews.com/article/250502056/93aMQ4DWB0q-Ji5A - an appetising visual record of what school lunches look like in different countries around the world.

http://education.einnews.com/article/254881127/52qWTV-PipxeWnPE - an article from Alaska about how teachers are trying to incorporate into their classrooms their students’ passion for playing computer games.

http://www.parenttoolkit.com/index.cfm?objectid=B32DD6D0-ACA3-11E4-B6B70050569A5318#Section_8 – a website containing the results of a poll in the USA of what parents think about and want from their children’s education
Collaboration as a key element in leading a globally relevant school

Kamran Namdar

Ingela Netz, a brand new ENIRDELM member, is also one of Sweden’s newest school principals. But already, within the first term of her career, she has become nationally recognized. She was nominated for a prize as the most innovative school principal in Sweden and ended up as a runner-up. The Swedish Minister of Education quoted parts of a blog entry by Ingela in one of his first talks in front of the Parliament as a newly appointed Minister. Consequently, he came to Ingela’s “Igelsta School” in February this year to officially inaugurate this visionary school that opened its doors in August 2014. What makes Igelsta School, an outwardly ordinary Swedish municipality-run school in a small multicultural town south of Stockholm, so special?

For Ingela Netz and her staff, the school is an arena for fostering knowledgeable and responsible global citizens, prepared and willing to take action for bringing about necessary global transformations. To change the world may sound naïve and even impossible when those setting out to do it are between ages six and thirteen. But Igelsta School is working hard to prove the opposite. After all, who are better equipped to bring about societal transformations than young students with their idealism, their energies, and their open-mindedness? Ingela and her staff see the potential in their diverse student body, and work systematically to realize it.

The entire school, from young first graders to seventh graders in their teens, is currently working on the theme of “the environment”. To work thematically, integrating knowledge from various disciplines requires close collaboration between the teachers. And that is one of the distinguishing features of Igelsta School: its teachers are willing to collaborate, to bring together their complementary knowledge and skills, to plan and teach as a team. To be sure, this is not always easy, but the Igelsta teachers see themselves and their students as explorers sailing uncharted seas, and with the leadership of “captain” Ingela, they have dared many storms and sailed on towards a new continent of meaningful and relevant education.

Learning about various aspects of the environment thematically is not just a matter of helping the students gain a holistic view of reality. An integral aspect of the theme is transformative action. In the fourth grade, for instance, the class teacher, a teacher’s assistant, and an advisor to the school, also an ENIRDELM member, are collaborating to teach students how to contribute to necessary global transformations through initiatives in their local community. The entire process started with the training of five students as group leaders to facilitate the learning of small groups of students that the class was divided into. Then, each group had to decide on one of three projects that were presented to the entire class. Two groups chose a project on reducing car usage and thus pollution from exhaust gases, while another two wished to work on a project about food, eating habits and their impact on the environment. Each group was guided to generate its own research questions, and to find materials for soliciting answers to them. Students are visibly excited to study and to discover new things that they are genuinely interested to know and that are relevant to their daily lives and to the real world, rather than unconnected “school knowledge”. The teacher helps the students place their specific findings and answers to their particular questions in a broader holistic framework. Using films and digital tools and integrating various subject areas, she helps the
students understand things such as the process that brings their food from farms in another continent to their fast food venue or principles of global trading or the functioning of ecosystems.

Currently, the fourth graders are being prepared to start transformative action projects based on the new understanding they have gained. They will learn to look for fundamental causes, rather than addressing only symptoms. They will be guided to recognize positive potential and to strengthen it, instead of trying to battle evil tendencies. They will be shown how to go from vision to action and then reflection on that action. Ten and eleven year old students are in the process of learning about change agency and through that reconstructing their self-images. And here, too, collaboration – between students, between students and teachers, and between teachers – plays a decisive role.

One of ENIRDELM’s strengths lies in the fact that this network brings together academics and practitioners and thus enables cross-fertilization between the various aspects of education. The self-same idea is applied in the work of Igelsta School. The school principal, Ingela Netz, and her staff interact on a regular basis with ENIRDELM member and teacher educator, Kamran Namdar, who in an advisory role of a “critical friend” collaborates in carrying out an action research and learning process. This also results in the fact that school development is built-in as an intrinsic feature of the school’s weekly activity. As these various forms and circles of collaboration operate, Igelsta school is developing systematically its ways of teaching and learning that aim at enabling the students realize their powers as globally transformative agents here and now. For Igelsta students, their best years are not a period of waiting spent in learning “school knowledge” but a time of learning to impact the real world that they and their children will get to live in.

**Educational Reforms in Wales & Teacher Stress**

*Gerald Dunning*

I suspect that the trams which are ubiquitous in many European cities are required to maintain a minimum track distance from each other. The same is not true of buses and a popular claim in British urban folklore is that you can wait for ages in frustration at a bus stop, only for three buses turn up simultaneously, all travelling to the same destination! Although there has been no shortage of buses – sorry, educational policy initiatives - from the Wales Government in recent years, three particularly important government-commissioned reports have turned up in very close succession this month, all of which have significant implications for school leadership and management.

**Curriculum reform**

The first, *Successful Futures*, authored by a Glasgow University academic who was previously Chief Inspector of Schools for Scotland, proposes the most radical reform of the curriculum for primary and secondary schools in Wales since the 1988 Education Reform Act introduced a common national curriculum for all state-funded schools in England and Wales (education was one of the domestic policy briefs devolved to the newly established Welsh Assembly Government from London in 1999).
One of the more welcome features of this report is its explicit acknowledgement of an academically valid interpretation of curriculum as something considerably more holistic (in terms of both content and implications) than a mere compendium of subjects – an erroneous and dangerous assumption underlying much political engagement with school curriculum in England and Wales over the last 25 years. It also recognises that much previous curriculum policy has been rendered problematic by anachronistic views and expectations - a mindset which supposes that the current school curriculum should be recognisable in terms of adults’ own recollections of their schooling - as well as the dominance of economic rationales.

Equally encouragingly, it acknowledges explicitly some of the main impediments to effective curriculum provision and the truth of the long voiced (but ignored) claim by heads and teachers that the current curriculum is over-loaded, overly complex and overly prescriptive:

*The high degree of prescription and detail in the national curriculum allied to increasingly powerful accountability mechanisms, has tended to create a culture within which the creative role of the school has become diminished and the professional contribution of the workforce underdeveloped. The extent of legislative control and associated accountability mechanisms, seen as necessary at the time, have inhibited professionalism, agility and responsiveness in dealing with emerging issues and has forced too-frequent political interventions in non-strategic matters. For many teachers and schools the key task has become to implement external expectations faithfully, with a consequent diminution of local creativity and responsiveness to the needs of children and young people. . . . Partly as a consequence, much of the curriculum as experienced by children and young people has become detached from its avowed aims and too focused on the short-term. At its most extreme, the mission of primary schools can almost be reduced to the teaching of literacy and numeracy and of secondary schools to preparation for qualifications. . . . The curriculum, then, has become overloaded, complicated and, in parts, outdated. Assessment arrangements are not making the contribution they should to improving learning. . . . The current national curriculum and assessment arrangements no longer meet the needs of the children and young people of Wales.*

In response, *Successful Futures* proposes a much slimmer framework which will give creative use of information technology and ‘digital literacy’ a significantly higher profile. The revised national curriculum for Wales will take the form of a broad set of duties rather than detailed prescription of content and afford teachers and heads enhanced freedom and creativity in determining its focus and delivery, as well as placing greater reliance on their professional skills and judgement with regard to curriculum planning and assessment. The existing compendium of eleven subjects is to be replaced by six areas of learning for all students between the ages of 3 and 16: expressive arts; health and wellbeing; languages, literacy and communication; mathematics and numeracy; and science and technology. The report also proposes replacing the current divisions of curriculum structure into ‘phases’ and ‘key stages’ with more flexible ‘progression steps’ encompassing a range of achievement outcomes, as well as simplification of assessment processes with greater stress being placed on assessment for learning supported by an overall assessment and evaluation framework congruent with recent OECD recommendations.

Of course, a major, sustained change and professional development programme will be required to convert the recommendations into practice and the history of school reform initiatives, not only in the UK but further afield, is littered with instances of failure to allow adequate time and resourcing for these processes - as I write this I am reminded in particular
of the classic example of the Cambire School study (Gross, Gianquinta and Bernstein, 1971) whose absurdities Ray Bolam used to enjoy relating. My own recent research has highlighted the complaints of headteachers who cite lack of adequate funding and time to establish new initiatives as one of the major problems they encounter in school leadership. Funding may be a crucial issue since education budgets have been adversely affected by cuts in government spending in response to the so-called financial crisis (which, strangely, seems to have had no impact at all on the large salary increases and bonuses earned by bankers and business executives, giving the lie to the claim of the current UK government - which is likely to implement even more draconian cuts if re-elected in May this year - that we were “all in this together”!!). I am also aware that my contributions to this newsletter over the last couple of years have recorded a variety of new initiatives intended to effect significant changes in Welsh schools, not least last autumn when I reported on the publication of a report commissioned from OECD by the Wales Government in 2012 which noted that there had been a lack of:

...long-term vision for education, ...[and] systematic patterns of professional development together with too much radical change to curriculum and other aspects of school process too quickly: “the pace of reform has been high and lacks a long-term vision, and adequate school improvement infrastructure and a clear implementation strategy all stakeholders share.”

Headteachers and other school leaders in Wales who will have a significant role in ensuring that the new system promotes a more effective and successful process of schooling will be hoping that these criticisms are now being taken seriously and that Successful Futures will be given adequate time and support. I hope not to be lamenting a case of the “la plus ca change” syndrome in my future updates!

**Teacher education**

The second major education report published within the last month complements Successful Futures since effective teacher education and professional development will be key to successful curriculum reform. Commissioned from a teacher education expert who was once my head of department at Swansea University and is now Emeritus Professor at Oxford University, this second report, *Teaching Tomorrow’s Teachers*, is a response to the Wales Government’s recognition that current provision is failing to serve present and future needs and, in particular, to address adequately ramifications of the changing nature of knowledge in society. The report iterates a need, identified several years ago, for initial teacher education (ITE) to focus more successfully on the development of professionals who:

* have high expectations of and a commitment to the achievement of all pupils;
* take responsibility for innovation;
* relish change and help to lead it;
* are able to take a sharper focus on the needs of individual learners, including helping them ‘learn how to learn’;
* accept and respond to demands for their accountability;
* take personal and collective responsibility for professional development;
* are able to evaluate and use different sorts of evidence relevant to improvement of practice;
* are willing to work collaboratively with other teachers and other professionals in the development of their practice;
* are willing and able to work in ways that draw on best practice from across the UK and internationally.
The report also emphasises the need for Welsh provision to reflect characteristics typical of the best teacher programmes in the international context which:

* ensure that ITE programmes attract the best and most suitable candidates into the teaching profession;
* offer academic awards that are competitive, practice-focused and built on relevant educational research;
* develop strong links between theory and practice, in a way that helps students understand and explore the interconnectedness of educational theories and classroom practices;
* establish strong links between initial teacher education and continuing professional development of teachers in schools;
* ensure that all of the above principles are underpinned by a clear understanding of evidence about how student teachers learn to teach and that ITE courses themselves are the constant subject of research and development.

One of the report’s most interesting proposals is its recognition of the vital part universities can and should play in initial teacher education by providing the rigour of strong, research-based and research-led courses as part of coherently integrated training programmes which complement school-based practicums. This assertion is especially encouraging given the trend (much more marked in England than Wales) over the last twenty or so years to devalue and even denigrate the involvement of universities in this field and the dangerous and deluded misassumptions that teaching is a practical activity, theory and academic underpinnings are a distraction or irrelevance, and the best place to learn the professional role is alongside teachers in the classroom. The nonsense implicit in this stance was beautifully exposed some years ago (pre-devolution in Wales) when a London education minister who had been expounding the merits of wholly school-based teacher education as a cure-all for disappointing standards of pupil achievement, responded to the interviewer’s question, “Why, if standards are disappointing, would you want to base initial teacher education wholly in schools?” with 30 long radio seconds of stunned speechlessness!! – a instance of schadenfreude which has always reminded me of Garret Fitzgerald’s beautiful aphorism - “It sounds great in practice, but how will it work in theory?”

The report makes three particular criticisms of current practice in Welsh initial teacher education: lack of effective leadership of ITE programmes; the erroneous conceptualisation – imposed on the teacher education curriculum and assessment systems by politicians - which defines effective ITE too narrowly in terms of a set of behaviourally based ‘competences’: things that newly qualified teachers ‘must know and do’ – with under-emphasis on related knowledge and understanding; a failure to link these initial competences to the process of ongoing professional development; and a lack of appropriate recognition of the significant role that research and critical reflection ought to play in the formation and subsequent development of teachers.

*Teaching Tomorrow’s Teachers* makes several recommendations for the reform of ITE, principally, that there should be:

- A major revision of the Standards for newly qualified teachers;
- A revised accreditation process for providers of initial teacher education;
- A new ‘teacher education accreditation structure;
- A revised role for the inspectorate with regard to both initial teacher education and the contribution of schools to ITE;
- Replacement of the most commonly adopted three year BA degree route into primary teaching with a four-year degree course in which 50% of students’ time will be spent in schools;
- Closer government monitoring of the impact of financial incentives on the recruitment of trainee teachers, taking particular account of different funding levels in comparison with those available in England.

These proposals imply a more responsible and accountable role for headteachers in whose schools student teachers will undertake a substantial part of their training and where teacher mentors will be expected to link examples of good pedagogic practice more clearly to theoretical underpinnings. Perhaps the most serious challenge to effective implementation of the recommendations lies in the fact that the continuing professional development of teachers has been restricted over a period of number of years – relying heavily on a ‘cascade’ model tightly linked to national curriculum provision - with the result that many teachers in schools are not well grounded in relevant theory bases and lack both knowledge of and confidence in articulating their relevance to practical curriculum provision so may not find the responsibility of providing adequate support to student teachers easy to fulfil.

**Arts education**

The third recent report - *Creative Learning Through the Arts - an action plan or Wales 2015-2020* - was a cause for particular personal celebration since it reaffirmed the valuable, even crucial role which arts subjects play in a truly broad and balanced curriculum. While ENIDRELM members, enlightened people that they are, will probably regard this as a truism, it has not been self-evident to British politicians and the arts have had an increasingly tough time justifying their claim to a significant place in the curriculum – in England they are no longer compulsory for students beyond the age of 14 and have become poor relations to STEM subject – though *Successful Futures* indicates a more enlightened stance in Wales in its recognition of the expressive arts as one of five areas of the reformed curriculum.

The report asserts a belief in the importance of the arts and creativity in general as having real capacity to improve educational attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy, and enhance the capacity of the education system to contribute directly to a stronger economy, greater innovation, greater creativity, and enriched cultural capital for the nation as a whole. It reminds politicians and others who may have lost sight of the obvious that the arts “provide opportunities to explore, refine and communicate ideas, engaging thinking, imagination and senses creatively . . . [and require] application, perseverance and close attention to detail, - capacities that have benefits across learning more widely [and highlight] the significance and potential of the arts in enabling improved educational, social and economic outcomes.”

The report’s recommendations include:

- The setting up of four regional arts education networks and an ‘experiencing the arts’ fund to provide and support a range of activities for schools;
- Integration of arts-based activities in training schemes to support schools implement literacy and numeracy frameworks and develop similar links with careers training providers;
• Arts and cultural organizations increasing their education ‘offer’ to schools, to make the arts more accessible and better matched to schools’ needs and priorities.
• Ensuring that all initial teacher education delivered by HE institutions in Wales makes creative teaching methodology is ‘core’ to educational practice.
• Establishing a network of ‘Lead Creative Schools’ to support high quality professional learning for teachers, drawing on the contributions of creative professionals in the arts as well as arts champions and arts and heritage organisations.

Taken overall, these three reports offer a very welcome injection of sanity into the Welsh schools’ system and constitute creative approaches to meeting the challenge of improving Welsh performance in PISA ratings which I have reported on in previous newsletters. Educational professionals in Wales will be hoping that the good educational practice implicit in their complementary proposals is fully appreciated and supported by government and I hope not to be reporting on their outcomes in future newsletters by quoting the famous Welsh proverb: “la plus ca change”.

Teacher Stress

One compensation for the absurdities of the British education systems is the consistently high standard of broadcasting provided by the BBC, in particular on Radio 4, the channel which presents a range of news, current affairs, drama and other general interest programmes. “Sick of School”, a recent programme in its File on Four documentary series, investigated the growing phenomenon of teacher stress in England and cited statistics gathered by one of the largest teacher unions which indicated that in the last year, work-related stress and pressures had caused:

• 68% of teachers to seriously consider quitting the profession;
• 48% of teachers to visit a doctor with physical or mental health problems;
• 37% of teachers to need to take regular medication;
• 13% of teachers to need professional counselling;
• 5% of teachers to be admitted to hospital;
• 2% of teachers to report that they had resorted to self-harm.

The programme began with a quote from the current English education minister who said: When I hear of teachers working late into the night, marking books, planning lessons, I marvel at their dedication but I also think there ought to be a better way,. I don’t want my child to be taught by someone too tired, too anxious and too stressed to do the job well. Yet teachers identify the major cause of their growing stress levels as pressures derived from government demands for higher levels of pupil attainment as well as associated accountability requirements that they compile copious amounts of related data on pupil achievement, progress and lesson planning. They also believe that the government does not acknowledge their claims that this bureaucracy has no direct correlation with good quality teaching and learning.

A recent government survey attracted 44,000 teacher responses and indicated that: 82% accepted that lesson planning, assessment and reporting were essential elements of the job but the detail and frequency with which they were required to engage in them was counter-productive:
• 53% complained about excessive, in-depth marking – often involving up to 120 books per day, all requiring detailed comments and specifying targets for development, as well as checking subsequent pupil responses to those comments;
• 50% believed that excessive time was spent on recording, inputting and analysing pupil attainment and progress data;
• 33% believes that the lesson plans they were required to produce were unnecessarily detailed.

An additional stress factor stems from the regular cycle of school inspections by OFSTED which has set increasingly rigorous targets. These expectations put pressure on heads and senior staff in schools who, in turn, place heightened demands for bodies of evidence and positive pupil progress data on teachers. The increasingly common use of ‘mock inspections’ by which senior staff maintain evaluation of school performance using OFSTED criteria and strategies also adds to stress since teachers often regard this form of surveillance as overly negative and unsupportive. The programme also noted a growing trend for unsatisfactory and critical OFSTED reports to result in the dismissal, or ‘disappearance’ of headteachers, a potential fate which, in turn, increases pressures on teaching staff. But it is not just unsatisfactory OFSTED reports which are problematic, since even a decline in grades allocated by the inspectors from ‘outstanding’ to ‘good’ can blight heads’ careers and school reputations.

Overall, many teachers now believe the demands of their jobs to be unsustainable, professionally unsatisfying and inimical to a reasonably work-life balance – some teachers report working for 14 hours a day, six days each week. Stress is now the biggest single factor accounting for teacher absences and adversely affects morale and motivation. A disturbingly high percentage of new teachers leave the professional after their first year of service and it is becoming increasingly difficult to attract high quality candidates for senior posts in schools. This state of affairs prompts some hard questions about the kinds of accountability which are reasonable and practicable in modern schooling. I wonder how this compares with other European contexts?

**The ABC of Gender Equality in Education: Aptitude, Behaviour, Confidence – A new OECD Report**

*Andreas Schleicher*

Measured in the most common metric -- average years of schooling -- the industrialized world essentially closed the gender gap in education in the 1960s. And that has made a huge difference: about half of the economic growth in OECD countries over the past 50 years has been due to increased educational attainment, and mainly among women. But women still earn 15 percent less than men, on average in OECD countries, and 20 percent less among workers at the top of the pay scale. Some people are quick to say that this is about men and women doing similar work for different pay, but another factor is that men and women pursue different careers. And as our new report "The ABC of Gender Equality in Education: Aptitude, Behaviour, Confidence" suggests, those career choices may be made much earlier than commonly thought.

The report finds that, even though boys and girls show similar performance on the PISA science test, on average across OECD countries, less than 5 percent of 15-year-old girls contemplate pursuing a career in engineering or computing, while 20 percent of boys do (it's almost exactly the other way round when it comes to health services). Gender differences in
self-confidence in science explain part of this gap. So while many countries can claim victory in having closed gender gaps in the knowledge and skills of boys and girls, we may have lost sight of important social and emotional dimensions of learning that may be far more predictive for the future life choices of children. In most countries, teachers and schools need to do better to help girls see science and math not just as school subjects, but as essential to open up career and life opportunities. This is significant not only because women are severely under-represented in the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields of study and occupations, but also because graduates of these fields are in high demand in the labour market and because jobs in these fields are among the most highly paid.

Studying longer does not automatically mean that a student has acquired better and more relevant skills. Indeed, the PISA assessments show that what boys and girls know and what they can do with what they know varies greatly among students of the same age and who have attended school for the same number of years. The assessments also show that gender differences in student performance vary widely across countries and across subjects. Everywhere, girls do better than boys in reading, boys do better than girls in mathematics in about half of the countries, and boys and girls perform equally well in science. But what is most striking is that six out of ten low achievers in all three of the subjects that PISA assesses -- reading, mathematics and science -- are boys. These low achievers seem to be stuck in vicious cycle of low performance, disengagement and low motivation. But in math and science, boys are also more prevalent among the top performers, where girls often miss out. And while we've known for a while that even the highest-performing girls are less confident in their abilities in mathematics and science than high-performing boys, our new study suggests that they don't seem to be getting much encouragement from their parents. In all countries and economies surveyed on this question, parents were more likely to expect their sons, rather than their daughters, to work in a STEM field -- even when boys and girls perform equally well in mathematics and science. Some 50 percent of parents in Chile, Hungary and Portugal expect their sons to have a career in science, technology, engineering or mathematics, but less than 20 percent hold such expectations for their daughters. And do you remember the Barbie doll saying 'math is hard'? It was a women, not a man. Interestingly, in Korea that gap is just 7 percentage points, so we can do better.

The good news from the report is that narrowing these gender gaps does not require extensive -- and expensive -- education reform. Rather, it requires concerted efforts by parents, teachers and employers to become more aware of their own conscious or unconscious gender biases so that they give girls and boys equal chances for success at school and beyond. For example, PISA shows clearly that boys and girls have different reading preferences: girls are far more likely than boys to read novels and magazines for enjoyment while boys prefer comic books and newspapers. If parents and teachers gave boys a greater choice in what they read, they might be more successful in at least narrowing the wide gender gap in reading performance.

PISA also finds that boys spend more time playing video games and less time doing homework than girls. While excessive video gaming is shown to be a drag on student performance, new analysis shows that a moderate amount of video gaming is related to boys’ better performance in digital reading than in print reading (although boys still lag behind girls in both types of reading). All of us who have children around the age of 15 know how difficult it is to have a say in how our children spend their free time. But all parents should be aware that if they do not convince their children that completing their homework comes before playing video games, they will significantly hurt their children's career and life chances.
Teachers can help both boys and girls to improve their mathematics performance. PISA finds that when teachers help students to learn from mistakes they have made, ask students to explain how they solved a mathematics problem, and require students to apply what they have learned in new contexts, among other teaching strategies that require students to work more independently, all students, but particularly girls, perform better in mathematics. One of the most disturbing new findings is that teachers consistently give girls better marks in mathematics than boys, even when boys and girls perform similarly on the PISA mathematics test. That may be because girls are "good students" -- attentive in class and respectful of authority -- while boys tend to exert less self-control in their behaviour when they are in class. But while higher marks may lead to success at school, they aren't necessarily an advantage for girls in the long run, because labour markets reward people for what they know and what they can do with what they know, not for their grades at school.

Employers have an important role to play too. While PISA shows that girls are more likely than boys to get information about future studies or careers through Internet research, boys are more likely than girls to get hands-on experience, by working as interns, job shadowing, visiting a job fair or speaking to career advisors outside school. This implies that employers can do far more to engage girls in learning about potential careers.

And in what may be a surprising finding, the large gender gap in reading performance observed among 15-year-olds virtually disappears among 16-29 year-olds. The data show that young men are much more likely than young women to read at work -- and at home. This again suggests that there are plenty of ways to narrow or even eliminate gender gaps in education and skills, as long as learning becomes everyone's business.

Twitter: www.twitter.com/SchleicherEDU

Financing education for all

Jeffrey D. Sachs, Special Adviser to the United Nations Secretary-General on the Millennium Development Goals.

Of all of the investments needed to achieve sustainable development, none is more important than a quality education for every child. In a knowledge-based world economy, a good education is vital for finding decent work; achieving good health; building functioning communities; developing the skills to be a dependable parent; and growing up to be an engaged and responsible citizen.

When the world’s governments launch the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) this September, they will rightly put education for all children at the forefront, alongside ending extreme poverty, hunger and death from preventable and treatable causes. Yet, while many poor countries have increased domestic financing for education, the international community has not yet done its part. Aid for education remains too low and too fragmented.

In advance of adopting the SDGs, at the Conference on Financing for Development in July, the world has the chance to put real resources behind the Education SDG. The three major types of partners convening in Addis Ababa - governments, philanthropists and top companies - should pool resources to enable impoverished countries to scale up education, especially at the pre-K and secondary levels. The time has come to create a Global Fund for Education to ensure that even the world’s poorest children have the chance to receive a
quality education at least through secondary school.

This is how malaria, AIDS and vaccine-preventable diseases have been battled successfully in the past 15 years. The United States, the United Kingdom, Norway, Sweden and other governments teamed up with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, private companies like Novartis, GlaxoSmithKline, Ericsson, Sumitomo Chemical and others to ensure that life-saving vaccines, medicines and diagnostics could reach the poorest of the poor. The results have been remarkable: millions of lives have been saved, and economic growth has been boosted.

We must now do the same for education. Scaling up the use of information and communications technology (ICT), together with improved access to educational innovations, trained teachers and village education workers, and better measurement of learning outcomes, would enable low- and middle-income countries to create high-quality education systems within the next 15 years. In the meantime, students in impoverished rural schools that currently lack books, electricity, and trained teachers would be connected online - via solar panels and wireless broadband - to quality educational materials, free online courses and other schools, thereby closing a resource gap that, until recently, seemed insurmountable.

The world even has the organizational leadership to make this possible. The Global Partnership for Education (GPE) is a worldwide coalition of governments and NGOs that has been working for more than a decade with the world’s poorest countries to help them scale up quality education.

Yet, despite the GPE’s tremendous success in encouraging poor countries to mobilize their own budget resources to expand the reach and quality of their educational programs, rich countries have not adequately supported this effort by closing the financing gap these countries face. The GPE should be supported to help build a true Global Fund for Education to ensure that every low-income country that puts in place an effective national strategy and domestic financing would have international support to accomplish its goals.

The additional financing required is modest. UNESCO recently estimated the annual education “financing gap” of low- and lower-middle-income countries - to cover education up through lower secondary school - to be around $22 billion. Ensuring the scale-up of upper-secondary school and ICT access might raise the needed annual sum to around $40 billion, with detailed cost estimates still to be made. Such aid would be needed only until today’s poor countries achieve enough economic progress to cover the education bill on their own.

That $40 billion might seem like a lot of money, but consider this: The world’s richest 80 people have an estimated net worth of around $2 trillion dollars. If they would devote just 1% of their net worth each year, they would cover half the global financial need.

Facebook, Google, Ericsson, Huawei, Samsung, Microsoft, Cisco, and other ICT giants could cover at least another $10 billion per year, in cash and in kind. A few forward-looking governments could then close the remaining $10 billion gap. As we have seen with immunization, this is the kind of partnership that is needed to take the SDGs from rhetoric to reality. The beauty of a new Global Fund for Education is that, once it got underway, it would quickly attract supporters from around the world. Arab governments would want to ensure that all Arabic-speaking children receive a decent ICT-backed education; Brazil and Portugal would surely contribute to ensure that Africa’s many Portuguese speakers benefit from
scaled-up education systems. Innovative high-tech companies would scramble to put their learning tools in front of the world’s children. Local universities would train teachers and villagers on how to maximize the potential of these new technologies.

The stars - the SDGs, the ICT giants, mobile broadband, online learning, and philanthropists - are aligning for such a scenario. A Global Fund for Education, announced at the Conference on Financing for Development, would be the best news possible for today’s children everywhere and a dazzling inauguration for the SDGs.

http://education.einnews.com/article/256267794/GMEiq4TzlFkGblk1

An urban school built with a philosophy in mind

Jeremy Williams

This is a beautiful new kindergarten in Dong Nai, Vietnam:

The ingenious shape makes an unusual building, but also maximises airflow around the school, meaning it needs no air conditioning. It is solar powered. That building on the right is a shoe factory whose big roof collects rainwater for the school.

It looks like a wonderful place to go to school, but the particular reason I wanted to mention it is the roof. It’s green and insulates the building, but there’s more to it than that. There’s a philosophy here. As Vietnam rapidly urbanises, many people are leaving farming lifestyles behind. Children are growing up without that traditional connection to nature. So the kindergarten has been designed to retain and encourage an agriculture heritage that could otherwise slip away. The whole roof will eventually serve as a vegetable garden, tended by staff and children together. They may live in the city, but the children will still grow and enjoy their own food, in a building that cleverly combines technology and tradition.

http://makewealthhistory.org/2015/03/13/building-of-the-week-the-farming-kindergarten/
BOOK AND ON-LINE PUBLICATION REVIEWS

The Brainwaves Channel

Pasi Sahlberg is our ENIRDELM friend currently teaching at Harvard Graduate School of Education. His Facebook entries are a mine of good links and one of the richest is the following: [https://www.youtube.com/user/TheBrainwavesChannel/playlists](https://www.youtube.com/user/TheBrainwavesChannel/playlists). It contains large numbers of links to short videos of a constellation of leading thinkers, academics and educators who present their insights into current and continuing educational issues. The videos are grouped by theme, for example, 65 videos on Educational Change, Improvement and Leadership; 11 on Project-based Learning; 33 on Global Education; 42 on Creativity, Innovation and Intelligence. - only four of the many themes. Pasi himself (Finnish Lessons), Michael Fullan (Maximising Principal Impact) and Andy Hargreaves (Professional Capital) are among the contributors to the themes on Leadership.

European Journal of Education goes on-line

The first issue of the celebratory Volume 50 of the [European Journal of Education](http://www.eje-jee.org/)(EJE) is now online. Issue 1, entitled What is Learning For?, will be free-to-download throughout 2015. This significant milestone in the history of EJE, has been marked by internal changes, as well as by many important and far-reaching developments, both in Europe and in other regions of the world. Discussions and debates in the world of education over the past five decades have been fuelled by complex educational developments often in connection to economic, social, technological, political, and ecological developments. This anniversary volume introduces an innovative new feature. In addition to the academic articles, there is a selection of "thought pieces" in which five significant thinkers and actors in education to reflect on the question: "What is Learning For?" Their answers are thought provoking and stimulating. There will be similar short pieces in each of the four 50th anniversary issues. The journal is edited by the European Institute of Education and Social Policy. 

Future issues will be:

**Issue 2: Learning to Be.** Guest Editor: David Istance (online June 2015)

**Issue 3: Education and Social Transformation.** Guest Editor: Richard Desjardins (online September 2015)

**Issue 4: The challenges of learning in a changing world.** The second part of the issue will draw together key debates explored in Volume 50 looking forward to emerging challenges. Guest editors: Edith Hooge and Jean Gordon (online December 2015)


The author was the long-time superintendent of the Scarsdale school district in New York, one of the most successful in the country and now a professor of school leadership at Bank Street College of Education. [http://www.commondreams.org/views/2015/04/10/guiding-principles-more-enlightened-us-education-policy](http://www.commondreams.org/views/2015/04/10/guiding-principles-more-enlightened-us-education-policy) This link is to an article he wrote in the Washington Post. Here is an extract:

"Current policy tries to force improvement by holding educators accountable for students’ test scores and by creating competition..."
among teachers and schools. But these strategies are not improving learning appreciably, let alone creating schools for the 21st century. According to the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), younger children’s learning improved most in the 1970’s, before the accountability era. Since the late 1980’s, their gains have been modest, while 17 year-olds’ scores have been essentially flat. Additionally, we’ve made little recent progress in closing achievement gaps. There was a large improvement in reading between 1971 and 1980 and a smaller one after 1980, for example. However, it’s narrowed by just four points in the NCLB [No Child Left Behind] years. the accountability and competition strategy has too often undermined the quality of education. Test prep has displaced efforts to make learning interesting and inspiring. Curriculums have gotten narrower. Educators have become increasingly demoralized. And growing numbers of parents are angry about a testing system on overkill. Instead of trying to improve education by the numbers so that performance converges on a low average, we need to establish ’schools of tomorrow’ that will redefine what and how students learn in order to lift all of them up...

Now more than ever, we need leadership that can work across divides, create shared understanding and thereby shape a common agenda that works for all children. That agenda must be about quality. First and foremost, it has to concentrate on the work of fostering accomplished, self-motivated faculties. We need to spend less time waging war on teachers and more time building a professional teaching force that attracts the most talented and committed people. Leaders at every level must develop trust, listen to others’ wisdom, and advocate for the public schools. High expectations should be grounded in a high international standard of performance and in evidence about what works.

McGill goes on to outline principles:

1. A collective commitment to quality.
2. An accomplished, self-motivated professional staff drawn from a strong, diverse applicant pool.
3. Board and professional leaders who guide the schools in a positive direction.
4. High expectations grounded in teachers’ own scholarship, the demands of a rich curriculum, assessments that get at “un-measurables” like critical thinking, and a high international standard of performance.
5. A culture in which students and teachers are learners.

Like so much educational leadership and policy discourse, McGill is questioning the shortcomings of the cage of testing and accountability that has imprisoned teachers and leaders for many years now. But like so many of the fine words we hear within our own network, the concern for process seems to be disconnected from the reality of the trajectory America and the rest of the planet is on. Educators should be leading the race to save our planet and societies from the exponentially growing impact of human activity. Even this critique of the constraints of the failures of the testing regime seems to stay within the cage of high international standard of performance – implying that education should still support business-as-usual as economies compete to race beyond the carrying capacity of the natural and resource systems that have allowed humans to expand their impact at a now uncontrollable rate. Quality? Self-motivation? Positive direction? High expectations? Culture? For what ends? To maintain the competitive race to catastrophe or to bring runaway global human impact under control? Not only do we have a testing system on overkill, our societies too are ‘on overkill’ and educational and political leadership seem largely unaware of this ‘race to catastrophe’.
INSTITUTIONAL PROFILES

Drumcondra Education Centre, Dublin - 2015 ENIRDELM Conference Host

The Drumcondra Education Centre, host of ENIRDELM 2015, was established in 1974. Since its inception, the Centre has been a leader in the development of a national network of Education Centres of which there are currently 21 full-time and 9 part-time across Ireland. Drumcondra Education Centre is situated on the campus of St. Patricks’ Drumcondra, which has been involved in the education and training of Primary Teachers since 1875. St. Patrick’s, Mater Dei Institute of Education and the Church of Ireland College of Education are now engaged in integrating with Dublin City University (DCU) in a process known as the DCU Incorporation. This development will create a fifth faculty within DCU - a world-class Institute of Education which will be based on the St Patrick’s College Campus.

The core business of the Drumcondra Education Centre is the design and delivery of continuing professional development initiatives for school communities - Primary and Post-primary schools and Further Education (FE) Colleges, both at a national and local level. The Centre has a strong tradition of innovation and excellent service and has firmly established networks, both educational and business, to assist it in the service it provides to its education community. As outlined in the Education Act 1998 section 37(1), Education Centres are statutory bodies under the aegis of the Department of Education and Skills and defined as: “...a place in which services are provided for schools, teachers, parents, School Boards of Management and other relevant persons which support them in carrying out their functions in respect of the provision of education which is recognised for that purpose by the Minister........”

Drumcondra Education Centre is one of the largest Education Centres in the national network and caters for the catchment area of Dublin North City and County: over 200 primary schools, 75 post-primary schools and FE Colleges and approximately 5,000 teachers who form its main client base. 

www.ecdrumcondra.ie

Open University, UK  http://www.open.ac.uk/

Universities risk becoming irrelevant and irresponsible if they don’t equip staff to deal with the digital age, said Martin Bean, vice-chancellor of the Open University, in the 2014 Sir John Cass’s Foundation Lecture at the Cass Business School in London. He focused on the tyranny of conventional wisdom, particularly in education, where “disruptive innovation” is forcing people to reconsider the very foundations of learning and teaching.

In the world of education, conventional wisdom has students sitting at desks, facing a teacher who stands at the front doing his or her level best to impart knowledge. It’s a model that has endured for literally thousands of years. But as the Open University has proved over four decades, it is not the only way to teach.
Bean said today’s young people are ‘digital natives’. “They have grown up swiping and clicking as well as reading and writing: their smartphones are glued to their hands. They can’t conceive of a world before Google, YouTube and Twitter. “When they have a question, they google the answer. When they want to know what’s happening, they check Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram and a million other forms of social media. They have friends living thousands of miles away and may spend hours chatting to them each day even though they’ve never met. “If education doesn’t keep up with this changing environment, we risk the sector becoming irrelevant and even irresponsible.”

Bean said the Open University was created to become a disruptive force in education and has challenged conventional wisdom in its admissions policies, in pioneering distance learning, and in partnerships with business. This is reflected in the 65 million downloads on iTunes U, the six million views each year of videos the Open University shares on its YouTube channel and the fact that all undergraduates receive their course material digitally on mobiles and PCs. One recent example of transformation can be seen in the proliferation of massive open online courses, better known as MOOCs. FutureLearn, sponsored by the Open University and launched in October 2013, is the first United Kingdom MOOC platform and has welcomed more than 1.4 million course sign-ups with its 40 ‘world-class’ partners.


European Schoolnet

European Schoolnet is a network of 31 European Ministries of Education, based in Brussels, Belgium. As a not-for-profit organisation, it aims to bring innovation in teaching and learning to its key stakeholders: Ministries of Education, schools, teachers, researchers, and industry partners. Here is a description of their 2014 conference: #EMINENT2014 - Experts Meeting in Education Networking is an annual event organised by European Schoolnet. The 2014 edition "Assessing key competences: shifting paradigms" took place on 13-14 November 2014, in Zurich, Switzerland.

Policy experimentation has been at the heart of European Schoolnet's work since its early days. At EMINENT 2014, we dedicated part of the programme to innovative education policy and presented to Ministries of Education, industry partners and other stakeholders involved in education the latest results from innovative projects such as iTEC, inGenious, Creative Classrooms Lab, eSkills for jobs 2014, Living Schools Lab and theeSafety label.

Besides innovation in education, we also explored the notion of assessment and the current issues around this topic, such as those highlighted in the European Commission’s communication on “Opening Up Education”, which underlines the need to “explore and test, in cooperation with stakeholders and Member States, digital competence frameworks and self-assessment tools for learners, teachers and organisations”.

This link contains a video of the keynote speech: http://www.eun.org/about/eminent;jsessionid=E2FC9707BB3CE2F5AD17FE0E4676325C
CHINESE LANGUAGE LESSONS IN ENGLISH PRIMARY SCHOOLS:


SCHOOL MEALS FROM AROUND EUROPE

UKRAINE  FRANCE
RESPECT YOUR PARENTS

THEY PASSED SCHOOL WITHOUT GOOGLE.

PEOPLE NOWADAYS

Help me!
I'm not bossy!
I have skills...leadership skills!!
Understand?