



Developing student's core competences and principal's mission.

- **A European perspective.**

This presentation focuses on European best practices enabling principals to transform their schools.

It is the result of my work as a practitioner, involved in European and international professional associations of school principals since 1998.

If we want :

to engage ourselves for more democracy
and more equity at school,

to prepare our youth for lifelong
learning,

to avoid violence, youth unemployment,
lack of interest in school, anxiety about
the future, lack of confidence,

we have to adopt different measures.



5 steps

- **Self evaluation of schools**
- **Distributed school leadership and autonomy**
- **Changes in teacher recruitment**
- **Competence-based training and assessment of teachers and school heads**
- **Cross collaborative activities between business and education world**

First step

Self evaluation of schools

If we want to give students and parents new roles and responsibilities, the first step is to involve them in the internal evaluation of the school.

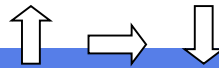
One of the successful practices in Finland is based on this method, while most of the countries still have inspection bodies.

Involvement of students, teachers, parents and school leaders in a collegial work : the “self evaluation profile”




The “self-evaluation profile”

- At the end of the Nineties, a European project was launched in several European countries by the European Commission. This pilot project was called “**evaluating quality in school education**”.
- One of the tools was a practical guide to self-evaluation. I had the opportunity to use the “**self-evaluation profile**” [1] (John Mac Beath, Denis Meuret, Michael Schratz, Lars Jakobsen) and to put the proposed self-evaluation questionnaire into practice in my school three times.
- Each time the questionnaire was used, about 50 representatives/delegates of students, parents, and teachers and 5 members of the leadership team had to answer questions concerning all the aspects of school life. Then we evaluated the weaknesses and strengths together and used the information to prepare the school development plan for the following 3 years.
- These results were taken into account by the staff of our school and then some teachers decided to do peer-supervision. So it is a good way to create a new culture at school and to promote teamwork.



Please, evaluate the school in relation to each area on the following scale.

	AERA	As we are now*	Recent evolution
Out-comes	Academic achievement	++ + - -	
	Personal and social development	++ + - -	
	Pupils destinations	++ + - -	
Classroom	Time as a resource for learning	++ + - -	
	Quality of learning and teaching	++ + - -	
Level	Support for learning difficulties	++ + - -	
School 	School as a learning place	++ + - -	
	School as a social place	++ + - -	
Level	School as a professional place	++ + - -	
Environment	School and home	++ + - -	
	School and community	++ + - -	
	School and work	++ + - -	
Other area			

Legend: ++ :major strengths in this area, + : strengths outweighs weaknesses, - : weaknesses outweigh strengths, : major weaknesses in this area .

The arrows indicate the trends since the previous evaluation two years before in the given area: upwards arrow means improvement, etc.

Second step

Distributed school leadership and autonomy are required to enable individualized learning :

Competence-based learning, integrating initiative and responsibility for the learner and for all the partners working inside and outside the school.

Second step

To change learning methods at my school and to remind my teachers of this fact, I posted this statement on the door of the teacher's room in our school [2] (Joyce, B.R. & Showers, B):

5% of learners will transfer a new skill into their practice as a result of theory.

10% will transfer a new skill into their practice as a result of theory and demonstration.

20% will transfer a new skill into their practice as a result of theory, demonstration and practice.

25% will transfer a new skill into their practice as a result of theory, demonstration, practice and feedback.

90% will transfer a new skill into their practice as a result of theory, demonstration, practice, feedback and coaching.

Second step

We need to implement a “**school-based innovation**”, allowing **personalized learning** with :

- **not an “age” but a “stage” approach**
- **“bottom up”** instead of “top-down” management
- **“empowerment”**, allowing teachers and school heads to have expanded responsibilities.
- 3 long terms replaced by 5 or 6 terms
- **flexible time management** in the school : variable blocks of time are a flexible resource for teachers
- a **new design for buildings** and learning spaces,
- **flexible student groups**

With a rigid organization based on classes, where teaching is the same for all, we will have thousands of students dropping out each year.

Third step

Teacher recruitment :



Access to studies leading to become a teacher must be selective, because this profession requires personal and social skills, and the choice of candidates should not only be on purely intellectual criteria, but including "soft skills".

Among the six "**soft skills**", which are usually required by employers, five are developed through involvement in youth organizations: communication, teamwork, decision-making, organizational skills and self-confidence.

Future teachers have to get an approach to teaching that goes **beyond traditional subject boundaries**. They also have to be trained as "**leaders**" in **management and finance** because they will have to organize external partnerships.

Teachers will have to recognize that "**co-construction**" is at the basis of knowledge and to be aware of the necessity to integrate the influence of **non-formal and informal education**.



Third step

A reminder of the 8
key competences

- Recommendation [2006/962/EC](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 on key competences for lifelong learning. The framework describes the essential knowledge, skills and attitudes related to each of these 8 key competences:
- **communication in the mother tongue,**
- **communication in foreign languages,**
- **mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology,**
- **digital competence,**
- **learning to learn,**
- **social and civic competences,**
- **sense of initiative and entrepreneurship,**
- **cultural awareness and expression.**

Forth step

Competence-based training and assessment of teachers and schoolheads :

Some European projects offer an initial and in-service training connecting the teachers and school leaders with European institutions, research institutes, universities, science centres, companies , associations involved in science, arts, finance education, ... They learn to work with external partners of the school..

Forth step

**Among these projects : “Hands’on, Brains’on”,
Etwinning, ELOS, ELICIT, for teacher training**

**and, concerning school leadership : the European
project ESLN - European School Leadership
Network – which I was part of the steering group (in
2004-05-06) and then the EPNoSL - European Policy
Network on School Leadership (2013-14-15)**

Fifth step

Cross collaborative activities between business and education world :

Self commitment, personal development, innovation driven by ICT ... companies and schools have a lot in common and much to share. To let students develop an awareness , autonomy , the ability to make choices and take responsibility, discover their own motivations and potential, we have to involve companies in the daily life of the schools.

Companies have to influence the design of student learning methods, of school buildings, adapted to the 21st century, enabling teachers to work with assistants, external partners, practicing teamwork.

Fifth step

We should consider the company as "a developer of talent" and take successful and inspiring practices in Europe into account, mostly introduced by a **public-private partnership Foundation**, initiating change at school :

- JETNET (NL) in the field of STEM education, promoting the "triple helix approach"
- WKÖ (Austria) for entrepreneurship education
- CYFI (worldwide) for social inclusion through financial education.



Conclusion

- To face new challenges in our societies and to develop innovation and creativity in our digital world, we have to benefit from exchanging knowledge and practices .
- New contents, new competences, new stakeholders inside and outside the school : we have to define a new role and new responsibilities for all principals.



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2015-2016 : Member of the EU STEM Coalition [EU STEM Coalition – Home](#) Member of a working group on women entrepreneurship at the EIT [European Institute of Innovation & Technology \(EIT\)](#) and involved in the activities of the OECD on financial education (2012-2016) <http://www.financial-education.org/home.html>

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