

GOVERNING EDUCATION AND COORDONATING EFFORTS WITHIN AND ACROSS NATIONAL STATES

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PRESENTATION :

The French situation is only a concrete background that can be used as a case study. The 5 strategies and tools proposed are all to be considered according to the situation and the experience of the participants

CASE STUDY : THE YELLOW VESTS CRISIS is partly the result of the French educational policy.

THE DEMANDS OF THE "YELLOW VESTS» at the end of 2018 – not to compare with the violent activities now in Sept. 2019 - were about:

1 / Higher “buying power”

Expecting more public services or subsidies from the state instead of demanding better conditions to gain new skills, to prepare a career development, to obtain the income needed to buy these goods and services

2 / Social inequalities

The social inequalities revealed by international assessments explain the lack of perspective for a large part of the population. In France, more than 100.000 young people drop out each year without a diploma.

Andreas Schleicher [1] Director of Education at the OECD, takes a critical look at the French system: “The school system is too focused on manufacturing the elite and must change its state of mind as its organization. It seems that the system does not understand the needs of society”... “According to the latest Pisa study (2015) on the educational assessment of OECD countries, the percentage of 15-year-olds in failure has risen in France from 15% to 20% in ten years (nearly 20% of a generation)”... “School failure exists in many other countries, but elsewhere there is often a second chance. How can you expect students and parents to trust the school?” in L’Express –2016. Feb. 26th

The result is a feeling of confinement which is at the origin of this spontaneous revolt of the "yellow vests".

3 / Anxiety about the future of their children

It is usual to call “critical thinking” in the French school, the ability of teachers to warn

against a society that is not good in itself. "Critical thinking" in European countries inspired by John DEWEY and the "learning by doing" is trained by teachers convinced that society will become what their students will be able to create.

In such a situation, it is not surprising that some parents are afraid of the future. Their children's and grandchildren's schooling is not so far from theirs, leading to unemployment or to jobs they know well - providing neither autonomy nor good pay.

THE REALITY: Lack of skills

The gap between the expected skills and the actual skills of jobseekers is growing rather than gradually closing.

According to the association *Think Young*, the current situation in Europe - and even more so in the future - is alarming because of this distortion. While 74% of educators believe that students leaving school have the skills they need for jobs in the 21st century, only 38% of students and 35% of companies agree.

French people who benefit from public services or subsidies distributed to them should be encouraged to make work, innovation, business creation and development, savings and investment efforts. etc. Therefore, they have to be trained at school in STEM, entrepreneurship, economy and finance. Most people do not understand the relation between high taxes for companies and consequences such as lack of growth and unemployment.

A. Schleicher [1]: "According to our Talis study, French middle school teachers favor group work less than in other countries. They give less exercises differentiated according to the difficulties and are poorly trained on digital tools".

At school the French would have had to learn to question, to argue, to search by themselves and in groups for plausible explanations, to confront their convictions with those of young people from other countries but also to develop projects by themselves. Instead of that they have learned to be silent, to write, to learn sometimes without understanding, to accept sooner or later not to be part of the "happy few". Failing to assert themselves at school, they try to exist on social networks or elsewhere then in the street, to escape anonymity.

THE POSSIBILITIES : The power to act or "empowerment"

"Empowerment" is the common goal for most European educational systems, France excepted.

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.

In the international evaluations, the competence "problem solving" ranks the French young people in last position in the comparison with their European neighbors because of teaching practices not allowing to acquire the capacity to make decisions, to take risks, to get self-confidence, to practice team work and make use of leadership skills and to be trained with digital tools.

A large number of professions will disappear, others will be deeply modified (lawyers, doctors, ...) but

others will appear. All these professional activities have in common that they must first and foremost call for mobility - not necessarily geographical - above all the ability to train continuously less by necessity than out of desire.

Some unrelated jobs will become connected and will allow unpredictable career changes. By reasoning in terms of skills, it will be possible to redirect several times during a lifetime.

The corollary of the energy transition is the need to develop STEM - science, technology, engineering, mathematics - from an early age.

France has to be inspired by the best in Europe and around the world to transform its educational system in order to reduce youth unemployment by abandoning any centralization. Competence-based learning, integrating initiative and responsibility for the learner and for all the partners working inside and outside the school means that we no longer have a "command and control policy" from the centre, **no longer a vertical hierarchy**.

Conclusion: Bureaucratic centralism is no longer the adequate response to this situation.

HOW TO TRANSFORM A HIERARCHICAL EDUCATION SYSTEM INTO A DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM WITH AUTONOMOUS SCHOOLS

This presentation focuses on European best practices enabling principals to transform their individual schools and consequently obsolete state organizations. It is the result of my work as a practitioner involved in professional associations of school principals since 1998 (ESHA- AEDE-ICP). I presented this topic first in Beijing in October 2013, then in Veszprem (Hungary) in June 2014 and in Shanghai in September 2014, in Helsinki and Zug in 2015, in Guiyang (China) in 2016, in France several times.

To engage 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, among youngsters, school leaders have to adopt different measures to change the school culture and the school governance at individual school level :

- 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

1. Self-evaluation of schools:

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.**

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**" [3] (John Mac Beath, Denis Meuret, Michael Schratz, Lars Jakobsen - 2000) and to put the proposed self-evaluation questionnaire into practice in my school three times. (More information on the self-evaluation profile [here](#)).

The “self-evaluation profile”: Please, evaluate the school in relation to each area on the following scale.

	AERA	As we are now*	Recent evolution
Outcomes	Academic achievement	++ + - --	
	Personal and social development	++ + - --	
	Pupils destinations	++ + - --	
Class room Level	Time as a resource for learning	++ + - --	
	Quality of learning and teaching	++ + - --	
	Support for learning difficulties	++ + - --	
School Level	School as a learning place	++ + - --	
	School as a social place	++ + - --	
	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.

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.

Result 1 : 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.

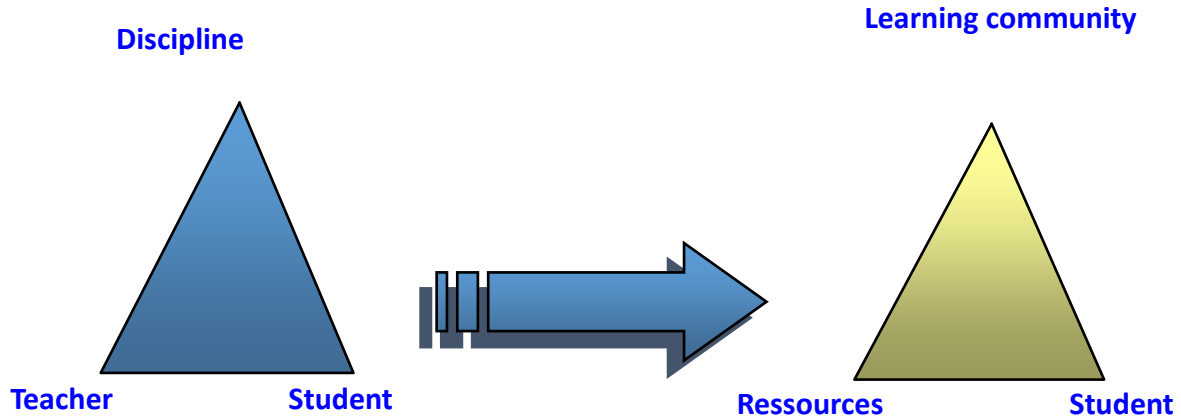
2. Distributed school leadership and autonomy are required to enable individualized learning

Instead of huge institutions, we need to implement a “school-based innovation” [4] (David H Hargreaves), allowing personalized learning with

- not an “age” but a “stage” approach
- “bottom up” instead of “top-down”
- "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

Some experiments – like Slash 21 in the Netherlands – have shown that 13 years old students are able to choose what they want to learn, able to decide when and how, able to know why, connecting learning with their own future.



The first model should belong to the past. The new model of the 21st century, which in a way prefigures lifelong education and then professional life will profoundly change the role played by the state and the local authorities, which have to assume much wider responsibilities in those areas.

Result 2 : If we wish to stop thousands of students dropping out each year, we have to get rid of our rigid organization based on classes, where teaching is the same for all.

3. Teacher recruitment

Access to studies leading to become a teacher should not only be based on purely intellectual criteria but including personal and social skills.

A school needs teacher with professional skills and personal commitment. They also have to be facilitators, team members, researchers, lifelong learners, reflective practitioners. The "**soft skills**", which are usually required by employers, can be 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.

Teacher training must prepare for life and work in a "learning community". 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**.

Result 3 : 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.

4. Competence-based training and assessment of teachers and school heads

Collaborative practices enable teachers and students in some European countries to develop

transversal skills mentioned among the “8 European key competences”, including science education, entrepreneurship education, financial education.

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.**

In the past decades, European projects – like **eTwinning**, **ELOS**, **ELICIT** then **Erasmus+** also have enabled European teachers and other staff to enhance project-based and problem-based learning whilst also addressing trans-disciplinary questions.

The European project **ESLN** - European School Leadership Network (2004-2006) which I was part of the steering group (in 2004-05-06) and then the **EPNoSL** - European Policy Network on School Leadership (2012-2015) - developing school leadership, aimed to allow our schools to implement “lifelong learning” and a “competence-based education”.

Result 4 : A “European” initial and in-service training will connect the future teachers and school leaders with European institutions, research institutes, universities, science centres, companies and associations involved in science, arts, finance education.

5. 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 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 and/or of school buildings, adapted to the 21st century, enabling teachers to work with assistants, external partners thus practicing teamwork.

We should consider the company as “a developer of talent”, take the European recommendations and some successful and inspiring practices in Europe into account:

- “**MODUS 21 (MODUS F)**” school experimentation led both by the Bavarian Ministry and companies, now part of the Bavarian Education and Teaching Act <https://bildungspakt-bayern.de/modus-f/>
- **Jetnet** <http://www.jet-net.nl/english> Jet-Net, Youth and Technology Network Netherlands, is a joint initiative of leading Dutch technology companies and secondary schools (triple helix approach).
- In Germany, the publishing company **Universum** within the framework of the **Jugend und Bildung** Foundation training : <http://www.jugend-und-bildung.de> <http://www.lehrer-online.de/>
- The “Entrepreneurial Skills Pass” proposed by the Austrian Chamber of Commerce of Vienna - WKÖ in Austria and Junior Achievement <http://entrepreneurialskillspass.eu/>
- Developing financial literacy through private-public partnerships, training teachers and students : **CYFI Child and Youth Finance International** is an NGO, working

worldwide <http://childfinanceinternational.org>

- The objectives of the EU STEM Coalition [5] <http://www.stemcoalition.eu/> are to support member states in the development of new STEM strategies based on the triple helix approach (Government/Region – Companies – Schools). The European Commission has recently approved the next project titled "Towards a European STE(A)M platform", aiming to upscale the EU STEM Coalition network.
- The KICS - Knowledge & Innovation Communities - of the EIT [6] [European Institute of Innovation & Technology \(EIT\)](http://www.eit.europa.eu/) on Climate, Digital, Food, Health, InnoEnergy, Manufacturing, Raw materials, Urban mobility, based on the Knowledge triangle : Business, Education, Research, show how transdisciplinary work could be articulated at school and therefore how to approach the initial training of teachers, which has necessarily become holistic and transdisciplinary.

Result 5 : Companies should be allowed to provide training content and to be more involved in the assessment of skills when training periods are set up. The innovation would be to promote all these new skills - economy, finance, STEM, by a School-Business collaboration from an early age.

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.
This presentation shows how school leaders can change the school's autonomy at their level. The other decisions depend on the will of the ministers. It is our role and our responsibility - as school leaders - to influence our governments to engage in the necessary reforms.

REFERENCES

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[4] System Redesign – 1 –The road to transformation in education - David H Hargreaves – Sept, 2007, Ed. Peter Chambers, for SSAT
[5] EU STEM Coalition <http://www.stemcoalition.eu/>
[6] EIT (European Institute of Innovation & Technology) <https://eit.europa.eu/>