



TOMORROW'S COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL

**UPDATING SKILLS TO
MEET FUTURE REQUIREMENTS**

SKILLS & COMPETENCIES ARE FINLAND'S MOST VITAL CAPITAL

Education is the key to a well-functioning society, competitiveness and economic growth. Education has direct links with the income levels, health, wellbeing and civic participation of the Finnish people. The significance of education for the entire cohort is high in Finland, as skills are Finland's most vital capital in a global operating environment that is undergoing a rapid change and development.

In recent years, the skills of young people in Finland have taken a turn for the worse: in the latest PISA results, Finnish students' learning outcomes in mathematics showed the second greatest decline in the OECD countries.

The way young people live and think have changed. Attitudes that obstruct learning have grown stronger, and other activities are competing for young people's attention besides the school. For this reason, the significance of **competence and learning in future society, motivation and teaching** were selected as the flagship themes of the project Basic education of the future.

The working groups appointed for this project, which consisted of 45 experts of various fields, produced descriptions of the current status of teaching, the phenomena associated with it, and the reasons for the deteriorating learning outcomes.

The working groups put together proposals that will support a society based on education and contribute to **updating Finnish competence levels to meet the needs of the 21st century.**

The efforts of the working groups were coordinated by a broad-based steering group chaired by Minister of Education and Communications Krista Kiuru. The steering group contained representatives of the eight parliamentary parties, the Trade Union of Education in Finland, the Association of Finnish Principals, the Association of Finnish Independent Education Employers, the Trade Union for the Public and Welfare Sectors, the Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities, the Finnish Parents' League, and the Office of the Ombudsman for Children and secondary level student organisations.



THEMES DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

SIGNIFICANCE OF COMPETENCE AND LEARNING AS AN ASPECT OF SOCIETAL DEVELOPMENT

Chair Eeva-Riitta Pirhonen, Secretary Tommi Karjalainen

TRENDS IN LEARNING OUTCOMES

Jarkko Hautamäki, Sirkku Kupiainen, Jorma Kuusela, Juhani Rautopuro, Patrik Scheinin and Jouni Välijärvi

EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION IN EDUCATION

Sirkka Ahonen, Venla Bernelius, Mira Kalalahti, Osmo Kivinen, Risto Rinne and Piia Seppänen

RESOURCES, LEARNING OUTCOMES, INCOME LEVELS AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

Tanja Kirjavainen, Tuomas Pekkarinen and Roope Uusitalo

POSITION OF MINORITIES IN EDUCATION

Heidi Harju-Luukkainen, Katri Kuukka, Heini Paavola and Mirja Tarnanen

LEARNING MOTIVATION, SCHOOL SATISFACTION, TEACHING ARRANGEMENTS AND TEACHING METHODS

Chair Aulis Pitkälä, Secretaries Najat Ouakrim-Soivio and Aija Rinkinen

LEARNING MOTIVATION, SCHOOL SATISFACTION AND WELLBEING

Päivi Harinen, Tommi Laitio, Markku Niemivirta, Jari-Erik Nurmi and Katarina Salmela-Aro

LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS AND METHODS

Mikko Jordman, Kristian Kiili, Kirsti Lonka, Allan Schneiz and Marja Vauras

DEVELOPMENT OF TEACHING ARRANGEMENTS

Pasi Hieta, Olli Hietanen, Bob Karlsson, Esa Parkkali and Anneli Rautiainen

DEVELOPMENT OF TEACHER EDUCATION

Ritva Jakku-Sihvonen, Tuula Koskimies-Sirén, Jari Lavonen, Kati Mäkitalo-Sigel and Arja Virta

THE PRINCIPLE OF LOCAL SCHOOL

- **WE** must hold on to universal and public basic education that is free of charge and non-selective. Education policy must strive to eliminate links between learning outcomes and a student's economic, social or ethnic background, living area or gender.
- **REALISATION** of the local school principle must be supported by the municipalities. The educational administration must ensure that the parents' possibilities of choosing their children's schools and the schools' student selection practices, including the use of aptitude tests or different weightings in the curricula of various classes, will not undermine equal access to education.

FINANCIAL RESOURCES

- **EDUCATION** demonstrably has a strong impact on income levels of individuals and growth of the national economy, and allocation of resources adequate to guarantee a high standard of teaching in basic education must be ensured in the future.
- **POSITIVE** discrimination of schools with a disadvantaged socio-economic background and poor learning outcomes will be supported financially.
- **EDUCATION** providers must have adequate resources to keep the size of teaching groups sufficiently small. The most important goal is to achieve a level of skills that meets the needs of the 21st century.

OPERATING CULTURE OF THE SCHOOL AND STRUCTURE OF THE SCHOOL DAY

- **THE SCHOOL** will be developed as an ethical and learning community where pupils have a voice and a choice, and also responsibility for their own learning.
- **THE OPERATING** culture and structures of the school must support the pupils' learning, wellbeing and participation. The school must also create and support friendships.
- **THE SCHOOL** is part of society that surrounds it. Cooperation between the home and the school must be open and dialogical.
- **THE OPERATING** culture and leadership in the school will be developed to foster linguistic awareness and cultural and linguistic diversity.
- **GUIDANCE** counselling and multi-professional cooperation will be stepped up and structured better along a student's educational path and in its transition points.
- **NATIONAL** evaluation policies must serve the principle of equal access to education.

LEARNING AND PEDAGOGY

- **The range** of pedagogical solutions that support both communal and individual learning must be expanded.
- **Learning** difficulties and other learning-related challenges must be prevented, and they must be addressed as soon as possible in the pre-primary education or, at the latest, during the first class.
- **The students** must be offered opportunities for challenge-driven and phenomenon-centred learning. The school will offer integral units of learning that tie together the content learnt in different subjects during the year.
- **School** assessment practices will be improved. Assessment and grading must be equal and non-discriminating, and assessment should be versatile and support learning.

PRE-SERVICE AND IN-SERVICE TRAINING FOR TEACHERS

- **RESEARCH-BASED** teacher training will be developed further in cooperation with the universities and municipalities.
- **CONTINUITY** must be ensured in the pre-service training and professional development of teachers.
- **A DEVELOPMENT** programme of teacher training will be put together as follow-up to a previous national project aiming to develop teacher training and pedagogical qualifications.
- **TEACHER** trainees must make use of information and communication technology and various virtual environments in their studies.
- **THE CONTENTS** of pre-service training will increasingly stress versatile student assessment based on set criteria, education in gender equality, human rights and democracy, and multicultural competence.
- **PRE-SERVICE** and in-service training must be evaluated at the national level.
- **A NATIONAL** development programme to support teacher trainers' professional competence will be launched.

LEADERSHIP

- **MANAGEMENT** systems will be developed, and adequate resources for leadership will be guaranteed.
- **PRINCIPALS'** qualification requirements must be reviewed in the light of the changes in their job description.
- **PRINCIPALS'** education will be developed and leadership skills improved. Personal development plans must be drawn up for principals.

LIFELONG PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF TEACHERS

- **SYSTEMATIC** in-service training activities are a precondition for developing the professional competence of teachers. To achieve this goal, the concept and contents of in-service training need to be redefined.
- **THE NATIONAL** in-service training structure and funding system must be updated to support both teachers' systematic professional development and the development of schools.
- **IN-SERVICE** training will be organised in different forms and tailored for the various needs and stages of a teacher's professional development.
- **THE EDUCATION** provider will ensure that a personal development plan is drawn up for each teacher and that the plan is updated yearly.
- **INDUCTION** training must be provided for new teachers following a dedicated induction programme.
- **LEGISLATIVE** provisions on teachers' right and duty to take part in in-service training or projects that promote their professional development will be adopted.

TEACHERS' WORKING DUTIES

- **THE DEVELOPMENT** and testing of different working time models will be continued, and these models will be introduced more widely.
- **TEACHERS'** in-service training will be provided outside the teaching hours, and the number of training days laid down in collective agreements will be increased from three to five a year.
- **WORKING** time reserved for developmental activities will be increased, and this time will be used more flexibly.
- **THE SPECIAL** tasks listed in collective agreements will be redefined, and their inclusion in the teachers' working time will be reviewed.

IN THE FUTURE THE BASIC EDUCATION SHOULD RESPOND TO THE REQUIREMENTS THAT NASCENT WORKING LIFE AND SOCIAL LIFE ARE ASSIGNING

EDUCATION RESEARCH

- **THE MOST** important achievement of the Finnish comprehensive school is educational equality. Safeguarding this equality and its further development must be put at the centre of multidisciplinary social research. Complementary areas of research should include research in the effectiveness of education that addresses development needs arising from societal change and is relevant to the reforms that are on-going or about to be launched.
- **AN EXTENSIVE** and long-term national programme of follow-up studies will be developed that is based on policy programmes and that ensures the participation of the universities, the Academy of Finland, the Finnish National Board of Education, the National Education Evaluation Centre and the Government.
- **RESEARCH** in the national economy impacts of education will be stepped up.
- **RESEARCH** will be conducted to evaluate the significance of and changes in task motivation and motivation to study and attend school.
- **THE PEDAGOGICAL** development of schools will be supported by collecting longitudinal data for research purposes.
- **THE OVERALL** impacts of municipal finances on education provision must be examined. This examination should also address the impacts of other changes within the administrative branch.
- **FREE** choice of schools in basic education will be studied.

The publication in Finnish (*Tulevaisuuden peruskoulu*) can be downloaded via: www.minedu.fi/julkaisut

A NATIONAL WEB-BASED SURVEY SUPPORTS THE DEVELOPMENT OF TEACHING

As part of efforts to develop basic education, the Ministry of Education and Culture sounded out the views of basic education pupils and their guardians, students, teachers, principals and other education sector experts of the current status of basic education, phenomena associated with it, reasons for the deteriorating learning outcomes and needs to develop basic education.

OTHER MEASURES LAUNCHED TO REFORM BASIC EDUCATION

Simultaneously with the Basic education of the future project, other extensive national projects aiming to develop basic education are also under way. These include a reform of the basic education core curriculum, launching a model for development plans of local education and education providers, and the operation of a network of development schools.

Finland has managed to make the dream of individual freedom and equal opportunities come true: with ambition and hard work, you can pursue education and training and become anything from a plumber to a police officer, a doctor, a film star, a sales assistant, an athlete or a politician, regardless of whether you were born in a mansion or a cottage, a girl or a boy, or healthy or disabled. The Finnish education system has successfully engaged our entire small nation in building the welfare state. While Finnish schools have even been acclaimed as the best in the world, the real strength of our education system lies in equality: there are no bad schools. The basic education of the future will meet the requirements of an evolving working life and society.



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THE ASSOCIATION OF FINNISH PRINCIPALS

THE ASSOCIATION OF FINNISH
INDEPENDENT EDUCATION EMPLOYERS

THE TRADE UNION FOR
THE PUBLIC AND WELFARE SECTORS

THE ASSOCIATION OF FINNISH LOCAL
AND REGIONAL AUTHORITIES

THE FINNISH PARENTS' LEAGUE

THE OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN FOR CHILDREN

SECONDARY LEVEL STUDENT ORGANISATIONS