SUSTAINABILITY OF EDUCATION – EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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Education system has been developed coherently during the past 40 years.
THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF THE FINNISH EDUCATION SYSTEM

• Equity, equality and high quality
• Teachers’ professionalism and pedagogical autonomy
• Focus on learners and learning, inclusiveness
• All-round development and sustainable well-being
• Lifelong and life-wide learning
CULTURE OF TRUST AND COLLABORATION IN EDUCATION PROMOTES SUSTAINABILITY

- standardised testing or school inspections
- league tables, comparison or competition between schools
- dead ends in the system

**Instead**

- collaborative mindset and dialogue between policy makers, researchers and practitioners
- strong national goals and support systems, flexible structures
- local autonomy and responsibility
- evaluation/assessment as a feedback for improvement
- coherent development (small step policy)
SUSTAINABILITY IN THE CONTEXT OF EDUCATION

• According to the Government Programme (2015) sustainability must be taken into account in all domains of society.
  • Importance of education, health and well-being
• According to SITRA (Finnish Innovation Fund)
  • Sustainable well-being refers to the pursuit of good life within the Earth’s carrying capacity
  • All dimensions of sustainability must be taken into account: economic, social, cultural and ecological
• In education, sustainable development is included in the main purpose of education
CURRICULUM REFORM 2016
Teaching and learning based on the renewed curricula started in August 2016.
According to the Basic Education Act and Decree the main task of basic education is to:

- promote the healthy growth and development of all pupils
- to enhance their development as human beings and as citizens of a democratic society
- create a solid bases for lifelong learning and sustainable well-being
ANALYSING THE WORLD AROUND US

This map is not working!

Source: Hamäläinen, T. 2011
How could we still improve the best features of the system? What kind of future we want to build?

How do we perceive learning? What is a good learning process like?

How is the world changing? What is worth learning in that world?
EXAMINING FOUR PERSPECTIVE OF THE SCHOOL CHANGE

Changing role of teachers and teaching

Changing role of pupils and learning

Changing concepts of learning and competence

World of change

Impact on children’s living environment

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FINDING WHAT IS ESSENTIAL IN THE REFORM

Why?
What?

How?

How every school could be a better learning environment and supporting and encouraging community for meaningful learning and being?

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DEFINING MAIN GOALS OF THE CURRICULUM REFORM 2016

- To enhance *joy and meaningfulness* of learning and the active role of pupils
- To promote *collaboration* in the school community and between schools and their surroundings
- To create a strong basis for *lifelong learning*
- To enhance *sustainable lifestyle and well-being*
SUSTAINABLE REFORM PROCESS: BUILDING THE FUTURE TOGETHER

- Written document
- Collaborative and transparent process

Strong knowledge base and future orientation

- Shared ideas
- Common direction
- Commitment

Teachers’ role was crucial in the process
Local curriculum process was extremely important.
Teachers were negotiating and creating new ideas.
Teachers were solving problems together.
SUSTAINABILITY IN TEACHING AND LEARNING ACCORDING TO THE NEW CORE CURRICULUM

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SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS IN BASIC EDUCATION

Changes in the world unavoidably affect the pupils’ development and well-being. In basic education, pupils learn to encounter pressures for change openly, to assess change critically and to assume responsibility for making choices that build a sustainable future.

Global education as a part of basic education contributes to creating preconditions for fair and sustainable development in line with UN development goals.

Basic education exerts influence as a driver for positive change that contributes to society, both at the national and international level.

(National Core Curriculum for Basic Education 2014)
Focusing on pupils’ experiences

- Competences
- Pupils’ experiences
- School culture

Learning process

Meaningful, enjoyable, sustainable learning

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INCLUDING OBJECTIVES OF SUSTAINABILITY IN ALL AREAS OF SCHOOL WORK

• Value basis
• Learning conception
• School culture
• Learning environments and working approaches
• Transversal competences
• Compulsory and voluntary subjects
• Multidisciplinary learning modules
• Assessment and feedback
• Other activities

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RETHINKING THE VALUE BASIS OF EDUCATION

- Uniqueness of every pupil, right to a good education
- Civilized human being and active citizen
- Cultural diversity as richness
- School as a learning community
- Necessity of sustainable way of life

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RETHINKING THE SCHOOL CULTURE – SCHOOLS AS LEARNING COMMUNITIES

- **Wellbeing and safety in daily life**
- **Learning community**
- **Equity and equality**
- **Participation and democratic action**
- **Environmental responsibility and sustainable future orientation**
- **Interaction and versatile working approaches**
- **Cultural diversity and language awareness**

**Other activities**
- Structure of school days
- Assessment and feedback

**Learning environments and methods**
- Guidance and support
- Subject lessons and multidisciplinary learning modules

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RETHINKING THE COMPETENCES IN BASIC EDUCATION

Transversal competences (promoting every pupils growth as human beings and as citizens) demand:
- knowledge
- skills
- values
- attitudes
- will/volition
RETHINKING SCHOOL SUBJECTS

Promoting sustainability and the development of all transversal competences is included in the task descriptions and objectives of all subjects. Most subjects have emphasized sustainable development also in the main content areas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives for instruction (music, grades 3-6)</th>
<th>Content areas</th>
<th>Transversal competences</th>
<th>Assessment targets</th>
<th>Assessment criteria (for the level 8 / good)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To guide the pupil to recognise the impacts of music on well-being and to ensure the safety of the music-making and sound environment.</td>
<td>C1 – C4</td>
<td>T3</td>
<td>Safe use of music equipment</td>
<td>The pupil uses music equipment while taking into account, for example, the sound and music volume as well as other factors related to safety.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Objectives for instruction (environmental studies, grades 3-6)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Content areas</strong></td>
<td><strong>Transversal competences</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>To support the development of the pupil’s environmental awareness and to guide the pupil to act and become involved in his or her surroundings and community in order to promote sustainable development and to appreciate the significance of sustainable development for him/herself and the world</td>
<td>C1-C6</td>
<td>T3, T7</td>
<td>Sustainable development knowledge and skills</td>
<td>The pupil is able to describe factors that support and threaten the building of a sustainable future, using examples. The pupil is able to describe different methods of protecting and developing his or her surroundings and communities, and to act in a joint community project with guidance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objectives for instruction (religion, grades 7-9)</td>
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<td>Transversal competences</td>
<td>Assessment targets</td>
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<td>To inspire the pupil to reflect on the ethical dimensions of his/her choices and their impacts on well-being and to encourage the pupils to a sustainable way of living</td>
<td>C2, C3</td>
<td>T1, T2, T7</td>
<td>Ethical thinking</td>
<td>The pupil is able to reflect on the ethical dimensions of his/her choices and to explain their influence on the well-being of him/her, other people, and on sustainable development.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<th>Objectives for instruction (chemistry, grades 7-9)</th>
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<th>Transversal competences</th>
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<th>Assessment criteria (for the level 8 / good)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>To guide the pupil to use his/her competence of chemistry in building a sustainable future and to evaluate his/her personal choices in terms of sustainable use of natural resources and product life cycles</td>
<td>C1 – C6</td>
<td>T3, T7</td>
<td>Knowledge and skills of sustainable development from the perspective of chemistry</td>
<td>Using examples, the pupil is able to describe how competence in chemistry is needed for building a sustainable future. The pupils is able to describe different alternatives from the perspective of sustainable use of natural resources and product life cycles.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CREATING NEW TOOLS FOR INTEGRATIVE AND SUSTAINABLE APPROACH

RETHINKING PUPIL ASSESSMENT

LEARNING

Assessment of learning
Assessment as learning
Assessment for learning
Inclusive school

Deep and active learning

Transversal and subject competences

Sustainable way of living and well-being
THANK YOU!

Teachers are the Heart and Soul of Learning Communities

PHOTO: Päivi Nilivaara
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