



WELSmain 2021 - Abstracts

29.09.2021, 15.30 – 16.30 CEST

R5 Educational Change and the Future of Education (Focus System)

Nelly Guet, Alert Education, France

Title: How to transform a hierarchical education system into a democratic system with autonomous schools

In a centralized country like France, the vertical hierarchy is the founding principle that governs the organization of a million civil servants. Educational leaders are expected to develop equity, the ability to act, and to get self-confidence. «Empowerment» is the common goal for most educational systems, France excepted. For that reason, France has to be inspired by the best in Europe to transform its educational system by abandoning any centralization. It is not possible for school principals to change the whole system from being centralized. However, it is possible for them to bring into their own school some autonomy and to run the school in a democratic way with all the stakeholders involved. 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 the 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



Dr. Denis Francesconi, University of Vienna, Austria

Title: The Quality of Life Movement. Indications for the Education Systems

In 2007, the European Commission, the European Parliament, the Club of Rome, the OECD and the WWF hosted a conference titled Beyond GDP (Costanza et al., 2014). The conference was attended by over 650 policy makers, experts and social activists and aimed to criticize the use of GDP (Gross Domestic Product) as an economic indicator of the wealth of nations, to advocate for a society better able to foster wellbeing and quality of life (QoL). The main purpose of this presentation is to introduce the audience to the theoretical and policy dimensions of the «QoL movement» and then to discuss the implications for education systems with particular attention to systemic leadership and educational systems governance. I introduce results from a research project entitled «School for Quality of Life. Policy, practice and theory for a quality of life approach in European school systems». This research project was funded by a «Marie Skłodowska Curie» grant (Horizon 2020). Research methods were text mining, content and discourse analysis, literature review and theoretical analysis. Research design was a parallel mixed method design. This project provides a theoretical framework and empirical evidences for an informed educational policy model to implement quality of life policies within education systems. In particular, I discuss: theories of quality of life; historical and conceptual maps of the Quality of Life movement; indications for the implementation of quality of life policies and initiatives within education systems. Critical aspects of the Quality of Life movement will be also introduced.



Prof. Dr. Ulrich Müller and Dr. Tobias Stricker, Ludwigsburg University of Education, Germany and Prof. Dr. Dawson R. Hancock, University of North Carolina at Charlotte, USA and Prof. Dr. Chuang Wang, University of Macau, China

Title: Implementing ESD in Schools. Perspectives of Principals in Germany, Macau and the USA

To successfully cope with global challenges such as climate change or loss of biodiversity, it will require a substantial change in the way's societies make use of the natural resources of our planet. Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) is expected to support the transformation of societies towards more sustainable ways of thinking, working and living. Although there is a broad range of literature on ESD, little is known about the role of school leadership in ESD. But leadership is crucial for the implementation of ESD. When a school aims at integrating sustainability and ESD, the principal plays a pivotal role. She or he has to support the endeavor wholeheartedly and credibly, organize a participative process of school development, emphasize sustainability and ESD in the daily life of the school, support teaching staff in the application of ESD, and offer students opportunities to launch their own initiatives. The proposed contribution gives a short overview to the status of ESD within Germany, Macau and the United States and a literature review on leadership for ESD in schools. It reports on a study that seeks to investigate what principals in Germany, Macau and the United States do to establish and foster ESD in their school. Finally, a conceptual framework is offered that seeks to support principals with suggestions for practical actions and according management strategies.