The Curriculum Renewal in Basic Education and Teacher Training in Finland
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Ideology of the Finnish National Board of Education for the process of creating the National Core Curricula

- transparency
- collaboration
  - steering group
- interaction
  - feedback rounds

As a result:
- no experimentation period needed
- a lot of autonomy for local authorities in providing education

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## Timetable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Until now</th>
<th>Now - Future</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>autumn 2012</td>
<td>spring 2015 – spring 2016:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- local and national discussions concerning the core curriculum</td>
<td>- local curriculum work going on to be finished</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- the first version prepared by the National Board of Education</td>
<td>autumn term 2016:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- 1st feedback collected spring 2013</td>
<td>- teaching according the the new curricula starts in all schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- the working groups for subject content planning started</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- emphasis on pre-education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>autumn 2013</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- core curriculum work going on</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- 2nd feedback</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- local curriculum work starts:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- organizing: seminars for educational staff, financing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>spring 2014</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- core curriculum work going on</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- 3rd feedback</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- locally:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- inservice training organizing local curriculum work</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>autumn 2014</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- core curricula ready by the end of the year</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Local curriculum work

Source: FNBE, Irmeli Halinen

- Teaching and learning
- Values
- Goals
- Conception
- Cooperation and participation
- Learning environment
- Working methods
- Assessment
- Support guidance
- Content, materials
- Structure of the school day
- Allocation of hours
- School culture
- Main tasks
The school in the past, now and in the future

Parents’ concepts, opinions and values for the curriculum process

A. School memories

What is your best school memory from your school days?

What is your worst memory from your school days?

B. Thoughts about the school now

How do you see the present-day basic school?

What things are better now than in your own school days?

What things are worse now than in your own school days?

C. Thoughts about knowledge, skills and the school of the future

What kind of world would you like your child to live in in the future?

What qualities do you hope your child to gain and develop so that s/he will manage in daily life and working life?

What knowledge and skills should the school of the future specially emphasise?

Design: Merja Kukkonen, February 2014
Some key aims in the reform

• Defining values of education and the *operational culture* at school
  – by teachers, pupils and their parents
• Transversal (generic) competences
• Cross-curricular themes and integration
  – examining phenomena from the perspectives of different fields of knowledge
• Collaborative learning environment
  – school = a learning community
  – collaborative atmosphere
  – promoting the students’ autonomy in studying and school life
  – planning processes: pupils and their parents can participate

→ *joy of learning*!
Transversal competences

• goal: to meet the challenges of the future
• a new way of combining competence-based and subject-based teaching and learning
• local innovative ways in reaching the goals
• competences assessed as a part of subject assessment
Transversal (generic) competences

Thinking and learning to learn

Looking after oneself, managing daily activities, safety

Participation and influence, building the sustainable future

Competence for the world of work, entrepreneurship

ICT-competence

Multiliteracy

Cultural competence, interaction and expression

Development as a human being and as a citizen

Source: FNBE Irmeli Halinen

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### Example: How do the transversal competences show in the curriculum? / Science studies for grades 1-2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opetuksen tavoitteet / Objectives for teaching</th>
<th>Tavoitteisiin liittyvä sisältöalueet / Subject contents related to the objectives</th>
<th>Laaja-alainen osaaminen / Transversal (generic) competences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Merkitys, arvot ja asenteet</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T1 tarjota oppilaalle mahdollisuksia toteuttaa luontaista uteliaisuutta ja auttaa oppilasta kokemaan ympäristööpin asiat merkitykselliseksi itselleen</td>
<td>S1-S6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T2 kannustaa oppilasta iloitsemaan ympäristööpin oppimisesta, omasta osaamisesta ja uusista haasteista sekä harjoittelemana pitkäjänenteistä työskentelyä</td>
<td>S1-S6</td>
<td>L1, L6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T3 tukea oppilaan ympäristöherkkyden kehittymistä ja ohjata oppilasta toimimaan kestävällä tavalla lähiympäristössä ja kouluyhteisössä</td>
<td>S1-S6</td>
<td>L3, L7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective 3: Help the pupil’s sensitivity for the environment and to guide him/her to act in a sustainable way in the environment close to him/her as well as at school</td>
<td>Subject content objectives 1-6</td>
<td>TC skills 3 and 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tutkimisen ja toimimisen taidot</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T4 ohjata oppilasta tutkimaan ja toimimaan sekä liikkumaan ja retkeilemään lähiympäristössään</td>
<td>S2-S4, S6</td>
<td>L3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T5 kannustaa oppilasta ihmettelemaan ja kyselemään sekä käyttämään yhteisiä pohdintoja pienten tutkimusten ja muun toiminnan lähtökohtana</td>
<td>S1-S6</td>
<td>L1, L7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective 5: Urge the pupil to wonder, ask questions and talk with others as a starting point for simple research processes</td>
<td>Subject content objectives 1-6</td>
<td>TC skills 1 and 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T6 ohjata oppilasta tekemään havaintoja ja kokeiluja koulussa ja lähiympäristössä eri aisteja ja yksinkertaisia tutkimusvälineitä käyttäen sekä esittelemään tuloksiaan eri tavoin</td>
<td>S1-S6</td>
<td>L1, L4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The basic idea of the multidisciplinary learning modules = cross-curricular themes

• collaborative classroom practices
  – integrating education and instruction

• objectives
  → emphasizing general educational goals
  → meeting the educational challenges of the time
Multidisciplinary learning modules
= cross-curricular themes
in practice

- multi-disciplinary, phenomenon- and project-based studies
- several teachers work simultaneously with any given number of students
- school subjects specific viewpoints, concepts and methods
- topics and their implementation designed at local and school level
  - the pupils’ developmental phase taken into account
- studying phenomena or topics that are of special interest for students
  - students are expected to participate in the planning process
- minimum: each year at least one multidisciplinary learning module
Example:

Cross-curricular theme: LIGHT

target group: 1.-2. grades

PE

Mother tongue

Environmental studies

Art

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Curriculum renewal and teacher training

- Our students will use the new curriculum after graduating
- Student teachers have been informed about the process from the beginning
## Teaching practice in Joensuu – the structure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Studies in teacher education</th>
<th>Training periods in Teacher Training</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Classroom teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s degree 180 ects</td>
<td>December, first year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orientation practice, 3 ects</td>
<td>Early autumn, usually 3rd year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic practice, 7 ects</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master’s degree 300 ects</td>
<td>Optional time for the student, usually 4th year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied/field practice, 5 ects</td>
<td>Spring term, 4th or 5th year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced practice, 7 ects</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Each teaching practice has a core theme

- **Orientation practice:**
  - Introduction to teacher profession and the teaching, studying and learning processes
  - Brief teaching tasks

- **Basic practice:**
  - The planning of teaching and learning processes
  - Teaching three subjects (28 hours)

- **Advanced practice:**
  - The development of teaching, studying and learning processes and getting an in-depth picture of a teacher’s work
  - 38 hours of teaching mainly whole days

- **Applied practice:**
  - Individual aims, practices and experiences
Curriculum renewal and teacher training

• Seminars
  – Purpose and meaning of the curriculum for teachers’ work
  – Background of the curriculum renewals – need for a renewal now
  – Timetable
  – Values of the present curriculum – how do they appear in everyday school life?
  – Aims for the future
Parents’ views for the new curriculum

• Students helped to collect and analyze data
• Parents interview sheet
  – Past
  – Present
  – Future
Pupils’ views for the new curriculum

• Pupils were asked what kind of a school is good to study and be at
• Teacher students planned and realized the classroom projects
• Classes were free to decide the form of their presentations
  – wordlists,
  – mindmaps,
  – pp-presentations,
  – videos,
  – news...
Opiskelu

• Lelupäivä joka maanantai

• Vapaatunteja

• Keskiviikkoisin ei koulua

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Opettajat

• Hyvä käsityönopettaja

• Kiltit opettajat

• Hyvät harjoittelijat

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hyvä koulun piha
Involving the student teachers

• Writing the school curriculum
  – Students participate in subject groups, evaluation group, support group
• Cross-curricular themes in curriculum are built-up and tested
  • Each class level will have its own cross-curricular theme
  • Each practice has its own theme
Thank you!

Kiitos!
Netpages on Finnish education

- [http://www2.uef.fi/fi/jnor](http://www2.uef.fi/fi/jnor) University Teacher Training School at Joensuu
- [www.uef.fi](http://www.uef.fi) University of Eastern Finland
- [www.cimo.fi/frontpage](http://www.cimo.fi/frontpage) Centre for International Mobility