



# esa magazine

december 2010

Dutch education Councils  
take responsibility for low and  
very low performing schools



European School  
Heads Association

ESHA magazine is the official magazine of the European School Heads Association, the Association for school leaders in Europe. ESHA magazine will be published ten times per school year. You are welcome to use articles from the magazine but we would appreciate it if you contacted the editor first.

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ESHA is a Foundation that consists of 32 Associations of Heads and Educational employers in 25 European countries in primary, secondary and vocational education.

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# What about “Program of International Student Assessments (PISA)”

Last week, finally, the results of the latest Pisa research were published. In many European countries' newspapers, ministers and educators would have asked themselves the same question; where are we now on the international rat race tables. I believe that by now, everybody has seen the outcomes of their own country. So what does this say? Actually we can see now the results on mathematics, reading and science from those kids that have entered our schools almost 10 years ago. The latest investments made in many countries on reading and mathematics cannot yet been measured by these outcomes. And if your country ( like the Netherlands) has dropped a place, governors and politicians get very nervous. And what does this say about my school anyway? And what if your country had jumped a place on the list, can you now sit back and feel confident?

In fact, these international ranking lists organised by the OECD are no more and no less than indicators how kids are performing. It takes more to create a successful world citizen than excellent performance on reading, maths and science. Our children grow up in a world that is rapidly changing. Schools have to deal with extreme threats from drugs and alcohol, broken and dysfunctional families, a young person's cyber world that is inaccessible to adults and teachers, health problems etc. Schools constantly have to make choices about where best to focus their energies. In my opinion it still matters that if a child grows up in an unsafe or threatening environment, any extra focus on reading, maths and science will be ineffective. Despite all the political fuss and rhetoric, politicians will not give educators the money we need to improve the quality of schools. To conclude, the Pisa results are no more than important indicators, nothing less and certainly nothing more.

Dear ESHA friends, 2010 was a important year for ESHA. We had a very successful conference in Limassol, new associations have entered the ESHA family and we have started with all necessary preparations to build the new leadership community. On behalf of the ESHA board, I wish all ESHA members, school leaders, friends and children a Merry Christmas, a Happy New Year and all the best for 2011.

# Ukraine Today



Ukraine today is not the country 17 years ago when in 1993 our school heads association – USHA was formed and addressed ESHA expressing our desire to be a member of the European association. Since then much time has passed, the time that influenced the quality and quantity of our organization. Now USHA accounts more than 1000

members. And while our nearest neighbors, – Russia, Belarus, Poland, – now can't cope with the organization to present their national SHA, we, Ukraine, are firmly in the ranks of ESHA inspite of all economic difficulties. We learn democracy from our West-Eastern colleagues and receive their support, represent our educational system and its best traditions, participate in many European educational projects, work closely with our government and we must admit today we have managed to influence the education policy in our country, having the European direction in what we do, first of all.

In August 2010, for the first time in the history of Ukrainian Independence, the whole session of the Cabinet of Ministers was devoted to education. 40 new legislative and normative acts were adopted as the European and democratic approach in our education. From now on we begin schooling from 5 years old, a lot of attention will be paid to the health of children in school, profile education will become the central point in the secondary

school, modernization of learning, ICT, computer net, school leadership training, salaries and status of teachers, higher education and scientific institutions work, international contacts and cooperation etc. – a lot of new and necessary laws. In the discussions and proposals submitted from the principals of schools beforehand, our association was the most active and frequently spoken of and addressed. As the Vice-president of USHA and National representative for ESHA I was invited and given the floor to present our attitude towards the documents.

We are a new and rather young democratic state that makes the first steps in the European sense of democracy comparing with our rather centralized system in the past. We have highly developed science in education but it's often far from reality and the challenges of time, we show the best results in learning maths but we need a practical approach to our super studies theories.

We have nearly the same problems and much more in common in the sphere of education than sometimes the Europeans think and we need to combine our teachers' efforts to create new European space of modern education. Our society really needs to be supported to survive and develop, and the significance of our schools, their responsibilities become greater, because what we do in school now, the future of our society will depend on.

Next year 2011, has been proclaimed as the Year of Education in Ukraine. Let it be happy for Ukraine and its teachers, for Europe, each country, each child, each family and each of us! Thank you ESHA!

*Iryna Kozina*

*Principal of Valery Molchanov Lyceum № 38 in Kyiv*

*Honoured Teacher of Ukraine*

*Vice-president of USHA*

*National Representative for ESHA*

# The European Perspective

Suppose that school leaders in Germany could learn from their colleagues in England and that they could learn from their counterparts in Cyprus. How will they ever know?

In October 2010, ESHA asked the National Associations for School Leaders to submit the top issues that their members, the school leaders, face on a daily basis. Many associations responded and the outcome is very interesting, to say the least. The top 5 issues that the National Associations reported were:

## **1 Administrative work load**

Many associations reported that their school leaders have to deal with too many administrative tasks. School leaders feel overburdened with administrative tasks and have less time to concentrate on essential matters, such as the quality of learning, the curriculum, pedagogical issues and staff performance, motivation and development.

## **2 School leadership skills**

Effective school leadership is a major factor in shaping the overall teaching and learning environment, raising aspirations and providing support for



pupils, parents and staff, and thus in fostering higher achievement levels. It is therefore of key importance to ensure that school leaders have, or are able to develop, the capacities and qualities needed to assume the increasing number of tasks with which they are confronted.



### **3 Reduced or too low budgets**

Many school leaders face reduced budgets due to the economic recession. Although The European Commission and Mc Kinsey stresses that investing in education and training is of crucial importance for both the economy, many colleagues will face lower budgets making it almost impossible to improve the standards of education and to meet public aspirations.

### **4 Autonomy of schools**

The levels of autonomy of schools vary in Europe. Some associations reported

that individual school leaders can only spend very limited time on school leadership tasks and some cannot even hire the teachers they prefer. The obvious question is: how can school leaders be accountable for achieving high academic results, if they cannot even hire their own staff?

## **5 Quality of education**

Teacher education programs need to be of high quality, relevant to needs and based on a well-balanced combination of solid academic research and extensive practical experience for preparing teachers and school leaders to carry out their responsibilities and ensuring school leaders' continuing professional development

The main conclusion is that many countries face similar problems, but while some struggle with solutions, others can offer good practice. Since the challenges involved are similar throughout Europe, school leaders could benefit from collaborative learning with their counterparts in other countries, by sharing experience and examples of good practice and through 'cross the border' opportunities for professional development.

ESHA and 24 national associations of school leaders aim to improve the quality and efficiency of school leadership in Europe by providing the missing link: a sustainable European community of school leaders, policy makers, research organizations, teachers and other stake holders across Europe. ESHA will establish and manage the community in order to:

- Work on the issues that school leaders and the EC have identified.
- Undertake policy analysis and research on school leadership to support evidence based recommendations.
- Facilitate exchange between the community members (policy makers, school heads, researchers, teachers and other stakeholders).
- Disseminate information to policy makers and the research community.
- Give inputs into peer learning and policy development in related areas (Teacher education, curriculum development, etc.).

All 24 European associations of school leaders, several research organizations and policy makers are committed. Having all these organizations and its members on board, the community will be in a great position to offer continuous professional development to school leaders and improve the quality and efficiency of school leadership through identifying, promoting and sharing best practices.

As a first step, ESHA will build a new web portal on which school leaders could learn from available research documents, e-learning content and best practices from colleagues around Europe. Each issue will be discussed in a separate part of the portal, making it a very useful resource.

ESHA will launch the portal in spring of 2011. School leaders are encouraged and enabled to participate in advanced professional training and development, to engage in pedagogical research and to take advantage of the research undertaken by both national and international academic and research organizations. The site will also include exchange positions, making it possible for school leaders to take advantage of the opportunities offered by working abroad. But most of all, school leaders will be able to publish their own experiences in the relevant fields of expertise to the benefit of colleagues in other European countries.

**Fred Verboon lives in Katwijk, The Netherlands, is married to Karen and father of Lisa and Vivianne. He is an independent strategy advisor specialized in community building and turnaround management. He currently works for ESHA and his main task is to build the community for school leadership.**

**Would you like to review or comment on his work, please send an e-mail to [Fredv@micnederland.nl](mailto:Fredv@micnederland.nl) and Fred will send you the relevant information.**

# Agenda

2011

January 17  
ESHA Board meeting Utrecht

January 19 – 20  
School leaders convention Slovenia

February 24 – 27  
NASSP convention in San Francisco ([www.principals.org](http://www.principals.org))

March 18  
AVS convention in Utrecht

April 1 – 2  
ESHA General Assembly

April 7 – 10  
NAESP convention in Tampa ([www.naesp.org](http://www.naesp.org))

April 29 – May 1  
NAHT conference in Brighton ([www.naht.org.uk](http://www.naht.org.uk))

August 15 – 18  
ICP convention in Toronto ([www.icponline.org](http://www.icponline.org))

**Note:**

If you want to publish your activities in this calendar, please send the information to [e.dejong@avs.nl](mailto:e.dejong@avs.nl)

## **Report from Antonello Giannelli about his activity as a session moderator during the ESHA Conference 2010, held in Cyprus**

By Antonello Giannelli

I moderated the Session F “Good practices B: School culture and teacher leadership” that took place in the morning of Saturday 6th November. We had the opportunity of listening to three speakers: Jaume Prat (Spain), Solveig Dahl (Norway) and Giorgia Pashiardis (Cyprus), who concentrated respectively on the internal organization of a school, on the supervising competences of a Principal, on the relationships among school and families.

Jaume described his school organization, which is based upon Departments and Educational Teams in order to improve coordination and cooperation within the school.

Solveig presented a set of supervising activities, adopted in many Norwegian schools and named “walk your school”, through which the Principal can effectively carry out monitoring of teachers’ work in order to support them and to improve students’ achievements.

Giorgia presented a recent experience, made in a primary school in Cyprus, aiming to implement a better communication practice with families.

The Session thereby offered a rather comprehensive survey of how to plan, monitor and assess school activity. Several questions were asked by the participants, fostering a thorough exchange of ideas among them.

# Dutch education Councils take responsibility for low and very low performing schools

Quality assurance and revenue-based  
working keys to sustainable improvement

TEXT JOËLLE POORTVLIET

PHOTOGRAPHY ENNO KEURENTJES

Roughly one percent of the Dutch primary and secondary schools is considered 'very low performing'. In order to help these schools, the Councils for Primary and Secondary education have taken action and set up different projects, developed practical tools and provide advice. This because every child deserves a proper education.

### **Performance indicators**

The Dutch Inspectorate of Education conducts yearly risk analyses on all the roughly 7000 primary and 650 secondary schools in The Netherlands. Inspectors start with an assessment of the educational outcomes. Pupils' performances should at least meet the minimal standards of the Inspectorate, social background is thereby taken into consideration. In primary schools these outcomes are measured in the final school year. For secondary schools it's more complicated: the results depend on tests, but also on the number of pupils continuing to a higher or lower level of education and how many years it takes for the pupil to finish school.

If the educational outcomes are within accepted ranges, a school is not reviewed any further. If they are not, the evaluation becomes more thorough. When it's the third year in a row the educational outcomes don't meet the standard, the Inspectorate marks the school 'low performing'. In the more intensive investigation inspectors also check the process indicators. These offer information about the learning climate in the school: the teaching programme, methods and the care for the pupils. When educational outcomes are insufficient – also in the first year this occurs – and approximately two (there is a small difference in measuring the process indicators for primary and secondary schools) out of ten process indicators are below a certain threshold, the school is labelled 'very low performing'.

The label 'very low performing' sets off alarm bells. Within a few weeks the Inspectorate of Education will publish the school's name on the website. Local media will be interested, parents will ask questions and within another six weeks the school has to come up with an improvement plan. Especially primary schools were not used to this kind of public 'naming and shaming'. It fits within current society according to Anneke van der Linde. She is programme leader for all





the projects regarding low and very low performing schools for both education Councils. “There is a strong tendency towards performance based appraisal. Society has to be careful not to be too harsh. But on the other hand, almost every school we worked with in hindsight is content with the label, because it forced a positive change.”

The Dutch government is officially not empowered to close a school, but when a very low performing school doesn't improve within two years (the new government wants to give schools only one year), the government stops the funding which practically means the same. Up till now this has only happened a few times. Sometimes very low performing schools merge with other schools and ‘disappear’ in that way.

### **Why help these schools?**

One percent doesn't seem much, but it means that every day thousands of children are educated in schools that seriously and repeatedly perform below standards. And above that: almost 6 percent of the primary and 15 percent of the secondary schools is low performing: their pupils didn't reach the educational standards for three or four years in a row. Low performing schools also have to write an improvement plan and the Inspectorate keeps a close eye on them.

Schools need and seek support with writing a solid improvement plan. To analyse what went wrong, to determine actions and – for secondary schools – to actually receive intensive help from experienced advisors, schoolboards turn to their Councils. Annette Kerkstra works as a policy advisor for the Council for Secondary Education: “The image people have of secondary schools in general is determined by the minority of schools that don't meet the standards. Also, if it comes to the point that a school closes, the surrounding

schools can get into trouble as well because they will get the pupils from the closed schools.”

The Councils also realised that by helping weaker schools a lot can be learned about being and staying a strong school: useful information for all the members of the Councils. Kerkstra: “How do I perform on outcomes? How can I make the teachers assess their own performances? These questions are asked in all schools. They’re just bigger and more urgent in very low and low performing schools.”

Almost 6 percent of the primary and 15 percent of the secondary schools is low performing

### **Actions taken by the councils**

Research shows that schools benefit the most from a fast and thorough analysis and from expert support. The Councils adjusted their programmes on these findings. ‘Becoming strong and staying strong’ is the name of the programme targeting low and very low performing primary schools.

One year ago the Council for Primary Education started conducting analyses. It formed a team of experienced advisors, some of them ex-inspectors. Within two weeks after the ‘verdict’ an advisor visits the school several times, talks with all the people involved (from board members to teachers) and produces a report the school can use to base their improvement plan on.

## Analysis

In the Inspectorate's report the 'deficiencies' are stated. But how schools got to this point and, more important, what they have to do to improve the quality of their education learning processes, is not so clear. That's where an analyst for the Council for Primary Education comes in. The analysis is based on a three-step approach:

- Determining the relationship between educational outcomes and education learning processes
- Checking the quality assurance activities and making an assessment of the development and improvement capabilities and the necessary conditions therefor.
- Providing recommendations to get the culture and structure in order. For example: introduce revenue-based working.

René Koelink: "As an analyst I don't question the outcome of the Inspectorate report. It is taken as point of departure. In my conversations with the people involved, I try to open their eyes with questions. What do you think went wrong? What has to change for you to do your work properly? The schools I worked with can still very clearly remember the point where it hit them: it's not about the Inspectorate judgment, or my board: it's about me: what can I do to take this school and my work to a higher level? Schools usually prefer what I call 'the recipe of the cook'. They love bullets: a list of actions they can choose from in order to lose the label 'low' or 'very low performing'. But it isn't that simple. You have to make changes in the professional culture and structure of the school. Self-reflection and commitment is crucial and needs to be present in all the layers of the organisation. The analysis therefore focuses on putting schools in a process of change. It formulates guidelines and forming elements for schools not only to get, but to stay out of the risk-zone."



For secondary schools the help goes even further. Three years ago the Council for Secondary Education started a network of schoolleaders from very low performing schools. Because the group didn't like to be confronted with its label all the time, they call themselves 'network of ambitious schools'. Kerkstra: "This network feeds us with information from the work floor. The members are in different stages of their improvement process. They support each other with their own experiences of what works and doesn't work and at network meetings experts give input on how to improve performances."

The network proved itself relevant, but in the end the schools had to do the hard work themselves. In order to provide profound support the Council for Secondary Education introduced the Taskforce: a group of process guides that actually help the schoolmanagement in making the changes that are needed. Kerkstra: "From making

the analyses, co-writing the improvement plan, introducing a fitting interim-manager, specialists help, conducting audits a year after, et cetera. The name says it: the total process from ‘verdict’ to losing the label is guided by one of our experienced and especially for this task selected advisors.”

The Council for Secondary Education also published different brochures on the subject and did research. Its website is an exhaustive source of research findings and stories of schoolleaders who faced similar challenges. Whether schoolleaders want to know how to inform parents, or boards seek help with making tough decisions like ‘are we going to work with an interim-manager?’, the information is available online.

Apart from the extensive analysis, the Council for Primary Education set up a part of their website especially for low and very low performing schools en focuses on early warnings and Twinning, an originally British project. School leaders or sometimes even complete teams of low performing schools and schools at risk of becoming low performing speak regularly with colleagues from a school with better outcomes. This contact lasts for a couple of months.

## **Twining**

Elleke Verwaijen is one of the advisors that make the matches:

“Twining is not meant to actually support the weaker school. That job would be too demanding for the ‘strong’ school. Twining is about creating a movement. It is meant to get the school leader inspired by a colleague on a certain subject. This colleague is someone who doesn’t judge them or advises them, but provides them with ideas

for improvement from a recognisable work-practice. The schools involved learn from and with each other. For example, I recently matched a school leader who got labelled 'low performing' with a colleague from a school with the same vision on education. The stronger school had a solid arithmetic method. The school leader from the 'low performing' school wanted – among other things – to improve the arithmetic education. So that's what they mainly talked about. In this case Twinning practically resulted in one school adopting the method from the other school. But apart from that, the school leaders were totally different types of persons. One was a bit disorganised and took on all the work and responsibility to make the school better. The other person was very composed and organised and able to delegate. So also on a leadership level these two learned from each other.”

In every study so far done on very low performing schools the role of the school leader turns out to be crucial. According to a report by the Inspectorate of Education school leaders from very low performing schools show less educational leadership and don't support their team as well as colleagues on other schools. Striking is that also the solution lies for a big part in hands of the school management. That's why on most of the very low performing schools the school leader is fired, or management is heavily supported. Essential for recovery and improvement is a strong leader who focuses on restructuring, clear goals, revenues, quality and vision.

Support actions are therefore firstly and mainly aimed at school leaders. Government funding for projects of the Council for Secondary Education is guaranteed until January 2012. The Council for Primary Education's projects are funded till April 2011. By that time almost 150 low and very low performing primary schools have had analyses done

by the Council. Recent evaluation by the Dutch advice organisation KPC-groep shows that school leaders are absolutely helped by the analyst. They give the support an eight plus and experienced the cooperation as pleasurable, fast and adequate. Apart from that: so far 43 Twinning matches are made and approximately 75 school leaders made use of the Council for Secondary Education's 'network of ambitious school leaders' and the services within the Taskforce.

### **Conclusion and goals**

Both Councils aim to reduce the low performing and even totally eliminate the very low performing schools. Most recent figures show a slightly decreasing trend. Kerkstra: "As long as the indicators for educational revenues are relative, there will always be 'low performing' schools. This doesn't count for most of the 'very low performing' schools, because process indicators are either sufficient



or not. That's why we want to give quality assurance an impetus. There are still too many schools that don't have a good insight into their educational outcomes and of what their quality is. We help them focus on that."

The Councils are convinced they can get the numbers of low and very low performing schools down and the quality of education up. Although the road might be longer than set by the Dutch government. A teacher in one of the Councils brochures states the school is able to 'cycle' again, but 'not without the side-wheels': "It's not in our veins yet. Sometimes we think too lightly of doing the things in order to stay strong." Van der Linde: "You can see it coming. Therefore acting to prevent getting a 'low' or 'very low performing' label will become increasingly important."

**More information on the subject on the actions taken by the Councils can be obtained from Anneke van der Linde: [zzs@vo-raad.nl](mailto:zzs@vo-raad.nl) or [a.vanderlinde@poraad.nl](mailto:a.vanderlinde@poraad.nl).**





# Windows: Dialogue based on facts

Education belongs to everyone and everyone has an opinion about education. As a result, education is a hot topic in politics, the media and amongst people both directly and indirectly involved in education. Much has been said about education, but too little by the educational sector itself. Thus, poorly nuanced and incomplete accounts are born which damage schools and those people who work in them. The Windows for Responsibility project set up by the VO-raad is the sectoral organisation for secondary school education in the Netherlands, aims to hand the reins of the discussion

surrounding education back to the schools themselves.



TEXT JESSICA VAN DAM-WISSE  
PHOTOGRAPHY WIM KLUVERS



Jan Willem van den Berg

Jan Willem van den Berg is deputy director of the Hervion College in Den Bosch. He believes that the manner in which education is presented in the media does not always do justice to how schools are actually performing. “If we, the educational sector, wish to present a correct and balanced image of what really goes on in our school system, schools and their management will have to be more pro-active in taking responsibility and entering into dialogue with the parties concerned.” For this reason, Van den Berg has been working as an ambassador for the Windows for Responsibility project alongside his teaching job since 2009.

The Windows for Responsibility project collects all numerical data concerning high school education in the Netherlands within one system. This information, provided by DUO (the subsidiary of the Ministry of Education which informs and finances schools), the Dutch Inspectorate of Education and by the schools themselves, is processed and visualized. Schools then have the option to publish the data of their own school via a link on their own website. Results

are consistently compared to the national average and schools have the possibility to add text to clarify or explain the data displayed.

“Schools and their management will have to be more pro-active in taking responsibility and entering into dialogue with the parties concerned.”

### Limits

The Windows for Responsibility project limits itself to information in four areas with a total of twenty indicators (see panel). Ten of these are indicators for which the information is delivered centrally, for example by DUO. The information for the

other ten indicators, is provided by the schools themselves, based on the regulations of the Windows for Responsibility project.

Schools have the option to add a comment or explanation for each indicator. “We have spent a lot of time discussing these twenty indicators,” says Van den Berg about the start-up period of the project. “You can think of so many things that could be represented in a system like this one. In consultation with schools, parents and students, we decided on these twenty. And of course we are often tempted to add another indicator, such as the authority of staff, or the level of satisfaction amongst employees. In order to keep the project

manageable, it is necessary to limit ourselves and retain focus. Soon (the project has now been running for three quarters of a year) we will start evaluating the indicators and determine which indicators can be eliminated, added in or altered.”

With such a comprehensive database, from a technical perspective, a lot is possible. According to Van den Berg it is quite a challenge to limit yourself in what you display. “At the end of the day, this systems is about schools using the results to enter into productive dialogue with for example parents about education and the school’s approach. That is why it is so important for parents to be able to view and comprehend this information. With this in mind the system was set up not to display what is possible, but what is necessary. In other words: creating a clear image of a school with the least possible amount of data. This way the information remains accessible, also for people who are not as familiar with the topic.”

### Reins in hand

Let’s go back to the start for a moment. With the Windows for Responsibility project, the VO-raad aims to hand the reins of the discussion surrounding education, back to the sector and the schools themselves. “The system of Windows for Responsibility, with the employed indicators, is obviously not a goal on its own”, Van den Berg agrees. “It is meant to be a tool for schools, so that they can enter into dialogue with concerned parties, both armed with a broad level of information. This will result in ‘dialogue based on facts’ instead of ‘defence on the basis of assumptions’, and factual discussions result in greater clarity and comprehension for all those concerned.

Parents can view the information via a link from the Windows for Responsibility system, which schools can place on their own website, he explains. “The key word here is responsibility. There is now also a website on which all the Dutch high schools are listed with their indicators: [www.schoolvo.nl](http://www.schoolvo.nl).”

The Maaswaal College in Wijchen was the first school to put their own data online via the Windows for Responsibility system link. “For us this was a logical step in the direction we were already headed”, explains the principal Harrie Koolen. “We want to be critically observed in our progress. Schools receive funding directly from the government. So I think it is completely understandable that the school shows and justifies what happens with this money and which choices are made.” His school has nothing to hide, is his opinion, even when there are problem areas and progress is less than desired. “For example, a few years ago we had a high percentage of truancies. We were way above

the national average. Since then we have worked hard to tackle this problem and today our truancy percentage is far below the national average.

“We want to be critically observed in our progress.”

For this reason Koolen does not regard publishing data online as an obstacle. “We do think it is important to be able to clarify or explain certain

results. Numbers can quickly seem absolute, however there is always a story behind a result: what led up to this? What was the context? Those stories need to be told.”

This school's data has now been online for some time. Koolen has presented the school's results officially to his employees, but as yet received little reactions and feedback; from employees nor from parents. “I expect this will change in the coming period, with the imminent open days and process leading up to the new school year. I must say, I am quite curious as to how prospective parents of students will respond and what role this information will come to play in the choice of school for their children.”



## Time Saver

From the outset, the philosophy of the Windows for Responsibility project was that its value would increase as the completion of the indicators resulted in a lessening of the workload in other areas. In this respect a number of initiatives were launched within the project. For example, the Dutch Inspectorate of Education has agreed that schools no longer have to provide them with information which is already available through the Windows for Responsibility system. Another initiative is the annual report. Schools use a lot of information in the Windows for Responsibility system to compile their annual reports. For this reason the system includes the option to compile a draft version of an annual report per school, based on the information available in the system and the extra notes and explanations schools have added.

“Not to mention,” Van den Berg goes on, “schools now always have the facts at hand. Whenever questions arise as to the schools performance or functioning, the school no longer has to dive into its archive. All the information is ready and up-to-date. This again saves a lot of time.”

At the moment all the information derived from central sources has already been implemented in the system for all Dutch secondary schools. Almost eighty percent of the VO-schools is participating in the Windows for Responsibility project and are currently completing the indicators.

## 20 Indicators Windows for Responsibility Educational performance/Results

### **Number of students**

- Graduation percentage
- Exam results
- Students continuing/terminating on to further education, students stepping out of educational system
- Premature school leavers (besides uncertified school leavers also students who exchange the school for a similar school type in the area)

### **Effective educational policy**

- School plan
- Cooperative systems
- Characteristics student: student specific financing, social economic background and special needs education
- Profile and Sector choice
- Care plan



**Quality**

- Student satisfaction
- Parent satisfaction
- Supplying/acquiring education
- External evaluations
- School climate and safety

**Management**

- Market share/operational area
- Actual class time/class absenteeism
- Staff (average age, demographic overview, absenteeism due to sickness, school expenses)
- Finances ( profitability, resilience, budget per student, school costs monitor)
- Proportion staff/ students

# ESHA 2012 – Edinburgh

The AHDS (Association of Headteachers and Deputes in Scotland) was delighted to be given the privilege of hosting the ESHA biannual conference in 2012. We have already started planning in earnest and hope to be able to present you with a full programme and booking details in the first half of 2011.

Our working title at this stage is 'Connecting Leadership'. We plan to explore the topics of leadership, motivation and change management. Central to the conference will be the message that we must all learn from one another if we are to improve our own practice.

We will arrange for high profile keynote speakers – one for each of the three days of conference. These will be drawn from the top speakers/thinkers from around the world but they won't necessarily come from the world of education. The themes explored in the keynote speaker presentations will be developed through a range of supporting workshops which will look at the issues in more depth and link them closely to the world of schools, school leadership and learning & teaching.

All these conference sessions will be held in the Edinburgh International Conference Centre (<http://www.eicc.co.uk>) which is situated in the heart of Edinburgh. It is only a short walk from a range of hotels which will suit every budget. It is also very close to Edinburgh's main shopping streets and the historic Royal Mile – a street with Edinburgh Castle (in the centre of the picture) at the top and at the bottom, Scotland's new Parliament building and the Queen's Edinburgh residence, the Palace of Holyrood House.

In addition to the programme of speakers and workshop sessions we will arrange an afternoon of visits to Edinburgh schools to allow delegates to get a real flavour of the education in Scotland – nursery, primary, secondary and additional support needs.

Of course, we won't forget partners either – we will organise an optional social programme which will take in some of the key historic sites in Edinburgh and further afield. Details of the alternative programme will be placed on our website as soon as possible.

As is ESHA tradition, the conference will be rounded off with a Gala Dinner. This will have traditional Scottish entertainment throughout. For AHDS this is about more than running an excellent event for ESHA members. We hope to deliver a legacy for the conference in the sense that we will use the conference to promote long lasting individual connections between ESHA members and/or ESHA member organisations.

Our planning is still at an early stage and things may well change a bit before we unveil our final programme. Our dedicated ESHA 2012 website - [www.asha2012scotland.com](http://www.asha2012scotland.com) – will go live soon and we will regularly update it as our planning becomes more settled...so watch this space for updates.

In the meantime please save the date in your diary. The conference will run from Monday 29th until Wednesday 31st October 2012.

We look forward to welcoming you, many of you, to Scotland in 2012 and will make every effort to ensure the conference is one to remember – professionally, socially and culturally.

**Greg Dempster**

**General Secretary AHDS**

**You can learn more about AHDS  
on our website [www.ahds.org.uk](http://www.ahds.org.uk).**



European School  
Heads Association