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Report on the ESHA biennial conference in Cyprus



European School
Heads Association

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winter 2010/spring 2011

December 2010

Decision call Brussels

December 2010

Skype meetings with ESHA community partners

January 17

ESHA Board Meeting

January 19-20

Meeting Slovenia

March 18

AVS conference

March 31 – April 2

ESHA General Assembly



Presidential Address Ton Duif
on ESHA Biennial conference Limassol 2010

Dear colleagues, and friends,

As your ESHA president, I would warmly welcome you all on our 11th biennial conference here in beautiful Cyprus, located in historic Limassol.

Let me first thank our Cyprian colleagues who have done a marvelous job in organizing this conference, especially thanks must go to our friend Panayiotis and his staff who have worked so hard to make this all happen. There are many good colleagues and friends here in Limassol, I cannot welcome them all by name, but I would like to give a special welcome to Mrs Gail Connelly, executive officer of the American National Association of Elementary School Principals (Naesp), my good friend Darrell Rud, Executive Director of the School Administrators of Montana, President of the Association of State Executives, and a Past President of NAESP, Mrs Brenda Bigland of the National College for School Leadership's Governing Council, Andrew Blair and Virginia O'Mahony, president and president elect of the International Confederation of Principals, Andy Hargreaves, Neil Hawkes, Petros Pashiardis as keynote speakers, and not to forget, my wife Meta. It's a privilege to have the possibility to meet so many distinguished guests and friends during this coming days.

My friends, ESHA is now 22 years old, you could say that we have passed our childhood and entered adulthood. When ESHA was founded in 1988, it started as a Foundation of Associations of Heads in Europe, first only for secondary and some vocational associations, from 1998, with the acceptance of primary, ESHA now consist of associations in primary, secondary and vocational education, all together 35 associations in 23 countries with more than 85,000 heads and deputy heads and school leaders all over Europe. ESHA was more or less an association that invested in connecting the board and executive members of the linked associations. During the first 20 years we've developed a lot of important decisions and position papers on issues as autonomy, quality and Inclusion.

In the Dublin meeting, spring 2009, during Chris Harisson's presidency, ESHA set upon the first step to add more value for the individual members of ESHA in Europe. Therefore we changed the Constitution, from a Foundation to an Association and we have set a new working plan. The regional conferences and the new ESHA Magazine are the first step to bring ESHA to the individual members. During the closing ceremony on Saturday morning Chris and I will outline more about our plans for the future.

My dear friends, According to the Lisbon Strategy, investing in education and training is of crucial importance for the European knowledge-based economy. Both the European Commission (Council conclusions of 26 November 2009 on the professional development of teachers and school leaders) and the OECD Report (Improving School Leadership, 2008) have all consistently stressed that school leaders play a key role and are crucial in improving education by influencing the motivations and capacities of teachers and that of the school climate and environment. Or as the report starts with (quote) "School leaders in OECD countries are facing challenges with the rising expectations for schools and schooling in a century characterized by

technological innovation, migration and globalization. As countries aim to transform their educational systems to prepare all young people with the knowledge and skills needed in this changing world, the roles and expectations for school leaders have changed radically. They are no longer expected to be merely good managers. Effective school leadership is increasingly viewed as key to large-scale education reform and to improved educational outcomes". On this matter, the OECD has developed a toolkit that is really worthwhile to study. It consists of Module 1 (Understanding and analysis), Module 2 (self diagnosing and auditing), module three (Prioritizing and taking action) and the last module (Communicating and connection). So the challenge to school leaders is to distribute school leader tasks (don't do it all by yourself!), develop effective skills on leadership (it's about me as a leader), make school leadership an attractive career-choice (this reflects to employers and society) and redefine roles and responsibilities of school leadership. That last recommendation is to us all, teachers, parents, employers and school leaders!

During many sessions, ESHA General Board analyzed the challenges that school leaders in Europe face and identified their needs to deal with these issues. The outcome was that many school leaders, especially in rural areas, feel isolated and overburdened with administrative tasks and face harsh working conditions. In many circumstances; young and enthusiast school leaders starts with ambition and new ideas. When they are not supported by employers and teachers, they could face the following fate...

The current financial situation in many European countries make that schools will have to deal with budget cuts. School leaders have stressed the need for sharing experiences and best practices to learn from each other's experiences. In 2008 the MC Kinsey report on school leadership was published. I would like to refresh your memory:

At first: The quality of a school cannot exceed the quality of teachers

All European countries that focus on teacher's development have good results, regarding the Pisa ranking lists. Teachers that give good instruction to every child have better results. Therefore, teachers need professional and personal development: it emphasizes not only organized learning but also a trusting and collaborative climate, a shared and monitored mission and the capacity to take initiatives and risks in confidence.

Secondly; Manage your curriculum and instruction dynamically.

This means: Goal-setting ! Assessment and evaluation can influence teacher and student performance. School evaluation is made through external evaluation, self evaluation and measurements of student performance (I'll come back to this later). School leaders play a key role in integrating external and internal accountability systems by supporting their teaching staff in aligning instruction with agreed learning goals and performance standards.

Third; Manage resources efficiently with pedagogical purposes and a strategic vision.

In many European countries, heads decide on how the budget is allocated, but fewer in formulating the strategic school budget. More and more principals will be responsible for property- and facility management without having the expertise to do so. There is no or very few influence on setting teachers starting salaries or awarding salary-increases. Although the level of responsibility in teachers' recruitment and dismissals vary from one country to another, public school teachers are rarely dismissed on performance grounds. So the question is: How can you hold school leaders responsibly and accountable for learning outcomes when they have no say in selecting their own staff?



ESHA president Ton Duif opening the conference

The fourth recommendation of McKinsey is: Build partnerships.

In many (mostly rural) environments it's difficult for schools to build partnerships with other schools, even though modern technology shapes the possibility to do so. In this case, this means not only partnerships with other schools but also to society, parents and community.

So, rephrasing the McKinsey report, it's clear that we should develop more and more autonomous schools in Europe. As stated before, you cannot be accountable for school results if the school as a whole (school board, heads and teachers) have no say in how to spend the money, how the curriculum should look like and the quality of all staff in the school. But remember; having more autonomy means that you will face more accountability. The ESHA board stated in 2006: "Autonomy is the right to make your own decisions, it's based

on trust and transparency within a strict horizontal and vertical accountability.” I will speak later on this issue when we focus on ‘quality’ but there is one word in the definition that is of the greatest importance: ‘Trust’. And does society really trust us? Furthermore, if you want to have more autonomy, it’s clear that school leaders should professionalize themselves to ensure that you’re capable to do the job. And professionalization is one of the key investments in the new ESHA school leaders community that ESHA is going to develop.

A very important issue in all European countries is the definition of quality. And if we know what quality is all about, how can a school improve its quality. Let’s first focus on quality itself. There are many books written about the definition of quality. The problem with quality is that everybody has a different opinion about quality. Let



me therefore introduce the following definition. “Quality is not more and no less than to do what you promise”. But promises will always be made in advance, not in reverse. Let me give you the following example: When you go to the shop and ask the salesman for a washing machine, the sales person will start to make you promises. Lets pretend that you eyes fancy on an indesit washing machine. ‘This machine will cost you 400 euro’s and will do the job for you for at least 9 years’; the man says to you. When this machine breaks after 10 years, what is your opinion of that piece of equipment? I think that’s positive because it met the expectations and promises made. But if you buy the more expensive Miele, for let’s say 900 euro’s and the man promise that this machine will work for at least 12 years. What is your opinion on that machine when it breaks down after the same 10 years. I do understand that it is not easy to predict the outcome of a child’s career when it enters our school. There is more that matters in a child’s life, for instance; the divorce of your parents, loosing family like grandma or grandpa, illnesses and a lot more. But building a school that gives children maximum possibilities and deal with the circumstances that will happen during a school career, that school should make constant predictions on the child’s future and therefore on its own quality. To do so, it is important to reconsider Maria Montessori and other’s researchers like John West Burnham who discovered that the chances of success for kids rely 20% on the quality of the school; 40% influence is the kids individuality (male, female, IQ, ambition, character etc) and 40% relies on the social environment, or in other words where you live, in a poor or rich family, community. Your own personal abilities are difficult to change or improve.

So, to ad 40% extra to the schools chances to be successful, schools should connect to community. Research in the last few years shows that schools which invest in their relationship between community and parents are successful schools. To accomplish this, it’s important to

develop a communication and evaluation circle. It starts organizing a relationship with the stakeholders of the school. This can be the local government, health care, sport clubs, social workers but it must include the parents of the school. This is not an easy job and should be done by the principal as well as the teachers.

Out of this dialog, schools can make promises and expectations. When parents and others are involved in these expectations and promises they could be contract-partners of the same program. The next step in the circle is focusing on the results to make this promises

come through. Working on this promises makes it easier to reflect on the vision of the external stakeholders from outside of the school circle (e.g. governments and politicians). They are encouraged by Fullan and others, and want us to focus on literature and numeracy. And this is of course a necessity. Without excellent

“Quality is not more and no less than to do what you promise”

numeracy and literacy skills, kids cannot learn well. But in the meantime we cannot forget all the other issues that are important to us and the children. To help a child to develop as a social individual who is able to find the way into future society, we need more to do than focus on Numeracy and Literacy.

Returning to where I was, in this stage, teachers, parents and heads will know where to focus on, it's part of the contract. This will help us to develop an internal evaluation circle, using tests and evaluation procedures that helps teachers and others. In this way we can measure the effectiveness of the work and if we reach our goals

(promises). And what about tests? There's a lot to say about tests. Tests are important for teachers to measure the progress of the kids. They gives us the input where to focus on or how we could improve the learning process of an individual or the whole class. They help us to reach the goals we've set. Problems start when tests are used to blame kids or schools. Using tests as school quality measuring and ranking systems as we see in some European countries, makes schools defensive and it has a negative effect on individual learning outcomes. System tests are even more dangerous. It disqualifies talents. If your train is not on the station when the mainstream departs, you find yourself on the marshalling area and it's not an easy job to get back on the main track, especially not if the predicate "special need" is given to you. Isn't every child a special need child? Some kids need simply more time to reach their goals. Making predictions on this helps us to avoid these outcomes.



The next stage is to organize the external evaluation. This can be done by a school inspector or any another external evaluation system. We need external evaluation systems to help us with benchmarking and it also helps to avoid tunnel vision. Together with our internal evaluation we should be able to make an output report to our stakeholders. This leads to new discussions and dialogues that help us to redefine our promises. In this way we will improve the quality of our schools.

“Countries
with the best
teachers
have the best
results”

My dear friends, the underlined theme of this conference is ‘a human approach of leadership’. Education is people work. While I have spoken about school leaders, I would also like to advocate for teachers. They are the most important human factor in our schools. Countries with the best teachers have the best results, like Finland. In Finland, no teacher is allowed to work in schools without having at

least a master degree. The best students will apply for the teachers academy because it’s seen as one of the most important jobs in the country. It’s not because of a high salary, (in that case the Finish teachers should be the best paid teachers in the world, (and that is not the fact). In many European countries schools and teachers are not always fully appreciated. I remember a Dutch high ranked officer of the ministry of Education who stated many times ‘it’s about earned trust’. And when you think about this a little longer; it implicates that in his opinion it starts with mistrust! The other issue is that our politicians aim to develop a perfect society; there is little room for mistakes. And do we all learn from mistakes? Instead of encouraging



A warm welcome by Cypriot singers

and equipping schools and teachers to improve the work, in many cases we use blaming and shaming, public rankings, central testing systems and more. As I said before; this makes schools defensive. We need entrepreneurs in our schools, both heads and teachers. I think it's time not only to raise the bar and close the gap, (as Fullan stated) but also to give schools, school leaders and teachers back their job and the tools to fulfill this important task. We educate the new generation. And society should realize and support this. And for what future society do we raise our kids? This is the society that is already here, without us knowing? How can we prepare kids for this new world? We have school buildings, mostly designed in the 19th century with traditional class rooms, teachers out of the 20th century and kids who live in the 21st century. Do we have a clue what kids do with internet, mobile phones, games etc? Do we integrate this in our learning system, our schools? How do we help

youngsters to find a future place in this complicated society that is changing so rapidly? Questions, questions! And there are answers, some new visions, some good practices. The challenge is to find these answers and good practices. This is the reason why ESHA (hopefully with the help of Brussels) will build the European School Leadership Community that will help European school leaders and others like researchers and policy makers, to indentify good practices and where they can share knowledge and support. We will talk more about this during the closing ceremony on Saturday morning.

My dear friends, before I end my speech, there is one important issue that I would like to share with you. I've spoken for the last 20 minutes about schools, teachers, developments, improving systems, quality and a lot more. This is important for existing schools and countries where kids can go to school.

Do you realize that in our world 80,000,000 children have no school at all? That it is estimated that more that 250 million children under 14 years of age have to work in factories like the clothing industry. That 800,000,000 people in the world cannot read or write; they rely on information given by others and in this way are easy to control and to influence. More than 1,000,000,000 people have no access to clean drinking water, they face an early dying rate and a lot of diseases. Did you know that in my country more that 800 kids are in prison, hundreds of thousands in the world! Didn't we all agree on the Children's Rights Treaty in 1989, accepted by the United Nations? Statistically every 100 years one new "Einstein" is born, a brilliant thinker who really can make the difference. Someone who could help to solve our energy problems, the world wide pollution. What will happen if the New Einstein is among one of these kids? So my statement as an educator shall be: Enough is enough!! We, educators should raise the alarm bell; how can we educate children when they are not in our schools, how can we fight against ignorance, poverty

and religious fanatics if governments don't give us the schools and tools to educate.

This is why we work to establish the World Educational Forum, a forum that shall consist of educators all over the world. If politicians use blaming and shaming on our schools, why should we not use the same instrument to measure their behavior. Analog to the World Economic Forum, the World Educational Forum should set the standards for all countries, a civilized investment in the new generation, including the right to go to school, to have clean food and drinking water, to live in an open and free society. With the help of International researchers the WEF will not only set standards but publish ranking lists of all Global countries, measuring their efforts and investments in education and children. ESHA will support this idea together with international associations like ICP, EERA,(W)APPA and others.

In conclusion, I hope it will be a challenging experience to share ideas and good practice over these days. The new approach to the workshops and sessions offer opportunities for you to add your own experience to this conference. To share and to review your own practice. This will certainly improve the quality of this conference. I wish you all a great conference.



The ESHA board

The Data Rich School

The modern school often has a wealth of data about pupils, from a variety of sources including both tests and teacher/professional assessments. The data need not just be on academic progress, but could include other measures of development.



Such data can be exceptionally useful. It enables schools to spot children who are not making the progress they should and target early intervention. It can help teachers adapt their teaching approaches to suit individual needs. It can help evaluate the success of teaching approaches and other initiatives. It can suggest individuals and groups at risk of falling behind. It can enable fruitful comparison with other schools and direct the allocation of resources appropriately.

The intelligent use of data has become central to the work of all professionals involved in education.

There are, of course, limits:

- The consequences attached to the data profoundly affect the accuracy and validity of the data. If your job depends on the results, objectivity is limited; data become a weapon rather than a source of enquiry. The most interesting data, therefore, is not necessarily the stuff you are held accountable for.
- Not everything of value can realistically be captured in numerical form and analysed. A heavy reliance on data to inform decision making can distort activity to reflect what is measurable rather than what is valued.
- Data collection itself has an opportunity cost. Time spent testing or assessing is time not spent teaching. Time spent analysing data is time not spent leading in other ways. The benefits of data collection and analysis must be weighed against the cost, and they are subject to diminishing marginal returns.

Above all, data does not provide answers. It poses questions and suggests avenues of enquiry. It tells you very little about how the results are achieved (for example, the risks taken to achieve them or the sacrifices made in other areas) and therefore very little about their sustainability. Smart managers use data but don't rely on data. They get underneath the data to understand the how and the why of what is working well in the school, what needs to improve and maybe suggest how to achieve that growth or effectiveness.

We're not the only ones to think this, of course:

"There is no straightforward, formulaic link, for example, from contextualised or any other form of data to the judgments inspectors make during inspections. And data must never be used – by schools or inspectors – to furnish excuses for poor attainment or slow progress... so data are valuable.

"But data are only numbers on a page, or a spreadsheet on a screen. They only measure what has been tested. And people often only test what they feel they can measure. The challenge for schools, and for inspectors, is to understand the data available and get behind the figures to explore the strengths and weaknesses they indicate."

(Christine Gilbert, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector(HMCI) Ofsted 2008)

The effective use of good data is particularly relevant to helping those who tend to do less well at school. Barriers to learning come in many different forms and combinations. They can only be addressed when they are noticed; and they are more easily addressed if they are noticed quickly. Although a focus on the circumstances of each child is most helpful, analysis of the data can also reveal patterns of groups which tend to be at risk of under-achievement in a particular context.

The school can then redesign its processes and organisation to help these groups right from the very start.

We'd therefore like to suggest ten principles associated with being a 'data rich' school.

- The school knows, discusses and acts upon the expected and actual progress and development of every child, measured at various points in each year, and connects it with salient characteristics.
- The school does not rely solely on data collected for accountability purposes.
- Only as much data as is necessary is collected, and no more. The school constantly asks whether it will take meaningful action on the data and, if not, stops collecting it.
- The prime use of data is early identification of progress and the application of relevant support.
- The school possesses a range of tested strategies for dealing with different levels of progress and achievement.
- The school looks for patterns in achievement to help identify groups at risk, and adapts its overall approach and organisation to support them appropriately.
- Data is not used as an excuse for under-performance. The school asks how it can improve the way it teaches a child before categorising a child.
- The school knows its children as people not data sets. Managers talk and lead more than they analyse.
- Data is used to generate questions and hypotheses, which are subject to debate, enquiry and investigation.
- Success is celebrated.

3rd. ESHA Conference of the German speaking regions in Europe in Landau/Germany



It has in the meantime become a tradition that school leaders, presidents of the school leader organizations, representatives of school administration come together once a year to discuss the newest developments in education and to summarise the results of the conference in a declaration.

BY DR.BURKHARD MIELKE, ESHA HONORARY PRESIDENT

At the beginning the decision was to start with a regionalization project in ESHA. It was decided in Potsdam 2006 to give ESHA a new regional structure following the regional languages. 2008 in Basel (Switzerland) the Regional Coordinator, Margret Rössler, organized the first Regional

How to realize inclusion in general and especially in rural areas with small schools?

Conference as a pilot project for the German Speaking Regions with participants from South Tyrol, Switzerland, Austria, The Netherlands and Germany. Now we have new partners from Hungary and Belgium. The second conference took place in Goldrain/Coldrano, organized by the South-Tyrol section of the ANP (l'associazione italiana dei dirigenti et delle alte profesionalità). This year in 2010 we are meeting in Leinsweiler near Landau in Rhineland-Palatinate/Germany. First of all we have to

thank the Board of the school leader association of Rhineland Palatinate and Theo Bauer for the perfect organization and the social program which gave us a good insight of the history and the culture of this part of Germany. It was a wonderful setting with endless vineyards, castles, walnut and chestnut trees and the special cuisine of the region.

The topics of the conference were inclusion and the way to realize inclusion in general and especially in rural areas with small schools. And consecutively from our discussion in Goldrain the necessity for new models of school leadership with regards to senior and middle management.

The conference was opened by Theo Bauer, representing the hosting organization SVR, the ESHA Honorary President Dr. Burkhard Mielke, Margret Rössler, ESHA coordinator for the German speaking regions and Bernhard Jäger, President of the ASD.

The first evening started with a brilliant speech by Prof. Dr. Faber from “The German Association of Cities”. From the point of view as attorney she explained the difficulties and different possibilities of interpreting the Human right of Inclusion and the implementation of this Human right in the different countries. Following her interpretation there is no way not to implement this in all schools at least for more than 80 % of all handicapped students. This lecture was followed by an intensive and sophisticated discussion with short descriptions of the current situation in the participating regions. On a really high and impressive level the participants forgot the time for dinner and the discussion went on the whole evening.



**Prof. Dr. Faber**

The next day we had a lecture about the way schools can build up a network and find new forms of cooperation in rural areas under the thread of the demographic situation with less and less students and a low birthrate. Günter Drenkelfort replaced Armin Lohmann and held his speech about some areas in Lower Saxony and a model how schools can react and do the best for their students in the current situation. Following the experiences of the project “Autonomous Schools”, he stressed on regional networking of schools and new leadership models. One of them seems to be a good solution for declining schools: cooperation, based on a contract, between two or more schools and rotation of the school leaders role every two years, including each school, one after the other. This principle of cooperation proves sustainable if the schools are not in competition with each other and it was a voluntary decision to work together.

This was followed by the Honorary President of the Finish School Leaders association Sure Fire, Jorma Lempinen. He studied once in Germany and therefore he gave a speech in German about the change of the Finish school system to an entire inclusive system without inspections based on trust and respect. Inclusion is feasible in cities and in very small schools all over in Finland up to Lapland – like the example and the results that Finland demonstrate. The inclusion of all kinds of handicapped children is taken for granted.

The last day Burkhard Mielke and Margret Rössler presented the results of a worldwide survey about Vive principles, their role, status and working conditions and new tendencies, regarding the change to more autonomous schools and the new tasks and challenges for school management and leadership.



'Südtirol und Deutschland'



'Weinprobe': Tasting the wines of the region

Therefore different forms of school leadership are being discussed worldwide. We think that autonomous schools need senior and middle management positions, with Deputies / Assistant Heads / Vice Principals and Heads of Departments.

School leaders prefer Vice principals in images' like: the tandem-working equally together, Pilot and Co-Pilot, the right hand of the Head teacher / Principal or The relay runner in the team, but only if there is a loyal and good working atmosphere and a high qualification of the vice principals.

The leadership models shift more and more from delegation to distributive leadership and full responsibility of each member of the team. This includes also a redefinition of the corresponding roles of educational administration, inspection, consultancy and monitoring.

This survey and the Leinsweiler declaration will be published soon on the ESHA website. But besides the interesting discussions the most important is that over the three years a growing network has now been installed which is getting more and more influence and interest and makes ESHA work better everywhere, and therefore becomes better known and respected.

Next year from the 12.-14. of October the Hungarian German community will host the 4th ESHA Conference of the German speaking regions in Pécs/Fünfkirchen. The topic is the future function of government organisations in relationship to autonomous schools. We are really looking forward to this event.

Reaching Ithaca – The journey is worth

The richness of educational innovation lies in the process and its development is like the journey of Odysseus: we are always searching for our way home. However,



true richness, temptations, risks and beauty lie in our experiences during the quest. This was presented to us in Cyprus by Dr. Petros Pashiardis of the Open University of Cyprus.

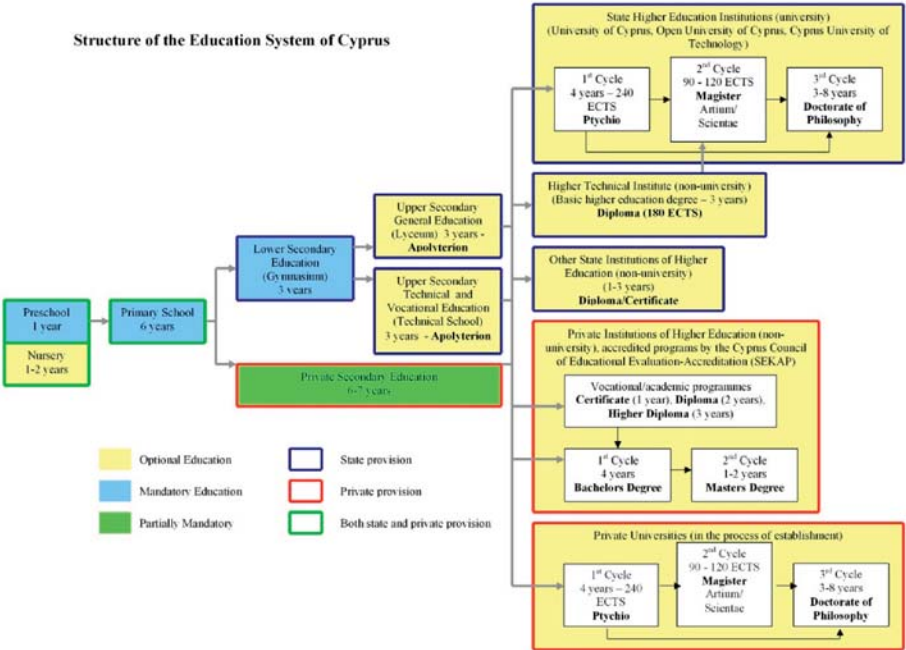
BY PETRA VAN HAREN MBA-ME, RDO,
THE NETHERLANDS

From 3 to 7 November, school leaders of primary and secondary education from throughout the world and of 27 European countries met and communicated at the ESHA-congress in Limasol. The theme of the congress was: “The Successful School: a human approach of leadership”. The head of the organizing committee Panayiotis Kyrou and his team provided for three quality days. With prominent key- note speakers such as Andy Hargreaves (‘teaching and learning beyond expectations’) and Neil Hawkes (value- based education) and several interactive workshops it proved to be a very worthwhile professional development conference. The Dutch delegation for primary education, which visited Cyprus with support of the AVS (Dutch School Heads Association) has done some research at several Cypriot Schools, about the educational system and the aspects of the human approach of leadership. Ton Duif, the current president of ESHA, explained a renewing and inspiring vision about the future development of school leadership within ESHA and advocated the founding of the World Educational Forum (WEF). The audience supported his ideas. The joint ownership of ESHA, the common and global leaderships questions and the stated goals were emphasized. The awareness that all school leaders are ESHA member through their national associations should increase. With Cyprus as a sunny host venue and a regional example of European education, the network of school leaders is once again renewed and strengthened. A lot has been learned from one another.

Cyprus an impression of the educational system

Cyprus – hereby is meant the Greek part of EU member Cyprus and does not apply to the northern part of Cyprus that is occupied by Turkey – has a centrally organized educational system. (see diagram) . Mainly the Greek language is spoken except for some schools where English is the common language (history and military bases). The Greek language stresses the connection with history

Structure of the Education System of Cyprus



and folklore. The ‘ Educational Service Committee’ is the central body that recruits, selects and appoints teachers and heads. The members of this committee are appointed by the Cypriot president. Over 7,8% of the gross national product is spent on education. The personnel, the national curriculum and material for education are state responsibilities. Literacy and numeracy are the core of the curriculum although much attention is also given to science, world orientation, art and culture.

The local authorities have responsibility for the buildings and the non-educational personnel. These are well provided for. For example the

municipality puts cleaning personnel, bus drivers, concierges and other support staff in place. The inspectorate is divided in two major roles: Advisor as 'critical friend' and evaluator of teachers, heads and school results. The inspector visits the school every fortnight. There is no nationally agreed standard for testing or analysis and evaluation of school results. Each teacher develops their own tests and standards, sometimes in collaboration with colleagues. At the end of primary school (6th grade) there is a central test. The results are used to determine the student level and to provide the secondary school with information about the (special) learning needs of the pupil. Meantime a standard for central testing in the third grade is being developed. There is research towards a new system for learning quality and evaluation. Specific research about evidence- based strategies and focus on results is done by Prof. Kyriakides in collaboration with European colleagues such as the Dutch Prof. Dr. H.P.M. (Bert) Creemers of the University Educational Centre Groningen , Collaborative professor at the university of Cyprus and staff member of the Cyprus International Institute of Management (CIIM) for educational management. Cyprus is determined to sustainably develop her quality of education!

Parent involvement is organized through a parental committee. This way they have substantial influence, but no legal rights. The parents spoken with, are positive about the school of their children. Educational partnership in a broader meaning is modestly developed. Currently this partnership has caught the attention as an instrument to give address the needs and talents of children. At various schools the values are colored by the local context. Emotions regarding the occupation of northern Cyprus are being kept alive in statements and behavior.

School heads and teachers are appointed to other schools regularly. The maximum workperiod in a school is approximately six years. It means that teams and school leaders cannot easily achieve

sustainable educational development, policy and innovations. Nevertheless the principal is responsible for school results. School leaders are obliged to teach. This is based on the vision that the head teacher is a role model and needs to be a pedagogical expert. Working at a small school the head must give eleven lessons (one lesson is forty minutes) at a bigger school this is maximum four lessons. Every school has at least one deputy head. Special teachers are employed

for 'special educational needs' or special subjects such as 'Science', 'Music' and 'Art'.

Although children do not wear strict uniforms, there is uniformity in garments and colors. The population of schools is diverse. Children have different backgrounds. Most kids are native Cypriot children and refugee children from the occupied Turk- Cypriot part of the isle. A growing group of immigrant children from Bulgaria, Poland, Syria, Egypt, Romania and more recently

Russia and Georgia attend the schools. There is a small group of Asian pupils.

Licensed teachers and teachers working in the system apply to the 'Educational Service Committee' for a job, a promotion or a transfer. In the selection your own curriculum vitae, the bi annual evaluation from the inspector, the 'professionalization points' and the working experience are criteria. Working in the country counts for extra experience credit. Usually young teachers start working in the rural area. People like to work in education. It can take up to eight years

Emotions
regarding the
occupation of
northern Cyprus
are being
kept alive in
statements and
behavior

of waiting to get a job. Education is well paid. The working times are attractive (07.30- 13.00 h), there are school holidays and the job provides a certain work guarantee for the future. Unemployed teachers and volunteers are recruited to carry out supportive learning projects and extended schooldays and get paid a small fee. It is a common custom for young (unemployed) teachers to obtain a master degree, preferably abroad. This is done at their own expense, getting extra points which increases their chances of being appointed. About 90% of the teachers are female. Also in management women are broadly represented.

Cyprus has an union for education. School leaders have their own department in this body. In negotiating of working conditions and dialogue with the ministry the position of the teachers is foremost. In spite the minor attention for the position of the school leader the demands are significant. Education has high professional expectations and the head teachers are respected for their position at school. Maybe this supports the need for a small country like Cyprus to be member of ESHA. This way the distinct position of head teachers can be supported. Cyprus has no national qualification or standard for head teachers or determined leaderships competences.

The findings of the Dutch delegation

The study visit to Cyprus organized by AVS was one of the by now 50 educative international travels that are organized. The Dutch delegation was welcomed at four very different schools in Polemida, Episkopi, Sotira and Paralimni. They saw modest but colorful school buildings where corridors, stairs and hallways were mostly on the outside of the building. The architecture equipped for tropical heat by the maximum use of airflow and shadow for cooling. Every class door is a main entrance. The schoolyards have access to water to prevent children from dehydration during the play outside. Shadow



Visiting Cypriot school

areas are created to play under or to eat lunch. There is the possibility to get a hot meal in the afterschool time. Of course the visitors were offered a lot of hospitality. Around the coffee breaks there was open discussion with teachers, local authorities and parents while eating various sweets. Two schools had used the visit for a thematic approach to learn more about the Dutch country and culture. Children also prepared creative lectures for the visitors to teach them about Cyprus. At B'Kato Polemida Primary School with head teacher Gregoria Kyriakou and at Episkopi Primary School which is lead by Niki Mikellidou the projects were presented in an informative, artistic, musical and colorful performance. In school various results were visible at bulletin boards. Children painted like 'Van Gogh' and put all sorts of information together. In Episkopi we saw an outstanding example of a lesson in history with use of ICT. Using film and image the content was presented at the 'smartboard'. Children processed

and learned afterwards by using digital mind maps. As the school bell rings the children are eager to continue their work. In Sotira and Paralimni a teacher Mrs. Eftychia Matsangou shows us around. We see the basic of Christian values in behavior at school and in the icons that hang on significant places in the buildings. Dr. Dora Costa explains about social context, the chances and threats. The visitors and the schools experienced how schools can always learn from each other merely from their differences than from similarities. Every school and every school system has special characteristics. The Dutch delegation specially embraced the open structure and open society with room for emotions the schools prove to be. The 'human approach in leadership' that is the leading theme for the ESHA conference was visible in the Cypriot schools they visited.

Education in transition

During the ESHA conference we find that Cyprus wants to develop some changes and innovations in their educational system. The minister of culture and education Mr. Andreas Demetriou states that the biggest development of our time is the shift from centralism to decentralism. Especially considering education local solutions are requested to give schools the best opportunity to become educational partners in the growing complexity of our profession. He finds that the changing role of teachers has a direct connection with the changing role of school leaders. The school is responsible for results. Being a politician he refers to the connection and question whether investments in education live up to the results that are achieved. Key- note speaker Dr. Petros Pashiardis critically points out some issues Cyprus needs to work on. He wonders how one can make school leaders responsible for results if influence at recruitment and curriculum is denied. He refers to the natural tension between limited autonomy and full responsibility. There is insufficient answer to the growing gap between rich and poor in Cyprus and the

rest of the globe. The chairman of the 'Cyprus Primary School Head teachers Association: P.O.E.D, Mr. Demetris Mikellides recognizes that reaching sustainable school leadership in relation to steering the school results is a path that has yet to be explored. There is a key role for the teacher.

Future, education, leadership: ESHA and the 'World Educational Forum'

Ton Duif being president of ESHA made an inspiring plea. A very important subject in every European country should be the definition of quality. Only when this is clear schools can targeted improve their quality. The leading theme "The Successful School: a human approach of leadership" confirms that education is people centred. People make the difference. The countries with the best teachers have the best results. Mr. Duif wonders whether politicians have an opinion about education that is based on trust or merely on mistrust. Do they want a perfect society where is no room for mistakes while making mistakes is how we learn the most? Instead of encouraging schools and teachers and support them we focus now on accusation, exposure, building ranking lists and measure only by central testing. It is a way to make schools defensive. We suffocate space to experiment. Education needs enterprising people. We should not only raise the bar and close the gap (Fullan). We should give back the profession of educator to the teachers and school leaders and support them to fulfill their important task! We educate the new generation and for what future society do we raise our kids? This is the society that is already here our awareness is minimal. How can we prepare kids for this new world? We have school buildings, mostly designed in the 19th century with traditional class rooms, teachers out of the 20th century and kids who live in the 21st century. We often have no clue what kids do with internet, mobile phones, games etc. Our challenge is to integrate this in our learning system and our schools.

We have the responsibility to help youngsters to find a future place in this complicated society that is changing so rapidly. There are answers developing, some new visions, some good practices. The sharing of knowledge and building the learning society of education is the reason why ESHA is building the European School Leadership Community. This will help European school leaders and others like researchers and policy makers, to identify good practices and have a place where they can share knowledge and support.

This is important for existing schools and countries where kids can go to school. Thereby we share a global responsibility. In our world 80,000,000 children have no school at all! It is estimated that more than 250 million children under 14 years of age have to work in factories like the clothing industry. About 800.000.000 people in the world cannot read or write; they rely on information given by others and in this way are easy to control and to influence. More than 1.000.000.000 people

Visiting Cypriot school



have no access to clean drinking water, they face an early dying rate and a lot of diseases. All over the world, including the West, numerous kids are in prison. Didn't we all agree on the Children's Rights Treaty in 1989, accepted by the United Nations? Statistically every 100 years one new "Einstein" is born, a brilliant thinker who really can make the difference. Someone who could help to solve our energy problems, the world wide pollution. What will happen if the New Einstein is among one of these kids? The statement of the educator should be: Enough is enough!! We, educators should raise the alarm bell; how can we educate children when they are not in our schools, how can we fight against ignorance, poverty and religious fanatics if governments don't give us the schools and tools to educate! This is why we work to establish the World Educational Forum (WEF), a forum that shall consist of educators all over the world. If politicians use blaming and shaming on our schools, why should we not use the same instrument to measure their behavior. Analog to the World Economic Forum, the World Educational Forum should set the standards for all countries, a civilized investment in the new generation, including the right to go to school, to have clean food and drinking water, to live in an open and free society. With the help of International researchers the WEF will not only set standards but publish ranking lists of all Global countries, measuring their efforts and investments in education and children. ESHA supports this idea together with international associations like the International Confederation of Principals (ICP), European Educational Research Association (EERA), Australian Primary Principals Association (W) APPA and others.

In short: Education and school leadership are developing. Networking and lobbying are crucial in the global and regional forces. The ESHA exists about 20 years and has become an broad European organization for school leaders in founding education. ESHA connects! To expand the network, ambitions and visions support is being asked in Brussels. ESHA belongs to and exists for her members. The biennial congress is an important meeting point. In 2012 the congress will be in Edinburgh. To improve the sharing of knowledge and to support professional dialogue between members we have the ESHA- website and the digital multilingual ESHA- magazine. (<http://www.eshamagazine.com>). Take note of your responsibility in the development of education on school leadership. Every input counts! Or as Marco Polo once stated: 'without stones there is no arch'.

Summary of conference results

After the conference, Androula Othonos-Zachario made a summary of the conference results.

“Dear participants,

As we come to the end of the ESHA 2010 conference, I am delighted to present a report of this successful conference. And it has been successful because of your contributions and active participation. The theme of the conference is: “The successful school: a human approach of leadership” Cyprus 4th to 6th of November 2010. During the three days we had a great opportunity to listen to inspiring educators, to refresh our knowledge and share our experience.

Professor Andy Hargreaves presented key findings of a unique landmark project on organizations that perform beyond expectations in education, business and sport. He explained what does it mean to

perform sustainably beyond expectations and described the factors of leadership and improvement strategy affecting PBE (performing beyond expectations). The common factors that explain PBE across sectors were identified along with the factors transposable or sector specific.

The second key note speaker **Pr Passiardis** presented the personal qualities and professional competencies generic to successful school leaders in diverse contexts based on recent research findings. Issues of successful leadership were also presented and discussed. More particularly, Pr Pashiardis addressed the key element of successful school leadership with a human perspective and drew out specific implications for practitioners as well as policy makers. Successful leadership seems to be people-centered with clearly communicated values and vision; with a strong emphasis on the promotion of learning through the use of networked leadership and involves the

Andy Hargreaves during his presentation





Workshop

creative management of competing values which are all vital in order to lead a successful school.

The last key note speaker **Dr Neil Hawkes** explored the philosophy, principles and practical methods of being a values-based school. He explained why values-based Education is being enthusiastically adopted by schools worldwide and suggested ways of applying this to schools or settings.

Session A dealt with the Impact of Principals on Strengthening School Culture. **Mrs Suzana Hitrec** claimed that the principal plays a very important part in the puzzle that is school culture and that the principals manage processes and lead people. She then described the actions that the head can do to strengthen school culture and the skills needed to implement these actions. She supported the idea

that self evaluation in schools is a good way of improving school culture and she emphasized the role of principal in improving the school culture.

Session B dealt with the Democratic and Emotional Aspects of School Leadership and the Improvement of Teaching and Learning outcomes. **Josef Huber** claimed that the fundamental principles and values of the organization, democracy and democratic culture, rule of law and respect for human rights and human dignity – need to be reflected not only in education policy, but they need to influence the day to – day practice of education in the classrooms across the continent. Only then can we hope that our European societies will manage to maintain the level of democracy and respect for human rights they have reached and to further develop towards sustainable democratic societies in the face of the challenges of the 21st century. He concluded that the school heads have a lead role to play in shaping the everyday practice of teaching and learning so that the desired change influences the day-today experience of all learners. It was also claimed that the school heads need to inspire a culture of living democracy in all its aspects (intellectual, emotional etc) throughout the school. Because as Huber emphasized, education needs to be governed by a vision of the society in which we would like to live, and in which we would like to see our children grow up.

Session C dealt with Good practices and more particularly about promoting cooperation in schools. **Dr Ari Pokka** described how Finnish school system has evolved and how it supported school and local autonomy and cooperation among schools. He described a new strategy (a strategy of network) implemented in a secondary school that could offer new learning possibilities for their students. According to this strategy one student can study the same day in one or two or even three different schools. In the same session Dr Zachariou-

Othonos Androula supported the view that creating conditions for collaboration in a school will enhance the school's improvement efforts. She explained how the individual teacher, professional and organizational culture affect the creation and function of collaborative cultures. The role of head was also stressed. She maintained that it becomes critical to influence the culture at individual and group levels in order to bring about the desired change. She finally described how she managed to create and support a culture of collaboration within her own school.

Session D dealt with issues of Community and Parental Involvement in Building the School of the Future. **Dr Stavrinides Panayiotis** suggested a multidimensional process of facing education. He addressed the issue from a systemic approach focusing on the various micro-systems, meso-systems, and macro-systems that are interacting with each other, producing dynamic changes both within each system and between them. He argued in favour of the school as living organism that promotes or inhibits .in some cases-significant socialization processes. He demonstrated how parents become a significant agent of socialization for their children and he finally discussed the role of various community institutions in building a reciprocal relationship with schools creating a partnership environment between schools and the community; because the successful school is the one that achieves, nurtures, and maintains the pathways through all agents of change (children, parents, educators, community institutions) to interact and cooperate towards common developmental goals.

Session E dealt with Distributed leadership: The role of school principals in a European perspective. **Dr Kythreotis Andreas** discussed the distribution of leadership among different people or groups at the school level as another key policy strategy for improving

school leadership. He maintained that different staff in school participate in different ways in the roles and responsibilities and that they can make a difference in the school outcomes. He explained the role of head in distributed leadership and gave examples of countries that implement distributed leadership in schools. Recommendations for implementation were also presented.

Session F also dealt with Good practices: School culture and teacher leadership (panel discussion). **Jaume Pat** described a strategy implemented in his management school for promoting cooperation. According to this strategy they decided to organize the school on two main axis: Departments and Educational Teams, with a Head/Coordinator for each one. On the other hand Solveig Dahl described the characteristics of school cultures that support cooperation. She maintained that creating culture for learning is the key to success. She gave an example of an efficient tool in the principal's toolbox.

Workshop



that is used in many Norwegian schools. The program called “Walk your school” helps principals be active leaders of the learning processes in schools. In the same session Dr Pashiardy Georgia described successful strategies for building partnerships outside schools. More particularly the purpose of her presentation was to illustrate an effective communication practice that was initiated in a school in Cyprus between teachers and parents in their efforts to work closely together. The main goals of this collaboration were to become aware of the classroom activities related to instructional and curricular matters as well as to know more about other special school activities, thus maintaining in this way a reciprocal dialogue. She finally maintained that school climate is the essence of the school, indeed the personality of a school.

Interesting ideas also came out of the six workshops. **Workshop 1** (by Ton Duif) examined the contribution of school and stakeholder cooperation in the improvement of student social behaviour. In the workshop participants looked deeper at these issues and discussed what these meant to self-evaluation, responsibility and quality of schools.

Workshop 2 (by Nives Pockar) discussed how school leaders could successfully deal with conflict situations. She said that the way we react depends on leadership style, the style of response, the orientation and the specific circumstances.

The theme of **Workshop 3** (written by Margaret Roessler and presented by Slagter Sjoerd) focused on the individual learner with all his/her abilities, gifts, talents and learning disabilities or failings and how these are met by the school which has to make available a variety of differentiated offers for all students in several areas. She concentrated on three forms and designs of individualising and

differentiating education: (a) The area of school structure (b) the area of methodology and (c) opening school and learning places outside school.

In **Workshop 4** (by Dr Burkhard Mielke) the participants identified the main stressors impacting on the daily life of school leaders, reflected on their own understanding of leadership and suggested ways to create more attractive working conditions for school leaders by changing the school climate.

Workshop 5 (by Dr Neil Hawkes and Jane Cross) discussed the impact of values based education on school improvement. This workshop drew on the experience of the success of numerous Values-based Schools throughout the world. Dr Hawkes referred to anecdotal evidence from his wide experience, as well as looking at the result of a major research project in Australia on the effectiveness of Values Education while Mrs Cross focused on how values-based schools helps to develop a secure sense of self. Workshop participants were invited to consider how their knowledge of the subject could apply to both themselves and the settings in which they work.

In **Workshop 6** (by Antoniou Panayiotis) aimed to help the participants develop their school policy and relevant strategies that could promote both student academic achievement and student personal development. The workshop focused on issues related to school policy on teaching and the school policy related with the school learning environment.

As we come to the end of the conference, we are very grateful for the opportunity to host this event in our country. We hope you enjoyed this conference as well as your stay here in Cyprus. We wish you a safe journey back to your countries.”



The closing ceremony with music and traditional dance







European School
Heads Association