

Review of National Policies for Education

Foundations for the Future, Netherlands 2016

May 25, 2016

An overview of this presentation

- Recent OECD review of the Dutch education system, the highlights
- The art of improvement:
 - balancing competing values;
 - alignment of policy and practice; alignment at and between different levels: system <-> school <-> classroom
- Key elements of policy and practice in The Netherlands for the years to come

1 OECD review 2016

- Strengthen early childhood education and care (curriculum framework + competent staff)
- Counterbalance the hazards of early tracking
 - > increase permeability between tracks; hinder downward and stimulate upward mobility: **strong differentiated teaching skills**
 - > large performance differences within tracks: **strong differentiated teaching skills**
- Reward motivation and excellence
strong differentiated teaching skills

2 OECD review 2016

- Strengthen teacher professionalism
 - > career diversity and competence standards
 - > **strong differentiated teaching skills**
- Develop leadership strategy
 - > culture and practice of collaboration and improvement
 - > professional standards for school leaders and school boards
 - > periodical appraisal; self-evaluation; peer review; collaborative learning; feedback
- Accountability and quality school boards
 - > professional standards; transparency
 - > rebalance authority school boards > more authority school leaders

Outside in <> Inside out

- OECD review is the outside looking in; the main actors in the Dutch educational system recognize and welcome all recommendations.
- The Dutch educational system 'stand out from the crowd': One of the best; no national curriculum; schools have extensive freedom; great variety between schools
- How to improve the system without undermining it's unique qualities and instead, making use of these qualities?

The art of improvement balancing competing values

flexibility and change

- leadership and common goals
- collaborative learning
- support and reward

- teacher leadership and empowerment (McKinsey)
- teacher development fund
- teacher study grants

focus inside

- periodic appraisal
- peer review
- self-evaluation

focus outside

- high quality inspectorate
- transparency in school quality
- registration systems teachers and school leaders

stability and control

The art of improvement alignment

policy

- rebalance top down in favour of bottom up policy development
- professional autonomy schools and teachers in combination with accountability
- common ideals in combination with diversity in context and approach

practice

- organized trust
- professional standards in ownership
- strong support for professional autonomy and responsibility teachers
- emphasis on collaborative learning in schoolcontext

Key elements lessons learned

- Consensus about aims and engagement of all stakeholders, especially teachers
- Realistic expectations (no change overnight)
- Empowerment: self-adjusting systems with feedback at all levels, incentives to react and tools to strengthen capacities to deliver better outcomes
- Organise learning and make schools learning organisations: collaborative learning in the own context; exchange of knowledge and good practice; feedback

Some highlights

- Strong support for teachers as key for improvement
- Registration systems for teachers and school leaders:
 - Ownership of the professional standards
- Independent of their own school, teachers can apply for study grants; educational pioneer funding; teacher development and innovation funding
- Collaborative research schools, teachers and researchers
- Growing emphasis on peer review; self-evaluation and feedback within and across schools
- Growing awareness of the importance of self-organised collaborative learning within and across schools
- Teacher leadership and empowerment

Impact on teachers' practices

- Include teachers in decision making
- Collaborative school culture in combination with professional autonomy
- Teacher ownership professional standards
- Link student assessment <> feedback <> teacher appraisal <>
- Teacher empowerment, leadership, innovation, practice research

Key elements the role of the teacher

“ The quality of our education is largely determined by our teachers.

This makes them uniquely capable of providing valuable input we can use as we work together to improve education.”

Jet Bussemaker, Dutch Minister of Education, Culture and Science

