



# ICSEI

International Congress for School Effectiveness and Improvement

## ICSEI EXPRESS and DIGEST

Volume 7 Issue 1, 2016

### Co-Editors' Note

Welcome to the May edition of the ICSEI Express and Digest. I'm sure there's been a lot of activity in your working and learning spaces - there certainly has been in ours! In this edition we bring you news and updates on Board activities and the 2017 Congress as well as a Digest which includes pieces from some of our colleagues in Russia. Our Digest pieces offer some unique ideas about the process of becoming a teacher in Russia as well as a discussion of the leadership functions of Principals in a part of the world that many of us know little about. Michael's President's Message is particularly thought-provoking as he reflects on 'what is dying and what is being born' in pedagogy as we seek transformational changes in education systems around the world.

The call for proposals for the next Congress in Ottawa is already upon us, and we hope that many of you are preparing your thoughts and ideas to share with the rest of us at that gathering. (We have been informed by an 'inside source' that there will be no extensions this year, so please be sure to get your submissions in by May 31st!) We wish you all the best in your current and future endeavours, and would be very happy to receive short versions of your work to share in our next Digest. This is a great way to get collaborative conversations started.

Sincerely,

Susan and Paige



Susan E.  
Elliott-Johns



Paige Fisher

# 1. President's Message

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

Talking to colleagues during my travels I have learned that the majority of school systems are still highly bureaucratic, strongly regulated in details, hierarchically organized, with too many actors involved with little alignment in goal orientation or actual responsibility. Such a policy context makes it very difficult to introduce coherent approaches to developing and transforming a school system. The implications for school governance and leadership reform initiatives are that eclectic government interventions cause an overload problem by piling disconnected policies one upon another, leading to a sense of confusion and uncertainty, not only among the actors in schools, but also at different levels within the system (regional, district, local levels).

The main reason for the absence of sustainability in reform initiatives seems to lie in the dysfunction of a political culture which develops reform models by responding to challenges or new ideas and concepts rather than based on a transformative vision of equity, social cohesion and quality (and thus trying to implement reforms by means of prescriptive strategies rather than by system capacity building). Their inevitable failure is often attributed to the fact that they follow a traditional managerial model which builds on command and control. This in turn leads to de-energizing effects of fragmentation, creates leadership dilemmas, and pulls school leaders in different directions between *sollen* (duty) and *wollen* (desire).

At a national gathering in Austria about 250 educational change makers were asked where they saw a world that was dying and where they experienced a world wanting to be born. For all of us present, the experience was unique in the way that we experienced the members of various sectors of the education system in dynamic interaction with rectors of higher education institutions, political heads of regional administration, and specialists practising new forms of interaction while shifting from debate to dialogue. At the end of the event, hearts and minds seemed opened and connected; a mutual space of trust, creativity, and dialogues seemed to create a generative flow. For many, it was a first step from transactional to transformational communication:

*“What is dying,” they said, “is a pedagogy that revolves around techniques and recipes. What is being born is a pedagogy that revolves around sensing and actualizing the best potential in students. What we need to let go of is thinking of school in terms of lessons or periods, and a culture of regulation and control. What we need to develop is a new form of equal collaboration among parents, teachers, and students. [...] We are constantly tinkering with rebuilding the school; we are replacing a window here and another door there - but what we really need is a new foundation for the entire house.”* (Scharmer & Kaeufer, 2013, 211)

If we look out for the foundation of the school (house), we can neither find it in the national policies by educational authorities nor in the theories produced by researchers, since policy makers and researchers “need to give serious attention to the messy complexity of schools and not impose a ‘theory from above’. Just as one-size-fits-all policies run aground when hitting the rocks of real life, so do attempts to produce sets of definitive statements about policy enactment” (Ball et al., 2012, 149). Policies are enacted in an intersubjective

school world, in which many individuals are subjected to the events that take place in it and respond to them, sometimes as soloists and sometimes as a choir with the school leader taking responsibility for leadership. Their actions are deeply embedded in the complexity of experiences, which cannot be foreseen and planned in every detail. The process forces the individual to take ownership and initiative by co-creating the situation. It shifts collaboration from a chaotic mass of ideas, concepts, and experiences to a new level of order, integrating learning on different levels from the classroom level to the school at large resulting in a shift to mutual understanding and professionalization.

Although learning seems to be the common ground for understanding the effectiveness of teaching, we know very little about it, since it is not visible. We can only project backwards from the results, but not control it - it rather controls us, when something happens to us (often through happenstance). If we are aware of the fact that learning is beyond the reach of teaching, we have to become aware of the complexity and chaotic variety of issues, elements, aspects, dimensions, factors, as well as of problems, programs, and intentions which comprise the school as a whole - and whether all of these really lead to learning. Accordingly, it is the partnership among many actors involved - students, teachers, parents, communities, school districts, government, and academics - which collaboratively informs and impacts student learning, practitioner professional learning, and system leadership.

“Collaborative Partnerships” is also the theme for the coming ICSEI Conference in Ottawa, where we want to explore these issues further with a view towards system-wide educational improvement. Why don’t you become part of this excellent opportunity by engaging in a shared learning process, which makes transformation possible on personal and institutional levels? Six types of proposals within six conference strands offer various opportunities to hand in your ideas to becoming part of the community of global architects of the future of education. Looking forward to meeting you there,



Michael Schratz  
ICSEI President

## References

Ball, S. J., Maguire, M., & Braun, A. (2012). *How schools do policy: Policy enactments in secondary schools*. London, New York: Routledge.

Scharmer, O., & Kaufer, K. (2013). *Leading from the emerging future: From ego-system to eco-system economies*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers.

## 2. ICSEI News and Updates

### 2.1 A politician's perspective on ICSEI 2016

My name is Anneli Bojesson, I am a politician in Malmö, Sweden, representing the Liberal party, member of the City Council and second deputy chairman of the Board for Preschool Education.

Malmö is the third largest city in Sweden and the home of over 300 000 people with roots in over 174 countries, speaking 150 different languages. Malmö is a young city, almost half the population is under the age of 35 and 31% of Malmö's residents were born abroad. The population in Malmö has grown for the last 30 consecutive years. On current forecasts, we will have more than 350,000 residents within a few years, whereof many immigrants. These circumstances make it a huge challenge for the education authorities.

ICSEI-2016 in Glasgow was the first time I participated in an ICSEI-conference. My impressions and experiences from the conference are generally positive. Though a surprising reflection was that few delegates were politicians.

I found that The Conference Programme did include just a few sessions regarding Early Childhood Education. I planned to attend all possible sessions starting with Networks Pre-conference Wednesday January 6 where I met Persille Schwarz and the Early Childhood Education Network. We continued to meet on several occasions during the conference which was very valuable.

Another pick of sessions was three that presented sustainable improvements in the education system from Early Years through Primary and Secondary Education. Friday January 8 started with a visit to a local school, St Benedict in Westerhouse, a deprived area in Glasgow. After lunch I attended PC Symposium Over the Rainbow Sustainable Improvements in the London Borough of Hackney since 2012. On Saturday January 9 my last session was LDP Symposium Can Can Northlan - Closing the Poverty Related Attainment Gap.

These three presentations made a massive impression. St Benedicts fantastic work to give children a good chance to a life without drugs and criminality. Leaving St Benedict I was touched to tears. The presentations of Hackney Learning Trust and Can Can Northlan was very inspiring. Their methods to include the whole family from early years on gave me inspiration to bring back to Malmö.

Furthermore, I was impressed by the Keynote addresses by Professor Allan Walker and Pasi Sahlberg. My conclusions from the conference are the importance of:



30<sup>th</sup> annual International Congress for School Effectiveness and Improvement

**Collaborative Partnerships for System-wide Educational Improvement**  
January 7-10, 2017

Collaboration at all levels of the education system has been a hallmark of Ontario's success of the past decade. The theme for the 2017 ICSEI conference gives prominence to the importance of partnerships between and among the various participants in international education systems.

For more details and to register for the 2017 ICSEI conference, visit [www.icsei.net/2017](http://www.icsei.net/2017)

**ICSEI Ottawa 2017**  
International Congress for School Effectiveness and Improvement  
[www.icsei.net/2017](http://www.icsei.net/2017)

- Focusing on what is best for the child.
- A strong school leadership and skilled teachers.
- Evidence based methods.

Malmö, Sweden, Europe and several other counties in the world have big challenges in the massive amounts of refugees and asylum seekers. My hope as a politician focusing on education is that ICSEI will take up the following issues on its agenda:

- How The Children’s Charter to Rights is regarded in the education system in general, worldwide.
- How countries receiving children, refugees and asylum seekers, prepare to include them in their education systems.

Anneli Bojesson  
April 8, 2016

## 2.2 Board Elections

Nominations will open on the 15th June for the position of ICSEI President , ICSEI Treasurer and ICSEI Board Members. A separate email with directions will be forwarded closer to this date. A reminder that nominees must be financial members to apply for a position.

## 2.3 ICSEI at AERA

ICSEI members Paige Fisher, Shanee Wangia, Chris Chapman & Hannah Chestnutt presented papers in a highly successful symposium during the AERA Conference in Washington, DC in April, titled: **The Austerity of Change: Leadership challenges in diverse international democracies.**

The theme of ‘austerity’ was presented from a variety of international perspectives which lead to some stimulating discussion. Our colleague Pasi Sahlberg was originally one of the symposium presenters, but he was called away to receive the prestigious LEGO award. <http://pasisahlberg.com/news/lego-prize-2016/> and could not be with us.

Michael Schratz served as the Chair, and Andy Hargreaves stepped in and served as a discussant for the session which added rich insights to the conversation. The session was well-attended, and it was wonderful to see a variety of ICSEI members attend the session in support of their ICSEI colleagues.



## 3. Network contact information

### 3.1 Network contact information

The ICSEI networks are an increasingly important structure within the ICSEI community. All ICSEI members are welcome to participate in network activities during and between Congress gatherings. Here is an updated list of all network contacts.

ICSEI - NETWORKS (April 5th 2016)	Networks Coordinator: Persille Schwartz E: psc@eva.dk	
3P (Policymakers, Politicians & Practitioners)	Naomi Mertens MyLearningCommunity +31 654 231378 E: naomi@mylearningcommunity.eu	Erica van Roosmalen Director, Data and Reporting Education Quality and Accountability Office E: Erica.vanroosmalen@eqao.com (Until end of March 2017)
Data use	Dr. Kim Schildkamp University of Twente ELAN P.O. Box 217 7500 AE Enschede The Netherlands P: +31 53 489 4203 E: k.schildkamp@utwente.nl Twitter: <a href="https://twitter.com/schildkampkim">https://twitter.com/schildkampkim</a>	Jan Vanhoof Universiteit Antwerpen Venusstraat 35 2000 Antwerpen P: 032654512 E: jan.vanhoof@uantwerpen.be
Early Childhood	Persille Schwartz, Chief Adviser The Danish Evaluation Institute Ostbanegade 55, 3rd floor 2100 Copenhagen Osterbro P:+45 3525 4649/+45 9356 4387 (mob) E: psc@eva.dk Twitter: <a href="https://twitter.com/persilleS">https://twitter.com/persilleS</a>	Dr. M. I. Deunk Rijksuniversiteit Groningen Grote Rozenstraat 15 9712 TG Groningen, gebouw 2223, kamer 0315 P: +31 (50) 363 9118 E: m.i.deunk@rug.nl <a href="http://www.rug.nl/staff/m.i.deunk">www.rug.nl/staff/m.i.deunk</a>
Leadership	Pierre Tulowitzki, Senior Researcher, University of Teacher Education Zug, Switzerland E: ptulowitzki@gmail.com	Jacob Easley II, Dean School of Education and Professional Studies (SEPS)/Graduate Division at Eastern Connecticut State University E: drjeasleyii@gmail.com.
MORE (Methods of Researching Educational Effectiveness)	Daniel Muijs D.Muijs@soton.ac.uk	Marcus Pietsch pietsch@leuphana.de

## 4. ICSEI Digest

### 4.1 How To Become A Teacher In Russia: Ensuring Variability Of Teacher Education

**Authors: Roza A. Valeeva, Aydar M. Kalimullin  
Kazan (Volga region) Federal University, Russia**

A key objective of this paper is to examine the structure of teacher education in Russia and the subsequent changes in it as a result of a broad scale all-Russia experiment.

Changes in the political, socio-economic, cultural life in Russia in recent decades defined a completely different development of the national school in terms of its incorporation into current practice. Admittedly it is not only the priorities, content, technologies and technical facilities which matter in reform movements, but teachers and students as its main designers.

Historically, teacher training in Russia was carried out on the basis of academic universities where special pedagogical institutes were opened at the beginning of the 19th century. Later, on the basis of those institutes, autonomous teacher training institutions were introduced in Russia and then the tradition was followed in the Soviet Union (1917-1991). Only 5-10% of the Russian teachers were trained in the classic universities and 90-95% of them in the academic universities. Since the 1990s the number of teacher training institutes and universities decreased. If in 1994 there were 96 state teacher training higher educational institutions, then in 2008 there were 70 of them and today there are only 40 of them. The main reason is the contradiction between educational, research and technical criteria on the one hand and the accreditation requirements imposed by the government on the other. Due to the 1990s recession there has been a considerable decline in the state support for higher educational institutions which caused stagnation. For this reason many of them were reformed mainly by merging them with academic universities.

These changes are largely responsible for a tendency to increase the share of state order for training teachers in the classical universities. They have more powerful educational and scientific potential, the best equipment, which they can use in training teachers.

Before Russia joined the Bologna Process it took 4 and 5 years to train teachers in higher institutions. Upon graduation they received a diploma of a specialist. Since 2001 training finishes with awarding Bachelor's degree (4 years) and Master's degree (2 years). However, the content forms and methods of teacher training have remained unchanged. This created certain difficulties in teacher training which were worsened by low prestige of teacher's profession, low salaries, lack of career promotion, etc.

There are three main groups of problems that defined the crisis in the Russian system of teacher education:

1. Difficulties of entering a profession. For example, school leavers intending to do a degree in education usually enter with low grades. There is little possibility of selecting students who are apt to do teaching. There existed low percentage of job placement in the sphere of education among graduates with a degree in education (the problem of the so called “double negative selection”).
2. Problems of training connected with inappropriate quality of graduates’ qualification, low research activity of students, poor resource provision of educational programs.
3. Problems of sustainable employment connected with lack of forecast for the demand in educators in the region, lack of responsibility of regions for not meeting the cap on student numbers and future employment of graduates, inappropriate recruitment methods of attracting most talented graduates into teaching career, lack of professional support and guidance of beginner teachers as well as lack of career perspectives for a teacher due to lack of vacancies in schools as low qualified teachers occupy these positions.

That’s why the suggested in 2013 Russian strategic “Conception of teacher education development support” was a timely step. Initial teacher training, in-service training and professional retraining lie at the heart of the reform. The idea of combining the opportunities of classical and pedagogical universities launches unique conditions for a broad scale experiment: new content formation and the organizational structure of teacher education modeling.

At the same time “The teacher professional standard” was adopted in 2013. The teacher professional standard is to establish uniform requirements for the content and quality of vocational educational activities, to assess the level of qualification of teachers in employment and certification for career planning; the formation of job descriptions and the development of federal state educational standards of teacher education.

Introduction of the new teacher professional standard inevitably entails changes to the standard of their training and retraining in higher education and centers of excellence.

In May 2014 the national program “Comprehensive program to improve the professional skills of educational institutions teaching staff” was developed and approved. It has led to important changes in policy direction, the structure and curriculum of teacher education. Russian Ministry of Education and Science have launched projects to develop new modules, the basic professional educational programs of undergraduate and graduate programs in the framework of the teacher education modernization project.

In 2014-2015 the pilot projects were carried out in 23 higher educational institutions: testing new models and programs, training of professionals who will convey new ideology and technology, including the revision of the enrollment procedure for teaching programs.

In 2016-2017 the new models and programs will be implemented in the whole system of teacher training in the Russian Federation.

Along with this, Russia is experiencing a change in the structure of university teacher training. In terms of content, the priorities of teacher training reforms are given to these basic areas:

- Improving the quality of students receiving teacher education by eliminating the linear path of learning and creating conditions for a direct “entry” into the programs and teacher training for different groups of students.
- Changes in the content of teacher training programs and training forms and methods in order to ensure implementation of teacher’s new professional standard and the new standards of school education.
- The development and testing the system of independent certification of professional teachers who have already received the diploma; the establishment of the system of educational programs’ quality assessment.

## **4.2 Exploring School Principals’ Leadership Functions: A Case Study in the Republic of Tatarstan**

**D. Sabirova, R. Khayrutdinov**  
**Kazan Federal University (Russia)**

Quality of education in modern schools is considerably defined not only by teachers’ professionalism, but also by professional standards of its Head. There are questions: What is a professional School Head? Where and how can these School Heads be trained? What knowledge and experience do they need to have? What personal qualities should future school leaders develop? How can readiness of the applicant for a position of the first person at school be estimated? What processes call for close attention in a modern Russian school?

Sociological research on educational problems at the municipal level conducted by the Russian Academy of Education showed that about 30% of respondents indicated the following reasons of stagnation of educational institutions: lack of professional administrative qualifications of School Heads, conservative approaches to school management, lack of time of an administrative board to develop educational institution.

Let’s consider the issues of ensuring leadership in education in the way they have been solved in the Republic of Tatarstan over the last 10 years.

In 2006 the First Republican competition “The Leader in Education of the Republic of Tatarstan” took place. 108 best Heads of educational institutions of Tatarstan took part in it. The challenges of the competition: identification of creatively working leaders of an educational system with a high professional rating; creation of positive professional image of the leader in an educational system; public recognition of their personal contribution to the development of educational system, and also distribution of successful experience of administrative activity in an educational system.

Since 2009 the *Leadership Lessons project* has been implemented at schools of the Republic. It is conducted by both school psychologists, and simply successful people - businessmen, heads of large enterprises and even deputies of the State Council of RT. The Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic is sure that it isn't obligatory to be a teacher to conduct "Leadership Lessons". It is necessary to be an adult, a person who knows what to tell younger generations.

In March, 2015 the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Tatarstan discussed the issues of system modernization of general education management. The task was to prepare the whole package of measures on modernization of education: these included new qualification requirements for the Heads of educational institutions, suggestions for the formation of personnel resources and innovative projects on educational strategy.

Together with Kazan Federal University the package of measures on modernization of teachers' training in Tatarstan for 2015-2020 is being developed. Innovations include: attraction of talented school leavers, improvement of educational programs of teachers' training and improvement of mechanisms of social support of young teachers at schools.

It's time for educational reforms in Tatarstan.

In the summer of 2014 the assessment of professional competencies of municipal Heads of education was carried out. As a result they were distributed into several qualification groups. In the spring of 2015 a specialized educational program of professional development for each of 5 groups began.

From March to August 2015, 600 prospective School Heads from different municipal regions started a programme of professional development. The content of their further professional training was prepared. At the end of the courses the best will become part of a personnel reserve of the Ministry of Education and Science.

In 2014 a grant-supported competition "*Our Best School Head*" started. The challenges of the competition: identification of the most successful School Heads of the RT; encouragement of successful administrative experience of School Heads; increase of effective management of the general education organizations.

In August 2015 some results of implementation of the national educational initiative "*Our new school*", the Federal program of development of education for 2011-2015, Strategy of a development of education in the Republic of Tatarstan for 2010-2015 "Kilachak" were summed up.

Together with municipal boards, "route maps" for the development of a network of the general education organizations were worked out and approved. The Ministry of Education and Science defined 550 basic schools. Their task is to become a backbone, internship platforms of working out the best practice models, and the centers of methodical support.

The following recommendations were put forward for the coming academic year:

- to give a priority to the creation of the most favorable conditions for the development of human resources in terms of effective economy and social sphere modernization in the Republic of Tatarstan;
- to provide the achievement of target reference points designated in the Federal program of the development of education in 2011-2015 and strategy of the development of education in the Republic of Tatarstan in 2010-2015 of “Kilachak” (“Future”);
- to develop a complex plan for 2016-2018 to implement the tasks of **Strategy of development of educational models** in the Republic of Tatarstan for 2015-2025;
- to develop and accept the concept of development of a national education system in the Republic of Tatarstan for 2015-2030, to consider the mechanism of its implementation;
- to improve the regional model of methodical maintenance of educational process taking into account the introduction of the New Federal Educational Standard of general education;
- to develop the measures aimed at attracting younger pedagogical generations to schools;
- to implement the grant-supported program “The Best Class Teacher of the Republic of Tatarstan”.

The solution of the declared tasks, ensuring quality of educational process at school, depends on qualifications of its Head and his/her ability to concentrate on results.

## 5. The Next Edition

Expect another issue in August, 2016. We will share news and updates for the Ottawa Congress, and feature updates and perspectives from selected Networks.

If you have an announcement that you would like to have featured, or you would like to submit a ‘Digest’ version of a paper or project (500-1000 words) that you are working on, we will accept submissions until July 15th for this issue. All queries and submissions should be sent to Paige Fisher and Susan Elliott-Johns at [Paige.fisher@viu.ca](mailto:Paige.fisher@viu.ca) & [susanej@nipissingu.ca](mailto:susanej@nipissingu.ca)

**PLEASE NOTE:** If you are interested in exploring the possibility of hosting an ICSEI conference in your country, the guidelines are posted on the ICSEI website [www.icsei.net](http://www.icsei.net) and you can contact Jenny Lewis at the ICSEI Secretariat [admin@icsei.net](mailto:admin@icsei.net) for additional information.