

National Assembly of the Republic of Bulgaria

To Ms Milka Slavcheva  
Chairwoman of the Bulgarian Association of Private Schools

Dear Ms Slavcheva,  
Dear Guests,

It is a great honour for me to greet you with the beginning of the European Seminar “New Approaches to Learning as Key to Success”, hosted by the Bulgarian Association of Private Schools. Sharing good practices for improvement of the education and upbringing of our children is extremely important in the context of the reform in the field of pre-school and school education, which we started with the adoption of the Act of the same name. In it the possibility of funding private schools with public money is regulated for the first time – an obligation taken with the National Program for Development of School Education and Pre-school Upbringing and Preparation (2006 – 2015). Nine years later this possibility is officially granted by the Bulgarian legislation. We do not divide children into public, municipal and private and that is why we are convinced the quality of education must not depend on the ownership of the educational institution. In the Law our priorities in the field of education are set – to ensure equal access to every child to quality education and a chance for the school and the community to respond to the needs of each child. Through that Act we would like to ensure prerequisites for each child to stand the chance for development following his/her interests and for the teachers to find out the talent of every single student. We would like the children to acquire skills, not just memorizing facts not useful in solving problems.

The success of the reform depends on the common efforts of all – public authorities, non-governmental sector, social partners, local authorities, teachers and parents. It is important for all of us to feel like a community which looks and works in the same direction – the education of better quality and accessibility. The role of the Ministry of Education and Science is essential. It is called on to prepare the regulatory framework and look for its implementation. At that moment the contribution of the schools is crucial as without their successful practices, the reform will remain just a good intention.

In the recent years the private schools in Bulgaria are on leading positions with their results from the national tests. The educational achievements of their students are outcome of the innovative ideas and devotion of the teachers, the freedom and the entrepreneurial spirit of the heads of these institutions. Today, when the heads of schools and kindergartens, face the quickly changing educational environment, forums like this one help us gather together and discuss good ideas and successful practices for effective teaching and learning.

Dear teachers and heads of schools,  
Dear guests,

Tomorrow’s success of the change depends on our mutual efforts today – institutions, teachers, parents, children, local authorities, employers and NGOs. The guarantee for success lies in the common goals and efforts of the society as a whole. We all have to unite so that Bulgarian children grow healthy, happy and confident in their success!

Be healthy and impetuous and do not loose your strength and energy!  
Nice work and good luck!

Sofia, 19 November 2015

Milena Damyanova

Chairwoman of the Education and Science Committee in the 43 National Assembly of the Republic of Bulgaria