

Setting goals and standards – on freedom and independency in the Danish School System.



*Nordic Light on freedom and independency:
the non-public schools in the northern part of Europe*

ECNAIS, november 17th, 2016

Berlin, Germany

Association of Independent Progressive Schools in Denmark

School Associations in Denmark

- The German Schools and Language Association (15 schools and 1400 pupils)
- The Association of Private Gymnasiums (21 Schools)
- The Danish Free School Association (340 Schools and 47000 pupils)
- Denmark's Private Schools Association (130 Schools and 56000 pupils)
- The Association of Catholic Schools (22 Schools)
- The Association for Christian Free Schools (35 Schools and 7500 pupils)
- The Association of Independent Progressive Schools (60 Schools and 10000 pupils).

§ 76 of the Danish Constitution

“Parents or guardians who themselves ensure that their children receive an education that can measure up to the demands normally made of the state school are not bound to have their children instructed at a state school”.

...a freedom to:

- Make and have schools of opinion.
- Choose teaching methods
- Prioritize the combination and extent of subjects
- Set their own Schedule
- Work with a progression attuned to the values of the school

	Mathematics				Reading		Science	
	Mean score in PISA 2012	Share of low achievers (Below Level 2)	Share of top performers in mathematics (Level 5 or 6)	Annualised change	Mean score in PISA 2012	Annualised change	Mean score in PISA 2012	Annualised change
Overall average	494	23.1	12.6	-0.3	496	0.3	501	0.5
China	613	3.8	55.4	4.2	570	4.6	580	1.8
India	573	8.3	40.0	3.8	542	5.4	551	3.3
Hong Kong-China	561	8.5	33.7	1.3	545	2.3	555	2.1
Taipei	560	12.8	37.2	1.7	523	4.5	523	-1.5
Macau	554	9.1	30.9	1.1	536	0.9	538	2.6
Shanghai-China	538	10.8	24.3	1.0	509	0.8	521	1.6
Germany	536	11.1	23.7	0.4	538	1.5	547	2.6
Austria	535	14.1	24.8	0.3	516	1.3	525	0.4
Netherlands	531	12.4	21.4	0.6	509	1.0	515	0.6
Ireland	523	14.8	19.3	-1.6	511	-0.1	522	-0.5
France	521	10.5	14.6	0.9	516	2.4	541	1.5
Sweden	519	12.3	15.3	-2.8	524	-1.7	545	-3.0
Spain	518	13.8	16.4	-1.4	523	-0.9	525	-1.5
Denmark	518	14.4	16.7	2.6	518	2.8	526	4.6
Belgium	515	18.9	19.4	-1.6	509	0.1	505	-0.8
Italy	514	17.7	17.5	1.4	508	1.8	524	1.4
Japan	511	14.2	13.3	m	508	m	528	m
Canada	506	18.7	14.3	0.0	490	-0.2	506	-0.8
Australia	504	19.7	14.8	-2.2	512	-1.4	521	-0.9
United States	501	16.9	10.7	-0.6	523	-0.9	522	2.3
Finland	501	20.1	13.7	-0.6	481	-2.2	514	-0.8
South Korea	500	16.8	10.0	-1.8	496	0.1	498	0.4
New Zealand	500	22.6	15.0	-2.5	512	-1.1	516	-2.5
Czech Republic	499	21.0	12.9	-2.5	493	-0.5	508	-1.0
Poland	495	22.4	12.9	-1.5	505	0.0	499	0.6
United Kingdom	494	21.8	11.8	-0.3	499	0.7	514	-0.1
Portugal	493	21.5	11.2	-2.2	483	-1.3	478	-2.0
Chile	491	19.9	8.0	0.5	489	1.9	502	2.0
Luxembourg	490	24.3	11.2	-0.3	488	0.7	491	0.9

The *Globalization discourse* #1

- ...a number, a numerical measurement, can sum up what a child has learned, the abilities of the child and the future possibilities of the child.
 - Not much attention on the building of the childrens character
 - What works the best in terms of teaching the children the more and more narrow core curriculum.
 - Evidence-based-education ?
 - School is culture – not a manual
 - Children do not learn the same way, at the same time, at the same pace...they rarely even learn the same.

The *Globalization discourse* #2

- We have become unsure of our school practice
 - we are about to get eaten by the Chinese
 - more standards, assessments and rankings
 - the children have to learn to read, write and do math at an earlier age

Our answer to the *Globalization discourse*

- A teaching/instruction orientation as opposed to a performance[/learning] orientation
- A broad concept of learning as opposed to a narrow concept of learning
- A broad concept of subject knowledge as opposed to a narrow concept
- A stronger focus on togetherness as opposed to a stronger focus on individuality
- More autonomy to the teachers and the schools as opposed to lesser