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International assessment and evidence-based approaches to education

Brussels, February 2019

Autonomous professionalism and access for all



Access for All

- Global issues over access to education from lack of provision in low-income countries to lack of teacher supply in high-income countries
- The modern state as an education provider
- Shift in funding regimes
- Money following the baby boomers
- Under-investment in the future of people
- Future of education/ Future of work



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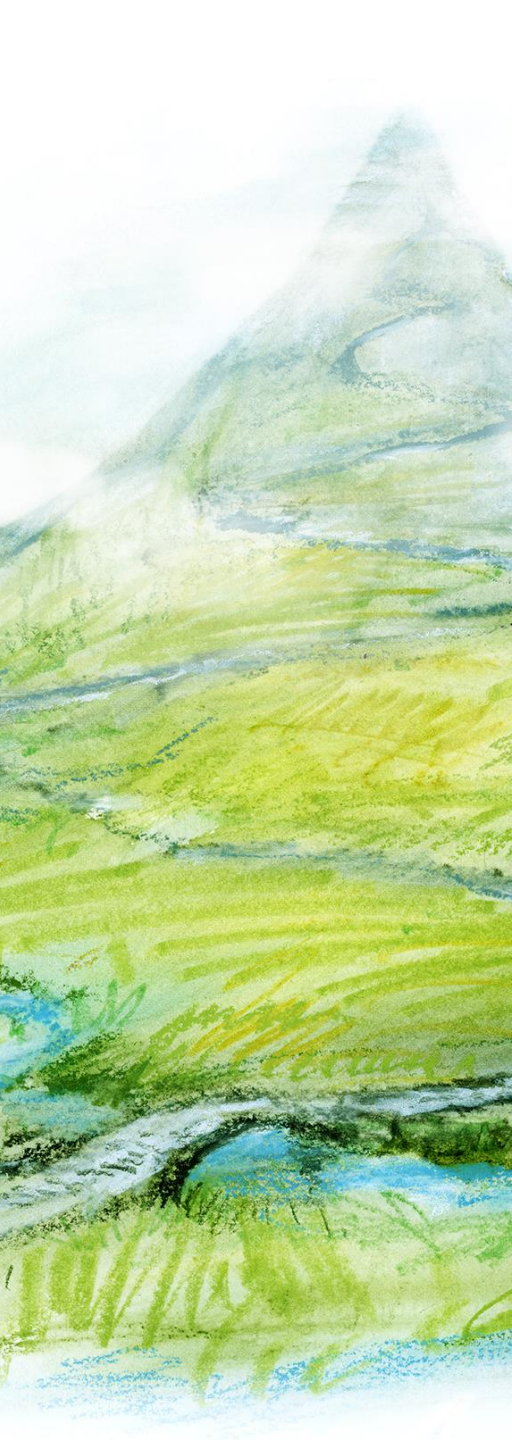


Students and Teachers

- Underfunding education and the SDGs
- Teaching is selected by the highest proportion of adults in an English survey as the most difficult of all jobs
- The status of teachers is in decline
- Yet our soon to be published teacher identity research tells us that teachers care more about students than their own careers



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Teacher Identity

- Collective teacher identities are changing
- Teacher professionalism has numerous systemic influences
- Teachers need to set their own standards
- Be supported by good Initial Teacher Education and career long Professional Learning and Development
- Career pathways should be varied and coherent
- Teachers should help shape curriculum and wellbeing policies



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Evidence-based approaches

- OECD
- UNESCO
- UIS
- GEM report
- EI - Global Status of Teachers report



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How does evidence help?

- Best evidence synthesis (e.g. TPLD BES)
- Learning styles (lemmings)
- Quality education
- Teacher policy
- TUAC



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Frameworks in focus

- Looking in depth at OECD frameworks
- The reflex to look inward must be challenged
- Education systems are comparable
- Smart policy leads to better outcomes for students (Canada, Finland, Singapore etc.)
- Cultural context matters
- Policy must be sympathetic to culture and history (e.g. German TVET)



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TALIS supporting teacher professionalism

- Countries that provide good classroom facilities and a quality state schooling structure do better
- Triptych of teacher knowledge, professional autonomy and peer learning work in concert
- To improve teacher self-efficacy and the ability to shape the classroom experience around the individual student
- Increasingly important as classrooms become more diverse and complex environments



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Holistic school communities

- Whole school approaches are essential for wellbeing
- OECD has recognised the importance of wellbeing with an increased focus on this
- OECD 2030 has a curriculum focus
- PISA and TALIS have added wellbeing questions
- Students who achieve the highest scores do not necessarily report as being the happiest



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Wellbeing

- Academic achievement is only part of a student's development
- Increases in student anxiety and negative human responses to over testing
- Negative effects of a crowded curriculum
- Stress also affects teachers: JTU survey told us 41% of pregnant women say their working environment adversely affected their pregnancy
- More balanced classroom experience required (OECD 2030)



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Active citizens

- We want to develop active citizens
- Teachers and students need a focus on more sustainable futures
SDG 4.7
- Co-operative skills, creative thinking and empathy for others
- NZ curriculum has included key competencies since 2007
- Coherence in PLD, curriculum and holistic approaches to schooling are required



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PLD

- Time is necessary but not sufficient
- Time engaging with administtrivia is time wasted
- Teachers should also have a say over what PLD they do
- Teacher unions have a role to play in quality PLD provision
- Conference on Teachers' Professional Wellbeing and Stress FENPROF October 2018
- Teachers know what works best
- PLD must be focused on whole school wellbeing for teachers and students



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Leadership

- Professional autonomy means leadership for all
- Heroic models of leadership are outdated
- Leadership must be lined up: school, district, national
- The best systems are coherent: Singapore, Finland etc.
- Structural reform can have the opposite result e.g. Sweden
- Systems must be based on evidence not ideology
- Must include teachers' unions in policy formation to achieve coherence





Teacher Status

- Teachers and their unions must not be constructed as blocks to innovation
- Schleicher (2018,) says countries must commit to making teaching an attractive profession both intellectually and financially with strong investment in teacher development and good working conditions
- Yet teachers in many OECD countries feel they have a low level of professional autonomy and an average degree of autonomy in decision making



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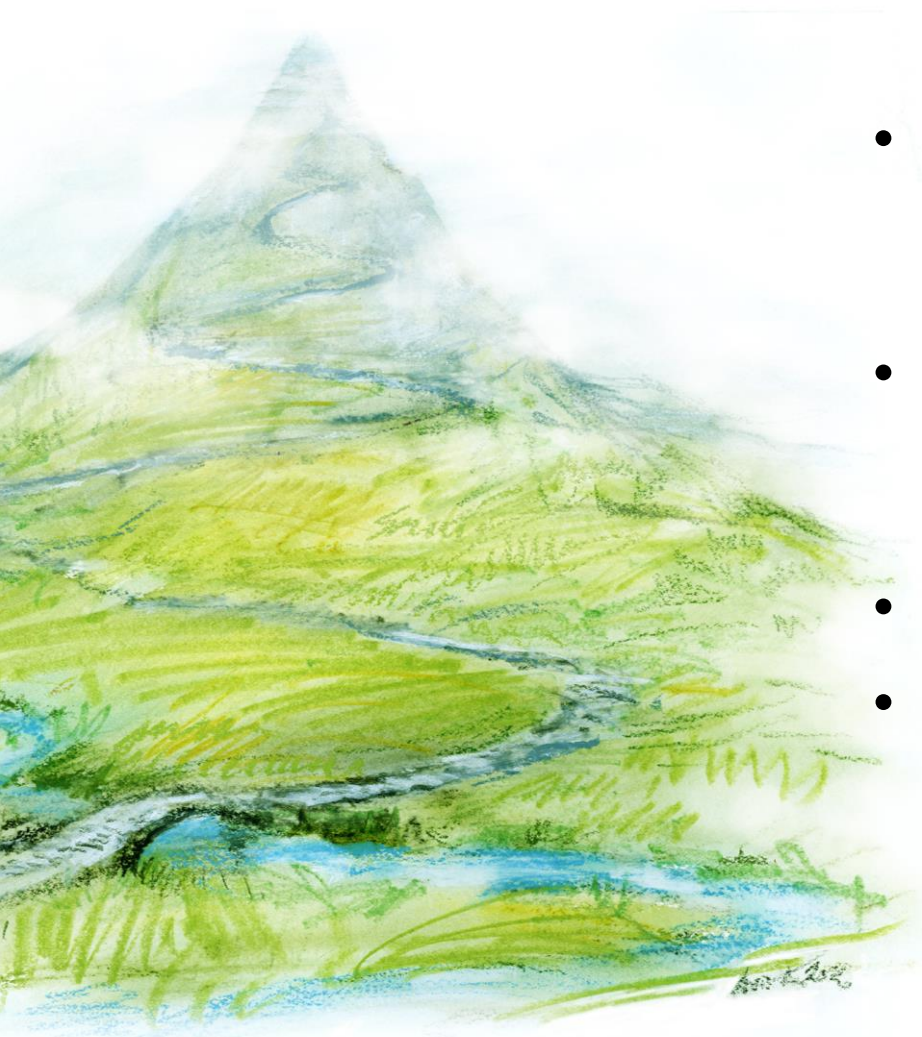


Things to Consider Part I

- International frameworks inform and help systems improve
- It is critical to look at the policy advice rather than the 'league tables'
- Education is a collective endeavour
- The most successful systems always involve teachers and their unions



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Things to Consider Part II

- Involving teachers and their unions more closely in curriculum development (e.g. OECD 2030) as well as all other education policies which relate to teachers
- Finding more time within teachers' working day to spend on collaboration with colleagues through peer learning networks
- Supporting teachers around wellbeing related pedagogy
- Acknowledging that teacher union leadership should be supported at all levels of the system



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