



Cooperation parents and schools

Finnish example

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Cooperation activities on 3 levels

- Law: Act and Decree for Basic Education from 1998
- Core curriculum demands by the National Board of Education from 2004
- Actions in practise in Alhainen School of Salo

Parents' rights and duties according the law and decree in Finland

*Those providing education shall cooperate with pupils' parents/carers.
(Section 3)*

rights

To receive information, which must be provided sufficiently often, about pupil's progress in learning and his or her work and behaviour.

The pupil and his or her parent/carer are entitled to receive information about assessment criteria and their application to pupil assessment.

Ask for a reassessment.

Possibility to be heard before pupil's transfer to special education without parents' proval, or before disciplinary actions are taken.

Unless the pupil's parent/carer has proposed that a pupil repeats a yearclass because of the pupil's overall school attainment, the parent/carer shall be given an opportunity to be heard

To choose about attending to religious education if the pupil is not a member of Lutheran or Orthodox church.

duties

The parent/carer of a pupil in compulsory education shall see to it that compulsory schooling is completed.

If a pupil's parent/carer neglects his or her duty to ensure the completion of compulsory schooling, he or she shall be sentenced to fine.



Core curriculum demands (2004)

- Parents shall be informed of the effects of subject choices for the pupil's future
- When deciding about pupil's social welfare actions the parents shall be heard
- When indiv.curr. is needed it shall be written in cooperation with parents
- For immigrant parents enough information about the Finnish education system



Parent cooperation in practise in Alhainen School, Salo

- Curriculum:
 - Parents' meetings at least once a year
 - subject curricula, assessment criteria, general information etc
 - Individual meeting at least once a year
 - personal information of pupil's achievements
 - If in special education: Individual curriculum for organising schooling together with e.g. school psychologist, special educationist, welfare coordinator, head teacher

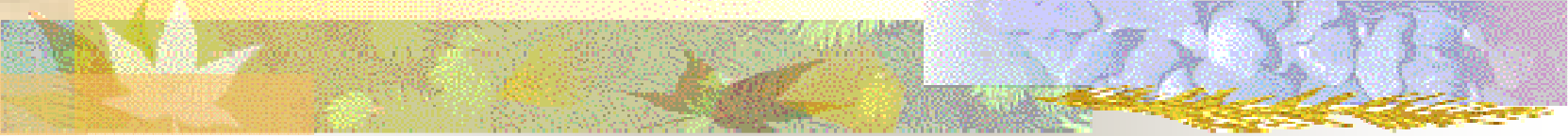


- Informing parents of disciplinary actions

- letters, phone calls, notes

- often enough information about school, achievements, schedules, changes...

- Written notes and letters returned back with parent's signature

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- Annual brochure delivered to each home at the beginning of the school year,
 - all the necessary information with ph.numbers, extra curriculum, general activities, school rules, afternoon- and sports clubs
 - School festivities
 - parents are especially invited to all festivities, such as Christmas party, Spring term fests, Church festivities,
 - Thematic parents' evenings at least once a year
 - themes this/last year: "Internet, viruses and dangers", "Responsible parenthood", "Good night sleep"



Voluntary parents' committees for raising funds for field trips etc

- Some classes have such committees in order to collect money for camp schools, field trips etc
- Parent runs the committee, not the class teacher
- Parents control the account and make rules, not school
- Joining in is voluntary; also taking part to such trips. Planned trip needs to be written down to annual action plan to cover the pupils with school insurance etc.



Means of committee work

- Christmas Markets
- Parties
- Handicraft works
- Postcards
- Garden works
- Washing cars
- Publishing a cook book of local celebrities' recipies
- Collecting monthly fee; pupils do household work and parents pay them "salary" which is transferred straight to class's bank account (approx. 10 € per month for taking the trash out or emptying the dish washer, for example)



Contact volume

- 4 out of 13 classes have active committees
- All notes and contact letters are delivered back with signatures
- Approx. 200 parents as guests in school festivities
- Dozen e-mails to school head weekly
- Class teacher-parent contacts daily; sickness notifications, homework inquiries, school bus/taxi inquiries...



Socrates

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