

**„Praxisbaustein“**  
**Feedback- Culture as a Strategy of Democratic Change**  
Fontane- Gymnasium Rangsdorf,  
Brandenburg

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## **General abstract of the approach**

### **“Feedback-Culture as a strategy of change”**

The last school years the pupils of the *Fontane Gymnasium in Rangsdorf* not only brood on their school work and tests. They further dealt with the assessment and constructive critique at the teachers and the general situation at school. On the basis of precisely formulated questions, pupils gave feedback among others about comprehensibility of lessons, methods of lessons, dealing with conflicts, teachers' reactions to the pupils, methods of learning and about positive and negative aspects of school life. Teachers for their part tried to reflect and estimate themselves. In confidential group conversations estimation of pupils and teachers were compared. Like it appeared it was a rewarding, even if a new and difficult experience for some people.

The project “Feedback- Culture” lives on the conviction, that lessons get better especially by communication- communication about what works well and what bad, what is improvable. This must occur without hurts and constructively. And there must be offered occasions for conversation, systematically, regularly and “extensively”.

Getting the mutual feedback become a culture, requires the exchange of all participants at school, and so does not stay at the pupils' feedback. This way also teachers have the possibility to assess the work of the school headship, just as well parents can regularly evaluate relevant aspects at school and reflect about their own possibilities for contribution.

The result: Pupils that feel taken seriously, changes in style of lessons by many teachers, constructive cooperation with parents, more satisfaction for everybody. And not at least, the reasonable hope, that the capability of the whole school increases.

# 1. Context, credentials, aims in the development

In 2002 the *Fontane- Gymnasium Rangsdorf* applied for the contribution to the BLK program “Learning & Living Democracy”. The goal was to develop pupil’s democratic consciousness namely by a continual possibility to impinge on the school and the lessons, as well as the contribution at the configuration of life at school. All in all there has not been a high degree of suffering pressure at that time, but there has often been missed a real motivation to learn or to engage voluntarily by pupils and also by teachers. Furthermore there has been definitely a potential for improvement in practising constructive critique or also in discussing with as much participants as possible to come to collective effective decisions.

In all this the school saw a demand for improvement, that has been seen clearer based on the reality at school and the reflection about capability by trials like PISA and TIMMS. The school realized the possible way to bring the school- and lesson- culture more into the line of self-responsibility of the pupils for their learning but also for the configuration of the “living-environment” school with the further effect to increase the level of performance and to decrease problems at school. Thereby the consciousness at school grew, that this changed shouldering of responsibility by pupils requires also a changed role of teachers and school headship and gives parents further possibilities to attend helping the educational way of their children.

To include all these participants in a structured process of change, there should be tried out and evaluated different instruments. The feedback by pupils to teachers has been realized as an important instrument. Lessons are one of the most important experiences at school for pupils. Therefore here the approach for pupils’ experience of effectiveness consists in the change of lessons’ culture under their contribution; in the inclusion of their needs in discussions and in the appreciable change at school. Hence the school has decided to entrench the lessons’ feedback as a constant component. Perspective this feedback should be one part of a 360°- feedback, which also includes the feedback by teachers and parents.

With the initiation of a system of regular and systematic feedbacks, the school has the following agenda:

- Intensify the communication between pupils, teachers and parents
- Upgrade pupils’ interest in the configuration of school- intern processes

- Make helpful feedback by pupils to teachers possible
- Increase the shouldering of responsibility by pupils for their own learning
- On teachers' side getting clearer about the own needs of further education
- Improve the school- climate all in all
- See reasons about own strong and weak points by all participants
- Achieve an improvement of school performance

## **2. Conditions for the initiation resp. the accomplishment of the approach**

### **2.1 Motivation, Information, Influence**

The initiation of a feedback system can only succeed, if there is consciousnesses of the problems at the participants respectively if there is build up a motivation to contribute and to answer for this way of change at one school. Ahead of the feedback careful and enclosing information of the participants is a very important element. They have to know about chances, advantages and possible courses of processes and have to get the possibility of an open discussion, which offers a space for reservation and resistance. For pupils preparing workshops about the function and rules of feedback are very important.

### **2.2 Voluntariness**

To accept feedback by others requires a high receptiveness, which not everybody brings along at the beginning. But often fastly there are enthusiastic people that find it fascinating to get feedback about their own job. Especially for teachers who are not familiar with critique, the feedback initially must be on voluntary basis.

### **2.3 Anonymity**

A further important component that must be cleared up ahead of the initiation of feedback at school is the dealing with its conclusions. It must be clear: Neither the school headship nor the school administration get information about the feedback that individual teachers get from their classes. Here should be invested time and rest– it avails to a little just to declare anonymity, but rather there must rise faith, how the exact process of the conclusion-feedback

executes, who has to do with the results when and how. It is important that the decision about dealing with the feedback results is only at the people that get feedback.

Also the people that give feedback need a “saved room” to dare to say their opinion. Also these ones must know that their statements are anonymous and not given to teachers as individual statements. The individual feedback will be included into a complete- feedback.

#### **2.4 External Consultation and Encouragement**

For the initiation of feedback, the evaluation and acknowledgement of results to the teachers, an external consultation approved as indispensable at the beginning. This because the school yet has had not much experience and know- how in the domain of feedback and so it found professional guidance. On the other side all feedback processes initially got more acceptance, if the data collection and acknowledgements were executed “safely” by an external person.

#### **2.5 Funding**

For external consultation, external analysis of data and materials that are necessary for feedback processes funding has been essential. The school has used here funding from the *BLK-Program*, further gains from prize money or funding from lottery after application at the appropriate ministry. Additionally funding from booster club could have been used and there have been founded further sponsors.

#### **2.6 Time Periods for Execution and Evaluation of Feedback**

Feedbacks take time. There should be scheduling lessons in classes and lessons for the execution of feedback possible. Furthermore there must be time for dialogues of evaluation with the participants. All in all the initiation of a feedback- culture requires that previously one gets clear, that feedback is one part of school and lesson and so part of the lessons’ volume. Here an open school headship is the crucial; a headship that realizes processes of feedback not as additive to lessons but as an element of the regular lessons.

#### **2.7 Web- Based Inquiries and Evaluations/ PC- Endowment**

If exhaustive feedback shall not just be a singular occurrence, but a regular instrument with that change in school culture and lesson is also measurable, it must be practicable and easy for school. Only with a pc- based inquiry this is possible. When the last pupil has entered his statements, the calculation of the whole evaluation is finished and a fast data access is warranted. In this context an access to pc is necessary for pupils.

## **2.8 Evaluation Talks**

The evaluation conversations should be counted as a form of intern further education. The conclusions stay in confidence – in special cases it must be possible to carry on individual conversations before or after the discussion in group (see execution).

## **2.9 Acknowledgments to the Participants and Consequences**

Anybody who gives a feedback should be able to expect an acknowledgement of the whole results. Especial pupils can be shown this way that their feedback is taken seriously. This also includes that there is found a way to handle this results collectively resp. deduce according arrangements and execute them. It is important that the respective person that gains feedback decides, in which form he wants the feedback to be exposed.

# **3 Execution and Procedure**

## **3.1 Decision for the Feedback**

Initially there has been made the school intern decision, if a participation on the BLK model program “Learning & Living democracy” with the subject “feedback- culture” shall take place and with which perspective. This first agreement happened with the chairmen of the subject conferences. The concept of the model program has been exclaimed and discussed and first suggestions had been taken up. The subject chairmen have concordantly voted pro participation on the model program. With one voted representative of pupils and individual representative pupils the model has also been discussed and also here there has been acceptance for the model program. Based on this the school conference eventually approved this enterprise and it has been decided the formation of a direct group.

## **3.2 Formation of a direct group**

The selection of representatives of the direct group has taken place after pre- conversations by the school headship; the personal decisions have been confirmed by the school- conference.

To have all participants “in the boat”, the direct group consisted of:

- Two pupils

- Three teachers
- One parents- representative
- The acting school headship and the school headship

Teachers of the project direct group had altogether three lessons less.

### **3.3 Clear Setting of Aims**

To realize feedback initially a good plan has been required. The direct group took one day time to argue about the strategy. This day clear aims have been worked out with external help and possibilities for realisation have been discussed. This day was very important to develop a project management for the complex subject feedback. Besides with the external partners support performances have been talked over and contracted (further educations, evaluation performances etc.)

### **3.4 Development of a pilot- questionnaire for pupils and teachers**

One of the first tasks of direct group was not only to make the approach popular among the staff but also to develop a first questionnaire. By means of precisely formulated questions the questionnaire should handle with:

- Comprehensibility of lesson
- Methods of learning and teaching
- Handling with conflicts
- Listening of teachers to pupils
- Positive aspects of school in all

For all questions referring the lesson a feedback- concept based on self- and strange- appearance- estimation was developed with the help of one parents' representative of the direct group, who brought in her experiences from management consulting. Here pupils give an estimation of the criteria and teachers simultaneously estimate themselves. This way both estimations can be compared and discussed.

Besides the estimations of lesson the direct group developed a questionnaire about the school culture in all.

### **3.5 Informing the colleague**

In preparation for the teachers' conference the colleagues got an information- letter about the BLK- program "Learning & Living Democracy". Central letter contents were:

- Nearer Clearing of the BLK- program

- References to the execution of the program at school
- One possible feedback- questionnaire from the pupils
- One possible opposite questionnaire from teachers' perspective

All colleagues have been required to evaluate the questionnaires from their point of view and everybody had the possibility to make notes and give suggests for improvement. Changes that resulted from this have been included in the questionnaires.

### **3.6 Test run of the pupils- teachers- feedback**

After completion of the questionnaire, the first test drive took place in a seven's grade class. For the decision for this class the fact was crucial that teachers from the direct group gave lessons in this class and could motivate many further teachers of this class. At the end there stood a ten person strength group of voluntary teachers, who got involved in the "adventure" of feedback. The principal of voluntariness stands at first place in this project.

### **3.7 Vote on the questionnaire with pupils and scholar committees**

After the test run it was important to get to know if also the pupils find the questions addressed to them meaningful; if they wish other further questions or if questions are not comprehensible or ineligible. About this the class was questioned and the questionnaire was modified as a result.

After that the questionnaire was voted in the teachers' conference with the teachers' council and the state school office and was last confirmed on this basis.

### **3.8 Evaluation Conversations with the test- teachers**

In a special further education (external moderation) the teachers of the pilot phase got as "feedback- getter" their feedback conclusions in a little group (five people). They got suggestions about how the results could be interpreted resp. which priority the individual statements could have and which possibilities there are to talk about the results with the pupils. Particularly the last is important for the success of the feedback processes.

Because on basis of the feedback results there should happen changes that are noticeable for the pupils as "feedback- givers". If this does not take place, pupils will see the feedback- actions as alibi- actions; they won't take this serious and won't join this project.

The test teachers had acknowledgement- talks with the classes and got especially in talk about the possibilities of change.

### **3.9 Motivate further colleagues**

After the test drive the feedback should expand and be initiated in further classes. But motivating other colleagues was not easy, although some colleagues curiously observed the happenings and weren't as distanced as at the beginning when they heard about the positive experiences and realizations of the test teachers. Yet there was scepticism, especially because many colleagues were of the opinion that the frame conditions at school stand in contrary to their wishes for change. Also in evaluation talks with the test teachers got obvious that many found for a change in their lessons the change in cooperation with school administration and with other colleagues is necessary. Again and again you could hear that this or that is impossible at this school, because of:

- The school headship
- The organisation
- The time pressure
- The lack of flexibility

Moreover there were basic reservations by some teachers against the feedback: "From where do the pupils get the competence to estimate my lessons?" and "Which consequences can this have?" These were just some questions teachers asked. To give teachers the possibility to get into the role of "feedback-giver" by themselves and learn about the consequences but also to subject and initiate the change of frame conditions which was desired by everybody, the direct group suggested the execution of feedback referring the school headship. The headship agreed to this feedback and set an example with its openness.

### **3.10 Further education meeting about the feedback**

Parallel to the intention of an execution of feedback about school headship, the school organized a further education subjecting "pupils' feedback". This further education should teach the staff about experiences with feedback approaches and help to reduce fears. In this meeting also stumble stones in handling with feedback were the subject and colleagues' questions were answered.

### **3.11 Outline and Passing of the headship- feedback**

The direct group and the parents' representative drew up the headship- feedback; also here the approach of self- and strange- appearance was chosen. All participants of school headship got this questionnaire and the possibility to decide which questions should be asked, which not and which further questions should be included. The principle to let this last decision do the

“feedback- getter” has proved to be very essential. Only this way “feedback- getter” feel taken seriously; the feedback is well accepted.

### **3.12 Execution and evaluation of headship- feedback**

The teachers filled up the questionnaire referring the headship and its individual participants where they could give estimation from their point of view. Moreover wishes could be put to the school headship. The results were interpreted externally by the parents’ representative and initial in individual conversations acknowledged and analyzed (external consultation). After that the whole team of school headship met and talked about possible consequences of this feedback. Then the talks of acknowledgement with the colleagues were crucial. The teachers were not just passive listeners here, but they worked out suggestions by themselves that make the cooperation with headship more efficient and are more in reference to the needs of teachers.

The school headship- feedback gave teachers the possibility to fill in a questionnaire by themselves and get to know the kind of questions and the headship’s way of treatment with the results. So reservation against a feedback declined under the teachers. This had an important effect on the motivation for the pupils- teachers- feedback, because motivation of some who doubt before increased.

### **3.13 Preparation of the exhaustive pupils- teachers- feedback**

The exemplary behaviour of headship led to the declining of reservation among the staff so that in an appropriate vote nobody voted against the pupils- teachers- feedback. So preparation of this comprehensive project could begin. To this belonged not only the instruction of colleagues and organisation, but also a one lesson taking initiation of the pupils (initiation lesson). The experiences of pilot- project showed that pupils should be made familiar with rules of constructive feedback, so that the acknowledgements are not insulting or generalized.

### **3.14 Paper- Based run and decision for a web- based variant**

Initially the feedback began in secondary education I and just infrequently in the upper classes. Pupils and teachers filled in the paper questionnaires. After that it got obvious that an exhaustive questioning will go beyond the resources of one school in this way. With help of the BLK- program there was support that analyzed these many questionnaires in long time, but the intention of feedback- culture in all was the regular repetition of questionnaires which

could not be supported this way for every time. Here needed to be found a better way. With the help of the parents' representative and an external programmer, a web- based variant was worked out. Here pupils and teachers enter their opinions in the pc and after short time the whole evaluation is completed. Before the teachers get the results, a web master examines insulting or hurting statements so that teachers don't need to read them. But all in all these statements happen very less.

### **3.15 Talks about results/ analysis with the teachers**

In small groups of maximum ten teachers the so called 'result rounds' took place. They can be counted as school intern further education meetings. Ones more the participants got here background information about the subject of feedback, help for the interpretation of their results and a lot of material about methods of teaching, team processes in schools and further feedback- instruments for a pupils- teachers- feedback in a small frame. Of course every teacher got his individual feedback- results; these results stay confidential. People only expose these results, which they want to. In special cases individual talks took place before or after the group meetings.

### **1.16 Further execution of the extensive web- based pupils- teachers- feedback**

By the creation of a web- based feedback possibility, the questioning of all other classes got possible. For this purpose pupils and teachers got a short instruction and the TAN (transaction number) with which they could log in the network. This TAN is comparable with a TAN used for online banking. The procedure is as anonymous and save as at online banking. The extensive execution of pupils- teachers- feedback included the following steps:

- Preparing the pupils for the rules of feedback
- Explaining the pc- room (date- setting)
- Briefing pupils in web based feedback
- External examination of the results
- Giving the results to teachers by an external person and offering talks

Due to the lessons:

- Result- acknowledgement- talks between pupils and teachers
- Common setting of agreements
- Examination of the success of realisation by a recurred feedback

### **Planning and execution of a parents- feedback**

To reach the goal to establish a feedback- culture at this school, parents' opinions were missed, besides their general opinion about possibilities of taking part in the configuration of school. Because of this, the direct group worked out a parents- feedback (parent questionnaire and parents cooperation sheet); also this took place in the web based form. An early inclusion of the parents' representatives, an introduction of the intentions and purposes in the parents' conference and at parents' evenings of classes must be responsible for the fact that two thirds of all parents of school took part in the questionnaire and offered the school diverse support (comp. 4. Intermediate results). To make parents' offers easily recallable for the teachers, parents developed and arranged an additional database.

## **4. Intermediate Results**

Until now all feedback modules have run through one time; the following result- talks have been executed and appropriate consequences have been worked out. All in all the initiation and execution has caused a lot of change at school.

### **4.1 After school headship feedback...**

... the headship faced up to the essential points of critique ( no transparent allocation of tasks, unclear allocation of replacement lessons, lack of information stream in headship and towards the colleague) and came to conclusions that are noticeable for all colleagues:

- Formation of an expanded school headship
- Structured agenda for the weekly 'jour fix' of headship
- Initiation of regular meetings of the tutors of upper classes
- Work out of a detailed appointments list for one year at the beginning of each school year (who has to do what, when, how...)

Especially the openness of headship towards the colleague's feedback, the open treatment of the results and the noticeable conclusions have convinced many teachers of the approach of feedback and reduced the resistance among the colleague.

## **4.2 After pupils- teachers- feedback...**

...many teachers tried together with their classes to draw conclusion for their future work together. Some teachers initially kept the results by themselves; most of them were not very familiar with the treatment of feedback. Nevertheless nearly every teacher has taken part in the pupils- teachers- feedback in the meantime and has estimated the following result- talks as positive for their work.

Pupils realise in feedback much potential for the own process of learning and for the change of perspective of one another:

*“There is noticeable a change at one third of the teachers.”*

*“Problems are subjected, which you didn’t dare to talk about in the past.”*

*“Pupils learn to express their opinion more sophisticated, declare their position and to debate.”*

*“Teachers have the possibility to see themselves from the pupils’ point of view and contrariwise.”*

*“Students are included in the process of change, are questioned and participate actively.”*

*“It is also learned that not everything has success and not every statement can be realised.”*

*“The relationship between students and teachers improves.”*

*“Pupils get more attentive and become aware of what they can do by themselves.”*

(These are exemplary statements from students about the pupils- teachers- feedback.)

The teachers notice more trust in each other and the possibility of professionalization of themselves and realise students as ‘feedback- givers’ not as problematic as they did at the beginning:

*“It is very nice that there is trust now and that you dare to talk to each other.”*

*“We all moved closer a little.”*

*“This is important for teachers, because you don’t get bogged down and you can examine yourself.”*

*“You ask yourself, what can be changed. This was very informative for me.”*

*“After the feedback, there were occasions for further education to teach us in due to these points which were realised as weak points.”*

*“Students are open, honest and effective.”*

*“Especially the evaluation with the students was very interesting. Sometime .it got obvious that questions were understood very different and especially the big differences caused good communication in the classes.”*

*“It takes a lot of will power to talk about results with difficult classes.”*

*“Classes with a tightened climate now give a better work, one moved closer.”*

*“Not only teachers but also students must handle the question “Which conclusions are to been drawn?”*

*“We got more open among ourselves in general; we didn’t hide with our results.”*

(These are exemplary statements from teachers about the pupils- teachers- feedback)

Pupils- teachers- feedback has become naturalness in the meantime for many. Points which are realized as difficult after the first run:

- The appearance of fatigue by students due to the feedback (“The feedback again!”)
- Control if acknowledgement- talks really take place in the classes
- Pupils’ frustration if there is no change at teachers after the feedback

At this points must be worked furthermore.

#### **4.3 After school- culture- feedback...**

...initially it was clear that there is much dissatisfaction at school with the different handling and estimation of existing rules by the staff. As a result there was a school intern further education with the goal to develop a common sense of values, a common pedagogical attitude and appropriate alternatives to act.

The feedback signified at different marks that the cooperation of teachers is improvable, especially in due to the work in classes. To remedy here, in the school years of 2004/05 there were initiated so called age- group- teams of the 7<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grade with the goal:

- Concentration of subject teachers to a few teachers in one age- group- level (ab.12-15)
- Intensified cooperation and coordination of curriculum contents
- Exchange and coordination of pedagogic work in regular meetings (one time a week)

Fastly it got obvious, that each teacher is treasure chest of methods, creative ideas etc. for himself, and that these potentials could be used more effectively now. This had not just a positive effect on the students but also accomplished satisfaction at the teachers. Also here we began with “pilot- age- group- teams”, whose advantage and success got obvious for the other colleagues. Since this school year every teacher is assigned to one age- group- team. On pupils’ side at the culture- feedback there was criticism of lacking stream of information at

school, of the dreariness of some classrooms and suchlike more. Based on these results of the culture- feedback, working groups were formed up that work at the realisation of particular domains. To give students even more possibilities to shoulder responsibility, a class council was initiated at school, which established fastly as a further element of democratic participation at school.

#### **4.4 After parents- feedback...**

...the database developed by parents is used by the teachers for the execution of projects (preparation of materials, offers for projects by parents etc.). 36% of parents offer the school their support here (43% in the grades 7-11). Here are 36 possible contributions included refer to the constitution of lessons, traineeships, 45 hours supervision in library and also equipment or funds for the arrangement of activities.

## **5. Constructive and obstructive conditions**

### **5.1 Constructive conditions**

- Innovative and open headship, that is willing to get feedback by themselves
- “pilotgroups” of active, courageous colleagues that are curious about feedback
- External support with having the result- talks and reflecting the process by the direct group
- Professional competence at the subject “feedback processes” in the direct team of the project (from the domain of corporate development)
- Inclusion of 3 participants of the direct group in the education to consultants for democracy- pedagogic (parallel intensive further education project to the BLK- program “Learning & Living Democracy”)
- Headship- feedback as a beginning and example on the way to feedback culture
- Students and parents that are willing to play an active part
- Regular and structured work of the direct group and following acknowledgement to all participants
- Timing of the participating teachers and pupils by the headship
- Facile and easy comprehensible instruments of inquiry
- Web- based questionnaires

## **5.2 Obstructive conditions and stumble stones**

### **Lacking project management by the direct group at first:**

Most of all at the beginning the work in the direct group was very difficult, because initially there was no serenity about cornerstones and working- packages. It had been better to definite the goals and set timeframes for the cornerstones at the beginning in the direct group. The regular checking of a “to- do- list”, which later has become a permanent feature of protocols, would have made the work much easier at the beginning.

### **Finding active people**

One crucial problem surely was at the beginning, that only a few (enthusiastic) people did much- but alone! The transfer of this innovative conception was one part, the other part to get more “active carer” into the boat was only after the first test runs successful and especially after the headship- feedback. Before then the direct group was very stressed.

### **Information and Inclusion plus “modest claim”**

Because of the attraction of feedback the direct group and the headship always initiated further activities very quickly after the initiation of one activity. Here it was not put enough emphasize on “secure the boat, test it and improve it”. Aside from that these many individual activities caused by some colleagues that they became unclear about the inclusion of these individual activities into the whole project. Appropriate information sheets could make some points clearer indeed, but it became obvious that the best transparency could be constituted by oral speeches at the appropriate conferences.

### **Feedback on paper questionnaires**

Its realisation is difficult, because the evaluation takes too much time. Because of this the web based variant has been developed, which proves oneself.

### **Agreements referring the evaluation- talks in the classes**

In the age- group- teams an agreement absolutely should take part under the colleagues about who wants to have the evaluation- talks with which class and when. Does this not take part there is much disappointment at the teachers when pupils say: *“Oh, please not again! We did this x times today yet!”*

### **Execution of the talks for acknowledgement**

Some few teachers did not evaluate their results with the students. How this must be treated in the future is still discussed.

## **6. Further quality development: Standards and criteria for self-evaluation of the approach**

### **6.1 Quality development in process**

Establishing a feedback culture at school already is a form of self-evaluation by the executing school. To ensure the feedback process qualitatively, the following steps were taken:

- The tailor of inquiry instruments to the individual participants and their further development based on the acknowledgements guaranteed that questions were asked which are relevant for pupils, teachers and parents. Besides it's possible to mention in every feedback, if there are questions missed from the respondent's point of view.
- There was a round for discussion with teachers, who described chances and limits of feedback from their point of view. As well some pupils were asked, which changes they notice at themselves, in their lessons and at school in general (Some statements can be found under 4.2).
- Next to each feedback in the direct group a systematic evaluation took place: What can stay as it is? What must be changed and improved?
- The school searched for discussions in public and arranged a lot of workshops, that also gave themselves impetus for the own work going on.

## **6.2 Signs for reaching the goals**

Does the feedback routines initiated till now, answer the expectations and does them prevail the goals that headship has set at the beginning of the process? A conclusive statement can't be made at this moment, but anyhow there is much that points to the reaching of our goals:

### **a) Goal: Intensification of communication between students and teachers; headship and parents and improvement of school climate**

Examples for the realisation of these purposes:

- Students talk with their teachers about the lessons and also touch upon delicate subjects, as a result teachers adopt modifications.
- Parents offer their support more distinctly and teachers know, which parents offer which kind of help.
- As a result of the acknowledgements by the colleague, headship has changed its allocation of tasks and is at teachers' disposal in the breaks.
- The age- group- teams, formed because of the feedback results, have led to an appreciably improvement of communication between the colleagues.
- At the class- parents- conferences parents teach parents in the parents' database resp. in parents feedback.

### **b) Goal: Enhancement of students' interest in being involved in shaping school intern processes**

Examples for the realisation of these purposes:

- The direct group grew by several students, who fancy working here.
- In the frame of school culture feedback, many pupils' ideas were collected, referring the shaping of school. There are students working in one group at the realisation of these ideas.
- Pupils' handling with the subject school increases by the class council, formed after the feedback.
- Students feel taken seriously and really questioned.

**c) Goal: Make helpful and constructive criticism from pupils to teachers possible**

Examples for the realisation of these purposes:

- Teachers who are astonished by pupils' acknowledgements, because they are constructive.
- Students who give serious and high regarded feedback after initiation of feedback rules.
- Decreasing worry about critical opinions (students' - but also parents' opinion) as a result of the made experiences.

**d) Goal: Increase pupils' shouldering of responsibility for the own learning**

Examples for the realisation of these purposes:

- The class council has been established in all classes of the grades 7- 10. The possibilities of taking part in shaping for the individual student increased.
- By estimation of the lessons pupils also estimate their own process of learning and what is constructive and what obstructive for it.
- Teachers discuss with their students which responsibility they have on their own for the lessons.
- Pupils take part in processes of change, are questioned and play an active part.
- Students become more attentive and realise own possibilities to act as well as domains for which they are responsible on their own.

**e) Goal: Become more conscious about the own needs for further education, make the understanding of own weak and strong points possible**

Examples for the realisation of these purposes:

- Accomplishment of a common workshop after discovering by feedback that there are very different ways of handling pupils
- After talks of acknowledgement, due to the pupils- teachers- feedback, but also due to the headship- feedback, weak points become obvious, for which further education programs can be developed now.
- The initiation of colleagues talks after feedback, that subject the further development in profession of individual teachers.

**g) Goal. Improvement of school work**

Because this was not an explicit object of analysis, statements about it are not possible. But it can be guessed, that pupils at least get more support in their own processes of learning and win more competences by their increased shouldering of responsibility for learning and by the improvements of lessons that are appropriate to their feedback.



## Information about the school and contact/ person of contact

Fontane- Gymnasium Rangsdorf

Fontaneweg 10 a

15834 Rangsdorf

Phone: 033708 / 9339 6

Fax: 033708 / 9339 80

Email: [fontane-gymnasium.leiter@t-online.de](mailto:fontane-gymnasium.leiter@t-online.de)

Homepage: [www.fo-gy.de](http://www.fo-gy.de)

Headmaster: Ditmar Friedrich

Person of contact: Katja Witt

Number of pupils (school year 05/ 06): 680

Number of colleagues (school year 05/ 06): 47

Number of other contributors: 4

Location, catchment area and pupils:

The *Fontane- Gymnasium Rangsdorf* is provincial located in the administrative district of *Teltow- Fläming* in the state of *Brandenburg* (about 10 km south of *Berlin*) The pupils catchment area includes about 15 provincial municipalities with a radius of 30 kilometres. The students come from a mixed social background. In a certain contingent pupils were ingested by the entrance exam, that didn't have a recommendation for the Gymnasium, so the pupils are heterogeneous.

Description of "*Praxisbaustein*" by:

Katja Witt (project manager *Fontane- Gymnasium Rangsdorf*)

## **Materials**

**Self- portrait- assessment**

**Strange- portrait- assessment**

**Questions about school- culture**

**Letter for information**

**Headship feedback**

**Introduction lesson**

**Feedback results**

**Short instruction**

**Result acknowledgement talks**

**Parents questionnaire**

**Parents cooperation questionnaire**

**Letter to parents**

**Further reading**



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## **Administrative District *Teltow- Fläming***

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**To all Teachers**

Information: Herr Muster

Room: 00

Phone: (03378) 007

Fax: 803378) 008

Date:

File number:

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### **Feedback to the headship**

Dear colleagues,

Schools- especially *Gymnasien*- will have to confront with even higher requirements in the future; this becomes obvious by performance comparisons in Germany and especially in Europe.

Continuous school intern processes of change and improve can only success, if all participants work together at this process.

Due to this there are special tasks and questions for the headship- as responsible participants:

- Which necessary change must be undertaken?
- How must be a process of change be arranged?
- How could be a permanent process of quality improvement initiated?
- How could be guaranteed a creative culture of solving problems in handle with short resources?
- How could be guaranteed the effective and appropriate use of resources?

The headship of the *Marie- Curie- Gymnasium* has decided to invite you, as colleagues, to give feedback about how you assess the work of your headship and which possibilities of change and improvement you realise.

The inquiry will be accomplished pc- supported and anonymous on Wednesday, 1<sup>st</sup> December. *Herr Freye* and *Herr Tusche* will attend the accomplishment.

Every information will be collected and treated confidentially by questionnaires of the company "*net- anschluss*".

Within the time between 11am and 5pm, you'll have the possibility to enter your statements on the work stations of room 207. There you will get a short introduction and the TAN. To be sure that every acknowledgement of the colleagues can be analysed, you are requested to give your assessment at that time.

The conclusions will be analysed by "*net- anschluss*" in a curving- matrix, suggestions will be documented appropriately to the address and will be reviewed with the participants of the headship. The moderation of these conversations will lead *Frau Dagmar Schreiber*.

The resulting needs for improvement and change (change of organisation, responsibilities) will be discussed and agreed in the whole colleague.

If you have any further queries, please do not hesitate to contact us or *Frau Schreiber*.

Beforehand we thank you very much for your attendance!

Yours sincerely

Headmaster

Deputy headmaster

Chairperson of teachers' council

## **Short instruction for the pupils- teachers feedback**

**Fontane- Gymnasium Rangsdorf**

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### **Short instruction**

- 1. Pull a TAN (transaction number) = access code**
- 2. connect to the internet**
- 3. <http://www.net-anschluss.de>**
- 4. navigation left side: school feedback → feedback tools**
- 5. actual projects**
- 6. >>>pupils- teachers- feedback**
- 7. field: Fontane- Gymnasium Rangsdorf → send**
- 8. >>>>choose the class**
- 9. enter your password = TAN = jzdhjx6b → login**
- 10. fill in the questionnaire**

**If there are any problems, you reach us under the hotline of [net-anschluss.de](http://www.net-anschluss.de).**

An exactly structured conversation of acknowledgement with the students is very important and necessary for the success and for the future relationship between pupils and teachers. If this does not take place students won't feel taken seriously and their motivation for shouldering more responsibility for their learning and for their corporation at school will decrease.

Here you can find an example how a structured process of acknowledgement can take place, although each teacher can handle it individual.

### Analysis of feedback results in lessons (example)

**Goal:** Teacher gets an agreement with students due to one or two domains of action at which should be worked together.

Phase 1	<p>Introduction</p> <p>Goal- announcement:</p> <p>Students and teachers improve together the lessons resp. lessons' procedure</p>
Phase 2	<p>Show the results of analysis sheet (red and blue curves)</p>
Phase 3	<p>Interpretation of these two curves</p> <p>Impulses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) What is interesting in the two curves? (Divergences? Drifts?)</li> <li>b) What catches ones eye?</li> </ul>
Phase 4	<p>Interpretation of these two curves</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Teachers adds, if necessary, missing aspects of interpretation</li> <li>b) Teacher comments in points, which he absolutely wants to work at or which he certainly not wants to work at and he gives his reasons.</li> </ul>
Phase 5	<p>Teacher comes to an agreement with the students about one or two domains in which they want to work on improvements.</p>

## 2. Lesson

**Goal:** Students come to an agreement about two or three suggestions for improvement refer to the appointed domain.

Phase 1	<p>Introduction in group work “ working out suggestions for improvement”</p> <p>Explanation of the procedure: Phase 2) to 5)</p> <p>In each group every participant has a function.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) <b>The time manager</b> keeps attention, that timing is maintained.</li><li>b) <b>The material manager</b> is responsible for getting and bringing materials.</li><li>c) <b>The social manager</b> keeps attention, that each member of group has nearly the same time to speak like every other and that nobody is interrupted.</li><li>d) <b>The presenter</b> represents the group results in class.</li></ul>
Phase 2	<p>For example: 7 groups (each with 4 students) are drew by lot per “skat”</p>
Phase 3	<p>Procedure group intern due to one working sheet:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) The working sheet is set on the middle of the table. Each participant gets seat appropriate to his function ahead of one field.</li><li>b) Each student writes into his field 3 suggestions due to the appointed domain. (5 minutes)</li><li>c) During the next 10 minutes each participant presents his group his suggests.</li><li>d) During the next 5 minutes the group comes to an agreement about 3 suggests for improvement and writes them into the middle field.</li></ul>
Phase 4	<p><b>Presentation</b></p> <p>Each group stands in front of the class and each student reports about his task in the group.</p>
Phase 5	<p><b>Evaluation</b> of the group work</p>

	The whole class comes to an agreement about 3 suggests for improvement
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Phase 6	<b>Working out a “group- contract”</b>
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## The twelve spheres of activity

No	Sphere of activity	Needs for change
1.	Conveyance/comprehensibility of learning material is for me	
2.	Our teacher talks with us about what we must learn and what it's useful for.	
3.	I have the impression that we pupils are respected and well regarded by our teachers.	
4.	The lesson of this subject is interesting.	
5.	It's worked with different teaching methods like work in groups-, with partners or round of chairs	
6.	It's worked with diverse medias (book, tape, film, video, computer)	
7.	Our often has required us to give suggests for the lessons' arrangement.	
8.	If we have problems or conflicts we can go to our teacher with them.	
9.	It's important that we do homework, because often it is proved.	
10.	If we don't understand something, it is explained one's more.	
11.	In the lessons we are teached in different methods of learning.	
12.	In our class there is a comfortable atmosphere.	







**Critical remarks/ suggests/ tips/ compliments for school life**

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*These data are elevated anonymously and are not associated to the sender.*

## Cooperation with parents

Please enter your data in this questionnaire, so that we know who offers us his cooperation resp. how we can contact you.- Thank you.

I can support the school exemplary by

- Support class/ school festivities
- Attend class excursions
- Offer traineeships .....
- Sponsoring (e.g. materials like colours,  
Paper, pieces of sports equipment etc.) .....
- Undertake little practical works, like .....
- Contributions to arrangement of lessons  
(e.g. own professional experiences,  
company visits etc.) .....
- EDV- support (e.g. pc AG, internet AG,  
supervise in pc- rooms)
- Tutoring, support in the subject .....

With about ..... hours a week.

- Cooperation at initiation/ organisation of  
parents' cooperation work about ..... Hours a week/ month/ year
- Supervision in the library about ..... Hours a week/ month/ year
- Addiction consulting about ..... Hours a week/ month/ year
- Law tutoring about ..... Hours a week/ month/ year

Or by

.....  
.....  
.....

- I'm expert in .....

**Parents: first name, surname:** .....  
**Child: first name, surname:** ..... **Class:** .....  
**Street, ZIP, place:** .....  
**Phone:** ..... **Fax:** .....  
**Email:** .....  
**Signature:** ..... **Date:** .....



**Pattern school**  
**Administrative district *Teltow- Fläming***

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To all parents of students  
of the pattern school

Pattern place, Date

Dear Sir and Madame,

The pattern school has started its way to establish feedback from students, teachers and parents as a permanent feature of school life (“feedback culture”). This includes also the feedback of our parents.

Parents and school experience their cooperation in very different ways. Fears of being contacted by each other and bad experiences often avoid, that parents and school get together. This parents’ feedback wants to get to know the opinions and wishes about our work at school.

It’s our goal to reach a mutual benefit by a practicable instrument and less effort (web based) and to improve the cooperation sustainably.

Our questionnaire can be found in the internet. It can be viewed and edited there. Here you can enter your opinion and criticism anonymously.

For the case that you have no internet access at home, you are requested to demand the questionnaire in paper form, fill it up and give it in an envelope without name to your child, who brings it to school.

The input than will happen in school (anonymity is also in this case ensured, because the access number is not on the instruction).

Further we want to know if and if yes- in which way you are able to support the school (yellow cooperation question sheet, that should be given to us again).

If there are any problems, you reach us under the hotline of .....

The conclusions of parents’ feedback will be announced in .....

Beforehand we thank you very much for your attendance!

Yours sincerely

Headmaster

Chairperson of school/ parents conference

Please cut here

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Please signure this and give it together with the cooperation sheet to the class teacher

Burkard, C. & Eikenbusch, G. & Ekholm, M. (2003). Starke Schüler – gute Schüler. Berlin: Cornelsenon.....

Internet questionnaire was filled up	<input type="checkbox"/> yes	<input type="checkbox"/> no
There were technical problems	<input type="checkbox"/> yes	<input type="checkbox"/> no
We'd like to have a paper questionnaire (because of technical problems etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/> yes	<input type="checkbox"/> no

Parents' Signature.....

## **Further reading**

Ministerium für Bildung, Wissenschaft, Forschung und Kultur des Landes Schleswig-Holstein. Externe Evaluation im Team- Evit. Schleswig- Holstein: Institut für Qualitätsentwicklung

Ministerium für Bildung, Jugend und Sport Brandenburg (2004). Orientierungsrahmen Schulqualität in Brandenburg

Bastian, J. & Combe, A. & Langer R. (2005). Feedback- Methoden. Weinheim: Beltz.



## Socrates

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This publication [communication] reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.