



Learning Democracy

Inspiration for Primary and
Lower Secondary Schools
and General and Vocational Upper
Secondary Education



Foreword

Democracy means government of the people, and democracy is based on fundamental values such as personal freedom, freedom of expression, and religious freedom. Democracy provides personal rights, but certainly also duties. The key to democracy is namely to give others the same rights as we demand for ourselves.

Many people take democracy for granted and assume that nowadays in Denmark democratic values are practically engrafted into us from birth, or that democratic values come to us all by themselves in the course of time. However, this is not the case. On the contrary, we all have a major responsibility to ensure that future generations learn about democratic values.

Especially Primary and Lower Secondary School as well as General and Vocational Upper Secondary Education are key players in accomplishing this task. In support of this work we now publish this publication with inspiration for teaching democracy in Primary and Lower Secondary schools as well as at General and Vocational Upper Secondary Education level.

The publication comes out in times of much debate and focus on democracy as well as freedom of expression, and it is not only intended as a tool to make the pupils aware of democratic values. It also provides good advice and practical instruction on how to deal with extremism in the school system.

The Ministry of Education wishes to acknowledge all those who have contributed to this publication.

Please note that all views in articles and examples etc. only reflect the personal opinion of the individual contributors.

BERTEL HAARDER
Minister for Education
August 2006

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Introduction

This publication has two objectives. Firstly, it provides inspiration for teachers and leaders in the Primary and Lower Secondary School and in General and Vocational Upper Secondary Education in relation to the task of heightening the awareness of students on democracy and democratic values. Furthermore the publication provides practical advice and instructions on how to deal with extremism in educational institutions.

The publication provides useful inspiration in relation to the teaching of all students, but is also applicable in connection with a more goal-oriented effort at bilingual schools with students from numerous different cultures.

The catalogue of examples contain examples from schools who have focussed on democracy and democratic values beyond the prescribed curriculum, e.g. in social studies.

During the writing process, the Ministry of Education has interacted with a working team consisting of headmasters from Primary and Lower Secondary Schools, vocational centres, Upper Secondary Schools, the Danish Centre for Educational Environment, and the Ministry of Integration. The working team has based its work on six main themes that are essential to go into detail about in connection with teaching democratic values.

The themes are:

- The democracy and fundamental democratic values
- Active citizenship
- Democracy in the school
- The school as a local democracy
- A sound educational environment and the inclusive school
- Extremism and the democracy.

The first part of the publication, which is applicable for both Primary and Lower Secondary Schools and General and Vocational Upper Secondary Education, consists of a number of elaborating texts on all of the above-mentioned themes. Each text contains interview with experts, school leaders, and the Minister for Education, and finally, there are references to further information regarding the subject.

The second part of the publication contains a number of examples showing how various educational institutions have dealt with the objective of teaching students the pillars of democracy.

The catalogue of examples is divided into three chapters, describing efforts in the Primary and Lower Secondary School, Upper Secondary Schools, and vocational centres. Each main chapter is concluded by a contribution that focuses on integrative aspects. The contributions are written by two former headmasters of a Primary and Lower Secondary School, a former rector of an Upper Secondary School, and a headmaster of a vocational centre.

The catalogue is not a complete list covering all democracy projects in educational institutions.

Democracy

Democracy and Fundamental Democratic Values

Democracy means literally government of the people. Thus the freedom and power to govern lie in the hands of the people. Denmark has not always been a democracy. Only 200 years ago, Denmark was ruled by an absolute monarch, but general discontent prevailed among the people, and on June 5, 1849, King Frederik the VII submitted to the demands of the people.

The constitution of 1849 formally marked the transition to democracy, laying the foundation for the political system we have today with free elections ensured by law. Another significant alteration of the democracy took place in connection with the so-called political system change in 1901, and in connection with the amendment of the constitution in 1915 when women and servants were granted the right to vote.

Beyond laying down the system of government, the constitution also lays down the rights and duties of citizenship. Thus the constitution guarantees the people basic rights of citizenship such as the rights of liberty.

Beyond national legislation, there are numerous international conventions protecting the basic human rights. E.g. the European Human Rights Resolution, which forms part of Danish Law. E.C. Law also contains provisions regarding the rights of the individual, having an increasingly higher degree of influence on our daily lives.

The democracy in Denmark has been developing ever since it was instituted, and is constantly in motion.

Any citizen has a voice in the democracy. However, these rights of citizenship also oblige any citizen to participate actively in the democracy, and take responsibility for the development of society.

Democracy is more than laws, rights and duties. It constitutes a fundamental way of thinking, demanding respect for others' opinion. Thus democracy is influenced by the way we talk about it, and the way we interact in our community. This applies for all citizens, authorities, politicians, the media, other nations, etc.

Alf Ross and Hal Koch

In the years following the Second World War, Hal Koch, theologian and folk high school advocate, and Alf Ross, solicitor, debated democracy, and their standpoints are still referred to when democracy is debated in Denmark.

According to Hal Koch, the essence of democracy is conversation and dialogue, where different standpoints are tested, and a common solution entered. Democracy is an informal process, where standpoints are presented, and a reasonable solution for all parties is entered – a process that will develop the human character of the participators. According to Hal Koch, democracy is thus equivalent of compromises bringing people together crosswise of different points of views.

The standpoints of Hal Koch were challenged by among others Alf Ross. According to Alf Ross, the perception of democracy of Hal Koch ascribes only slight significance to the formal democratic system.

According to Alf Ross, democracy is basically equivalent of a maximum of liberty and self-government. Alf Ross sees primarily democracy as a formal legal system that lays down the methods and procedures for obtaining democratic influence by political resolutions in accordance with the principle of majority vote. In practice, this means that the people elect an organ – the Folketing – which represents the people, and for a period is responsible for taking political decisions. According to Alf Ross, democracy particularly means respect for the notion of law and order.

The Danish democracy is often seen as a mixture of both approaches – thus a “way of life,” and a “system of government.”

The Constitution

The constitution guarantees citizens rights of liberty such as:

- Personal freedom
- Freedom of expression
- Freedom of the press
- Freedom of association
- Freedom of assembly
- Freedom of religion.

The constitution also contains certain limitations aiming to protect the democracy. Among others a provision ruling that associations, that resort to or attempt to achieve their objectives by means of violence, or instigating violence, or similar punishable offences towards people who have a different opinion, are liable for dissolution.

Teaching Democracy

Results from the democracy project at the College of Education in Odense/CVU Funen point out that teachers in the Primary and Lower Secondary School mainly focus on conversation and dialogue in connection with teaching democracy, whereas understanding of the political system and political conflicts have low priority. Only two percent of the teachers in the survey believe that it is not very important to teach

about dialogue and mutual respect, whereas 20 percent believe that it less important, or not important that the students learn about formal democratic procedures and debate social issues.

Read more about the democracy project at:

www.cvufyn.dk or www.folkeskolen.dk,

e.g. the article the Democratic Conversation:

Insufficient Education in Democracy by Anders Stig Christensen.



Interview



Ove Korsgaard

The Concept of Democracy Needs to be Updated

The conditions for democracy changes as the surrounding society changes. But unfortunately, this is not taken into account properly. Thus states ass. prof. Ove Korsgaard, leader of the Institution for Educational Philosophy at the Danish University of Education.

Democracy is never at a stand still. It has grown and been developed in Europe throughout a couple of centuries, and it is not a finished story. According to Ove Korsgaard, the historical evolution demands that we take new steps in the democratic history of Denmark:

“Denmark has since 1972 become a member of EU, and our society has become much more multicultural. This faces our democracy with a completely new set of problems. Today we stand fumbling towards the relations between religious, cultural, ethnic and political differences. We haven’t dealt with that for decades, however now it has become a political mine field. The differences have changed dramatically and given us new challenges, that we need to face,” says Ove Korsgaard.

He underlines that education in democracy has to be better at handling the development:

“Democracy is a very wide and sometimes a diffuse notion, that are being used about just about everything,” says Ove Korsgaard, who believes that democracy education in the school focuses too much on the way we are when we are together, how we speak to each other and how to make a group work.

“That is important – I wouldn’t deny that. But it is only a part of the whole. One also needs knowledge – an introduction into what democracy is, what a State Governed by Law is, how opposition and interaction unfolds in political life.”

Citizenship

On this basis, Ove Korsgaard suggests that the concept of citizenship is introduced as a compulsory subject in the school.

“The objectives of the teaching become more explicit and comprehensible.”

Since 2002 the students in England have been taught the concept of citizenship, which may be divided into three different aspects. Ove Korsgaard elaborates:

“The students shall learn about the pillars of democracy, the development of democracy, and terms like citizenship, citizen, union citizenship, world citizenship,” says Korsgaard.

Secondly, the students shall learn about the fundamental values of democracy and its dilemmas.

“The fundamental values of democracy are examined. How do we balance the relation between equality and liberty, and religion and politics? Which values shall a democratic education focus on? Criticism, tolerance, and the will to accept compromises, are e.g. key aspects of democracy.”

Clarity and Structure

Finally, the students shall learn how to communicate in a democratic fashion, and how to solve conflicts:

“The students shall acquire skills that make them able to level their arguments in public. The ability to use the media actively is a vital qualification, if you want to join the public debate in our society. Furthermore they shall learn how to solve problems and conflicts.”

Ove Korsgaard believes that teachers fail their educational obligation, if they only focus on one third of the aspects, and he is afraid that this error is prevalent within the Danish educational system:

“Introducing the concept of citizenship will help clarify and structure something that is generally difficult to comprehend. Furthermore it ensures that all aspects of democracy are dealt with.”

Read more on democracy

Folketinget: educational and information material are available at www.ft.dk.
See the bibliography in the Danish edition

An introduction to the British educational system is found at the web-site of International Review of Curriculum Assessment: www.inca.org.uk/1320.html#7.2.2

Hal Koch (1945). *What is Democracy?* Published by Gyldendal

You may find a description of the key elements of Hal Koch in an article in the periodical Uddannelse (education) of the Ministry of Education:

<http://www.uvm.dk/gammel/sep975.htm?menuid=4515>

Ove Korsgaard (editor) (2004). *Citizenship, Identity and Democratic Education*. Published by the Danish University of Education

Ove Pedersen and others (1994) *The Weightless Condition of Democracy*. Published by Spectrum

Alf Ross (1946). *Why Democracy?* Published by Arnold Busck

Krogerup Folk High School (1996). *Democracy-Jubilee Publication 1996*. Krogerup Folk High School



Active Citizenship

*The school shall teach the students to
commit themselves and participate actively.*

Citizenship implies both rights and duties. But it also implies that the citizens participate and accept a responsibility for the society that they are part of.

Primary and Lower Secondary Schools and General and Vocational Upper Secondary Education shall contribute to inspire the students to seek knowledge and influence on the society, and teach the students to commit themselves and participate actively.

It is important that the students learn where to gather information about social matters. Furthermore the student shall learn to listen, be curious, take a critical position, and express their own opinion.



Interview



Peter Østman

Getting To Know Each Other Across Cultural Borders

According to Mahmad Khatib, headmaster at an Arabic private independent school, it is important to teach the concept of citizenship, because it is a central part of the Danish society.

All students shall learn how the society works, which is essential in order to gain influence on the society, says Mahmad Khatib.

“The majority of our students are born and raised in Denmark, but their parents have come to Denmark without basic knowledge of democracy. Thus we must teach the students about the fundamental values of a democratic society. We must not isolate the students, but teach them how to take an active part of the Danish society,” says Mahmad Khatib, principal at DIA Privatskole, an Islamic-Arabic private independent school.

Student Participation

Reflections on how to teach citizenship have resulted in a great number of initiatives at DIA Privatskole. It is e.g. very important that the students and their parents participate actively. Mahmad Khatib elaborates:

“It is very important to us that the students gain influence and have the opportunity to express their personal views. The students are e.g. represented in the school board. We have established an anti-mobbing-patrol where student representatives mediate between students without interference from teachers. The students also attend courses on sound working environment where they meet students from other schools. When they return, they must tell what they have learned at the common morning meetings.”

Thus citizenship is about providing the students with an understanding on how to exert influence, and how to deal with disagreements in their daily school life. For DIA Privatskole, it is most important that the students learn to debate with others in respect of conflicting views.

Room for Heterogeneity

Accordingly, the school has contacted other schools – among others Ollerup Friskole – which is based on Christianity – with the purpose of giving the students an opportunity to meet students who have a different cultural background and different religious views. So far the schools have visited each other several times:

“We are not all alike – which is perfectly ok. We are different, and we have different views, but we must respect each other. Thus we must listen to the students. Some of them have extreme views, and we need to debate these views. We must communicate with the students and not isolate them. Thus it is very rewarding that they meet other students and get acquainted with these,” says Mahmad Khatib.

We Must Cultivate Heterogeneity

According to Peter Østman, teacher at Ollerup Friskole, the encounters have changed the students understanding of each other.

“Basically we want to give the students an opportunity to examine something that is unfamiliar to them. It is important that the students are familiar with other cultures and ways of life, and we must speak with them about why we choose to live our lives the way we do.”

Peter Østman is not only addressing religious differences:

“It is also a question of general life conditions. We have different looks, but that only concerns the immediate impression. There are also differences between growing up in the country, or in a large city. The students from Copenhagen were very curious during their trip to South Funen. They had never seen a bare field before, or touched a large living animal, so it was a groundbreaking experience for many of them.”

The school shall contribute to stimulate the students’ curiosity, and teach them how to express themselves. According to Peter Østman, the key to learning who you are, and to respect others, lies in the encounter with the unfamiliar.

“It is important that the students make contact with other cultures. Not in order to change, but in order to understand the diversities of life,” says Peter Østman. He continues:

“The precondition for understanding views of others is that you know your own.”

DIA Privatskole (private school)

DIA Privatskole (the Arabic-Islamic Private School) is located at central Nørrebro in Copenhagen. Currently, the school has 410 students from preschool class to ninth grade from mainly Arabic countries. All students are bilingual, but Danish students are welcome. The school has existed in more than 25 years.

Ollerup Friskole (private independent school)

Ollerup Friskole is a Christian Grundvig/Koldsk Private independent school. The school is located in South Funen and has 158 students. There are no bilingual students at the school, but they are also welcome. The school was founded in 1867.

Read more on citizenship etc.

Jonathan Schwartz (editor) (2002). *The Many Voices of Citizenship*. The Power Structure Examination

Democracy. The periodical Uddannelse (Education) No. 8, the Ministry of Education 2002

Interest group for citizenship. The internet periodical “International Journal of citizenship and Teacher Education” is available at www.citized.info

DIA Privatskole: www.dia-privatskole.dk

Ollerup Friskole: www.ollerupfriskole.dk

Democracy in the School

The schools have a huge responsibility with regards to teaching the students about democracy.

Primary and Lower Secondary Schools and other educational institutions are key institutions in relation to the fundamental values of democracy. The democracy is constantly developing and debated in public, and the educational institutions shall reflect this development. Thus the educational institutions have a huge responsibility with regards to teaching the students about democracy.

A democracy implies that its citizens accept a responsibility for the structure and development of the society. Thus the Primary and Lower Secondary School and General and Vocational Upper Secondary Education shall provide students with skills that make them able to deal with and influence their surroundings.

The Primary and Lower Secondary School and General and Vocational Upper Secondary Education are democratic meeting places for boys and girls with different social and cultural backgrounds. The purpose of teaching the fundamental democratic values are to ensure that the students become democratic citizens, learn to function in a democratic context, and acquire knowledge of the structure of democracy.

Since 1975 teaching democracy has been a part of the objects clause of the Primary and Lower Secondary School, and since 2002 the Private Independent Schools Act has directly stated that the private schools shall prepare the students to become citizens in a free society based on democracy.

The individual student shall learn to debate common social issues, and learn to express their thoughts and feelings clearly and effectively – and not least learn to debate in a democratic fashion in respect of alternative arguments. This personal development is a continuous process during the entire academic career of the student.

Thus education in democracy shall deal with other aspects than the basic teaching in formal democratic decision-making procedures. It is also essential that students learn to communicate in a democratic fashion, and that teachers are able to solve daily problems in a constructive way.

The Objectives of the Primary and Lower Secondary School

§ 1. The Primary and Lower Secondary School shall – in cooperation with the parents – provide the students with knowledge and skills that prepare them for further education, stimulate their urge to learn, make them familiar with Danish culture and history, give them an understanding of other countries and cultures, contribute to their understanding of man's interaction with nature, and nurse the allround personal development of the individual student.

Section 2. The Primary and Lower Secondary School shall develop working methods and create possibilities for experience, absorption, and an urge to learn, so that the students develop awareness, imagination and confidence in their own possibilities, and a background for forming independent judgements and for taking personal action

Section 3. The school shall prepare the students for active participation, joint responsibility, and rights and duties in a society based on freedom and democracy. The teaching of the school and its daily life shall therefore build on intellectual freedom, equality and democracy.

The Objectives of Upper Secondary Education

§ 2, section 4. The education shall focus on the cultural and personal development of the students. Thus the school shall teach the students to be responsible citizens and reflect on the surroundings: fellows, nature and society, and their own personal development. Furthermore the education shall develop the creative and innovative skills of the students and their critical faculty.

Section 5. The education and the social conditions shall prepare the pupils for active participation, joint responsibility, and rights and duties in a society based on freedom and democracy. The teaching of the school and its daily life shall therefore build on intellectual freedom, equality and democracy.

The Objectives of Vocational Training

§ 1, section 2. The education shall be organized so that it contributes to stimulate the students' interest for and ability to participate actively in a democratic society, and forms their personal development.

Interview



Bertel Haarder, Minister for Education

We must fight the democracy-blindness

The Primary and Lower Secondary School and General and Vocational Upper Secondary Education shall become better to comply with the letter of their objects clauses with regards to intellectual freedom, equality, and democracy, says Bertel Haarder, Minister for Education, who is concerned about the signs of blindness of democracy that are evident among newer generations.

The foundation for all teaching in the Primary and Lower Secondary School and in General and Vocational Upper Secondary Educational institutions is the objects clauses, which the schools are obliged to comply with. Unfortunately, says Bertel Haarder, some schools fail to live up to their obligation to teach the students about the concept of citizenship, and right and duties in a liberal democracy:

“We experience that an increasing number of youngsters have no clear notion of what democracy means, and this has caused problems that have surprised us all. This applies to both immigrants as well as Danish children. They are blind to the concept of democracy, and have not sufficient knowledge of what it means. Thus we need to focus more on democratic principles in the school system,” says Bertel Haarder.

This blindness of democracy is not exceptional for the generations of today. According to Bertel Haarder, history shows that each new generation has their form of democracy-blindness, and each generation must reconstitute the democracy:

“In the 1930s and 1940s, the Fascist leaders of Germany and Italy infatuated among others Danish intellectuals, and in the 60s and 70s, communist dictators were hailed on universities and at folk high schools.”

Democracy Ensures Freedom of Religion

According to Bertel Haarder, the blindness of democracy of today could be as damaging as the ones of the past.

“Some youngster claim e.g. that their religion contradicts with democracy. Frankly, it is the opposite. In reality, democracy ensures freedom of religion, even the right to be a religious fundamentalist.”

The Minister for Education disagree with those who suggest that – in order to prevent any discrepancy between religion and democracy – we should introduce the secular state banning religious symbols in public places:

“This is not the solution. See how we come to terms with the issue in the Primary and Lower Secondary School. Here Christian studies is a common subject that involves readings from the bible and hymn singing. Even though the subject is informative and not preaching, we have chosen to open up for exemption from the course. Nevertheless, only 0.25 percent of the students in Copenhagen have been exempted, and only 0.69 percent of the bilingual students have been exempted from attending Christian studies.”

Increased Awareness on Teaching Democracy at Teachers Training Colleges

Bertel Haarder stresses that the awareness of teaching fundamental values of democracy and being in compliance with the objects clauses, should also mark the new teachers training education.

“As an integrated part of the compulsory subjects, we need to make sure that the democratic obligations are taken seriously. I have however rejected Professor Ove Korsgaard’s proposal to introduce citizenship as a common subject in the Primary and Lower Secondary School. We have already a substantial number of common subjects. But it might be a good idea to introduce citizenship as an integrated part of the common subjects, which naturally means that we shall educate the teachers to comply with this task and combat blindness of democracy,” says Bertel Haarder.

The political Commitment of Youngsters

According to a Swedish survey, the political commitment and ambitions of Scandinavian teenagers are substantially low compared to teenagers from Southern Europe. 70.000 youngsters at the age of fourteen, from 24 different countries, participated in the survey on the political commitment of youngsters.

- 91 percent of the Danish youngsters expect to vote at political elections.
- 15 percent of the Danish youngsters want to join a political party – the lowest share compared with the other countries of the survey.
- The Northern youngsters expect a lower participation in the democracy than their contemporaries of Southern Europe.

Meaningful Participation, Erik Amnå, University of Göteborg: www.cefos.gu.se

Read more on democracy in the school

Youngsters and Democracy: The periodical Uddannelse (Education) NO 9, the Ministry of Education, 2004

Mitdemokrati.dk is a web-based democracy project: www.midtdemokrati.dk

The democracy project at the web-site of the periodical Folkeskolen (The Primary and Lower Secondary School), www.folkeskolen.dk, contains articles based on a science and development project at CVU Funen about democracy in the school

The School as a Local Democracy

A sound community in the school class is a precondition for democracy.

Besides teaching formal democratic and judicial processes, schools and educational institutions shall organize the education so that the students learn to practice democracy in their daily school life.

The democratic dialogue is part of the education. Teachers shall instruct and guide the students in democratic behaviour so that the students learn to listen, form their own opinion, and respect others' opinion and principles. The students' council also provides an excellent opportunity to experience how democracy works in practice.

As part of the Power Structure Examination (1999-2004), a survey of the Danish democracy, Bo Jacobsen, professor and dr. phil., and others, have examined the Danish Primary and Lower Secondary School as a democratic institution: Does the Primary and Lower Secondary School comply with the objectives? Does the school prepare the students in terms of active participation, joint responsibility, and rights and duties in a society based on democracy and personal freedom. The survey points out that the Primary and Lower Secondary School can be significantly better to comply with the objects clause.

A sense of community in the school class is a precondition for democracy. Here the teacher plays an important role setting the example for social manners and the code of conduct ways of in relation to communication.

The overall picture shows that the majority of the students experience a sense of community in the class (86 percent). However, 8 percent of the students experience that they stand outside the class community. This means that all classes have one or two students who feels that they are stand outside the class community.

The survey also shows that there significant differences between classes. Some classes have a strong community and inconsiderable problems with mobbing. Other classes function badly, and have major problems with mobbing. As the survey concludes, choosing the right class can make a world of difference in relation to the later development of a child (Jacobsen, 2004:90). Thus the ability of the school and the teachers to create the foundation for sound class communities has huge significance in terms of spreading democracy in the school classes.

The Power Structure Examination (Magtudredningen)

The Power Structure Examination was a research project initiated by the Danish parliament. The aim was to examine the Danish democracy in the transition towards the 21 century. It was headed by a research council, consisting of Lise Tøgeby (chairman), Jørgen Goul Andersen, Peter Munk Christiansen, Torben Beck Jørgensen and Signild Vallgård. Approximately 75 different projects were completed during the project which ended in 2004.

Students' Councils Have Too Little Influence

75 percent of the students felt that the students' council is important/very important for the school, but 64 percent felt that the school council has indifferent significance for the individual student.

- 4,500 students from fourth to ninth grade participated in the survey on democracy in the Basic School.
- 86 percent of the students say, that they have a good or reasonably community in the class.
- In 12 percent of the classes, more than half of the students feel that they are standing outside the community.
- Approximately 8 percent of the students fell that are standing outside the community.
- 50 percent experience mobbing in the class.

Bo Jacobsen(2004). The Future Democrat. Published by Aarhus University



Interview



Bo Jacobsen

Good Classes Create Sound Democracies

The democracy in Danish school classes looks profoundly healthy, says Professor Bo Jacobsen. Still he emphasises the importance of continuing to develop the democracy in the school system.

Many school classes in the Danish Primary and Lower Secondary School have sound communities who allow any student to speak their mind even though it contradicts the general opinion, says Professor, dr. phil. Bo Jacobsen of the Institute for Sociological studies of the University of Copenhagen.

A Democratic School

The survey showed – contrasting what many so far has claimed – that classes who work well socially also constitute those classes where individual freedom of speech exists. Thus focussing on the individual and the community is not incompatible. On the contrary, it supplements each other.

Bo Jacobsen elaborates:

“Thus in order to strengthen democracy in the school class, it is essential that teachers open up for the possibility of the students to discuss, argue on, and make decisions on school issues. These decisions must not be pseudo-events where students discuss matters that have no significance to them, or matters where they have no real influence. It is essential that the students feel that their decisions make a difference.”

According to Bo Jacobsen, there are many areas where the students can have influence. For example deciding on seat positions. Who sits next to whom? When do we change seats? The decisions can also concern school subjects. For example, when the class gets to decide the subject to write a paper on:

“Obviously some matters are not open for student influence, but there is a free scope, and I urge teachers to make use of it,” says Bo Jacobsen.

Free and Confident Students

According to Bo Jacobsen, the efforts of students’ councils also form part of the democratic education.

“The school council must work properly. It is up to the teachers to ensure that. However, the basic central processes of democracy take place in the school class. Here the students learn the basic rules of democracy, and how to interact in a democratic fashion. The teacher must bring this awareness into the class room.”

Thus the teachers’ obligation to ensure that the school class functions well is a central precondition for teaching students how democracy works.

“The main task of the class teacher is to ensure that the democratic community works, so that students feel free and confident enough to talk about issues that work well and their problems. It must be legitimate to speak one’s mind in the class room.”

The Teachers Are Role Models

The social conditions that teachers establish for the class are important. But according to Bo Jacobsen, it is equally important that the teacher is aware of his or her role in the class. The teacher serves as a role model for students who see how they debate things, the way they interact with the students, and their general approach to their surroundings.

Thus Bo Jacobsen emphasises the importance of having teachers who serve as democratic role models.

“Overall, the task of any teacher is to contribute to the personal development of the students, to create sound relations between them, and not the least sound relations between teachers and students. Thus the democracy in the school is established by committed teachers who are aware of the fact that they are role models.”

Read More about the School as a Local Democracy

Meet the student. The teachers' Road to Democratic Interaction. Jacobsen, B., Christiansen, I., Jespersen, C.S. Published by Hans Reitzel (2003)

The Future Democrat. A survey of the school class as a democratic environment. Jacobsen, B., Jensen, F.T, Madsen, M.B., Sylvestersen, M. and Vincent, C. The Magtudredningen and Aarhus University (2004)

The Power Structure Examination: www.ps.au.dk/magtudredningen

Democracy in teaching and school. Examples from Technical and Vocational Schools. The Ministry of Education (2001)

At the web-site of Skole & Samfund (School & Society), www.skole-samfund.dk, you can order leaflets about *Student Democracy in the Primary and Lower Secondary School*



A Sound Educational Environment and the Inclusive School

Creating a sound educational environment, embracing all students constitutes thus the first steps towards a democratic school.

A sound educational environment and an inclusive school are essential in relation to creating democracy in the school, and an important precondition for teaching students how to interact in a democratic way.

An inclusive school ensures that the specific student receives an education that matches his or hers qualifications. Thus the education shall be established so that it matches all students. Furthermore the inclusive school sees diversity and multiplicity as a resource, and focuses on dialogue and communication in order to create contentment, confidence and security among the students. This will provide students with the best possibilities for academic learning and personal development.

If a school fails to establish contentment, a decent way of communicating, room for everybody, mutual respect, and individual freedom of speech, the students will be deprived of experiencing an educational environment based on democratic values. A school life where the students – within the educational framework of the school – have influence and joint responsibility.

Inclusive all students and creating a sound educational environment constitute thus the first steps towards a school based on democracy.

Creating and maintaining a sound educational environment should have first priority for schools and educational institutions in relation to the democratic process. In connection with the Educational Environment Act, the schools are now obliged to examine and develop the educational environment. In addition, students now have the right to participate equally in the process with the school management and the safety steward.

Inclusiveness is especially important on schools with many bilingual students. The educational institution and the daily teaching must reflect the ethnical and social differences among the students. Furthermore it is important that students learn and accept that people are different with various opinions, habits, cultures and religions.

The ambition of creating an inclusive school based on contentment and dialogue requires a huge effort by the school management. In the process of designing the fundamental values, and developing and organising the daily school life, the management must contemplate how the concepts are implemented in practice. However, succeeding in creating an inclusive school constitutes as mentioned a huge step in relation to ambition of a school based on democracy.

Assessment of the Educational Environment

According to the Educational Environment Act, all educational institutions shall prepare and publish an assessment of the educational environment. In August 2005 the Ministry of Education asked the educational institutions whether they had completed or updated an earlier assessment of the educational environment within the last three years. The number of schools who had completed an assessment were:

- 78.8 percent of the Primary and Lower Secondary Schools
- 91.5 percent of the Upper Secondary Schools and higher preparatory schools
- 90 percent of the technical and vocational schools.

The Educational Environment Award

In 2005 Bertel Haarder presented the first Educational Environment Award. The prize was awarded to four schools that had made a significant effort to create and maintain a sound educational environment. The winners were:

- Bygerskolen in Brørup for introducing a smiley-arrangement in connection with assessing the educational environment of the specific classes.
- Aarhus Katedralskole for creating huge improvements of the educational environment by, among others, engaging a stress psychologist and a psychologist with speciality in mobbing in the school.
- Produktionsskolen KUBA in Copenhagen for intense focus on health conditions in the school.
- Vendsyssel Sygeplejeskole for close dialogue with the students regarding improvement of the educational environment.

Read more: www.dcum.dk

Interview



Ole Juhl

A sound Educational Environment and Democracy Go Together

In relation to creating a sound educational environment, the school management and the teachers shall look upon the students as equal associates. If this is accomplished, it is a wonderful example of democracy in practice, says Ole Juhl, leader of the Danish Centre of Educational Environment.

Ole Juhl has no doubts. A sound educational environment and democracy go together. According to Ole Juhl, a school based on democratic processes will ensure that students have influence on the educational environment, and show that they are respected as equal associates.

Unfortunately, many schools fail to involve the students in the statutory procedures regarding the educational environment, contrasting sharply with the objectives of the school of preparing the students for active participation, joint responsibility, and rights and duties in a society based on freedom and democracy.

“If we fail to involve students in the democratic processes, and the development of the school, we also fail to rear future citizens who are eager to participate in the democracy. The students shall be active players

and equal associates. We need to respect their views and convictions – even though they contradict the general routines of the school,” says Ole Juhl.

Democracy in Practice

Furthermore he emphasises that the process of developing the educational environment is a unique opportunity to show the students how democracy works in practice:

“In Social Science and other subjects the students learn how the democracy functions in theory. But when the students get involved in the procedures of developing the educational environment, they learn that they are able to create improvements through democratic procedures, that their opinion and knowledge count, and that you often have to enter into a compromise.”

Students Yearn for Democracy

According to Ole Juhl, is not only a question of principles and teaching of democratic processes. It is also important to involve the students regarding the development of the educational environment simply because they are the real experts. They are the ones who use the student toilets, experience mobbing, and are the ones most qualified to evaluate the teachers’ education:

“Thus in order to create a sound educational environment to the satisfaction of the students, it is essential that the students are heard.”

According to Ole Juhl, the requests of the students often concern the psychical environment. They want a school without mobbing, security, solidarity, joint responsibility, order in the class, mutual respect, room for everybody and decent ways of communicating:

“Actually, the students wish to enhance focus on the values that the society and the school system also regard as fundamental for a democracy. Thus if we listened more to them, the students would in fact ask for help to become more democratic and improve democracy in their school,” says Ole Juhl.

Students and the Educational Environment

In August 2005 the Ministry of Education asked students of the specific schools whether they had made use of their right to choose representatives to safeguard their interests in relation to the educational environment.

The number of schools, who had chosen representatives, were:

- 62,9 percent of the Primary and Lower Secondary Schools
- 83,5 percent of the Upper Secondary Schools and higher preparatory schools
- 65,2 percent of the vocational centres.

Interview



Niels Jørgen Helms

It is Not a Question of Them and Us

Ethnicity is not an issue, actually a provocative matter to bring up. This attitude pervades the daily school life at the Upper Secondary School, Mulernes Legatskole, located in the middle of Vollsmose in Odense.

“When you enlist at our Upper Secondary School, you are immediately told that it is about *us* and not *them and us*. We have huge focus on sense of community and democracy,” says rector Niels Jørgen Helms.

At the Upper Secondary School, 20 percent of the students are bilingual – or bicultural as it is called on Mulernes Legatskole. Even though it is a provocative matter to bring up among the students and in general on the school, Niels Jørgen Helms acknowledges that the school management makes a huge effort to ensure that the bicultural students are doing well.

“We have e.g. bilingual role models, and make a special effort to ensure that they are represented in e.g. the school council and the collaborative programme with the Primary and Lower Secondary School.”

In order to assist especially parents of the bilingual students, the Upper Secondary School has numerous rules and guidelines.

“Due to insufficient information material about e.g. Upper Secondary Education, many rumours and myths about the Danish youth culture flourish among the parents of the bilingual students. Many believe that it is all about partying and drinking. To ensure that parents and their children will not dissociate themselves from the school or parts of the education, we have introduced numerous rules, which we have made clear to everybody. On the other hand, I think that the state – hereunder the Ministry of Education – should see to that proper information translated into various languages would be available,” says Niels Jørgen Helms.

The school has e.g. implemented a set of general school rules which hangs in all classrooms. The first section goes: “No students shall be exposed to insulting or degrading treatment.” The school has also introduced more specific rules regarding e.g. participation in gymnastics and alcohol.

“We are very strict in relation to intervene and see to that the rules are complied with. In order to create a school based on a sound community and decent ways of communicating, we need to be consequent when our rules and fundamental values are violated.”

Read more about A Sound Educational Environment and the Inclusive School

The Danish Centre of Educational Environment: www.dcum.dk

Handling Conflicts and Mediation in the Primary and Lower Secondary School at www.brugkonflikten.dk (see also the Bibliography)

Instructions on Discipline, Good Behaviour and Contentment in the Primary and Lower Secondary School. The Ministry of Education, 2006

Black and White. Bilingual students at Avedøre Gymnasium og HF. Ole Thorup and others (editors). Avedøre Gymnasium, 2000

The publications of the Ministry of Education on integration in the school: www.uvm.dk under *Udgivelser*:

Inspiration for Improved Integration in the Primary and Lower Secondary School, the Ministry of Education, 2004

Multiplicity as a Resource. Teaching in a Heterogeneous Environment – Upper Secondary and Higher Preparatory School and AVU. The Ministry of Education, 2004

Being successful – recommendations regarding successful integration in youth education, 2005 (two additional reports have been written in connection with the integration project)

Extremism and Democracy

It is the task of the school management to prevent extremist tendencies, to keep an eye on the situation if these tendencies occur and if so, to be ready to take action.

September 11, 2001, had a profound influence on the world. Terror, fundamentalism and extremist views have become more predominant, and extremism has become a main issue in the debate on democracy and freedom of speech.

Extremism has also become a factor in the daily life of some schools. Although actual extremist behaviour is rare, an increasing number of schools experience problematic tendencies.

This involves e.g. racism, or students who exercise social control e.g. by forcing other students to wear special clothes, or observe religious festivals. Some students also warn their fellow students about education in topics such as democracy, sex equality, sex instruction, and evolutionism.

Students with extremist views may be influenced by family, religious guides, school friends, and extremist web-sites on the internet. A few schools have experienced that right-wing, or religious extremist movements have attempted to gain access to the school with the intention to recruit supporters among the students.

Even though any school in theory shall respect different views of the students, the specific school should consider how to deal with extremist views of the students. Especially as the school is responsible for ensuring that no student is subject to compulsion and is personally intimidated to adopt certain values and views by other students or individuals outside the school.

In other words, school managements and teachers around the country shall consider how to deal with extremist statements and actions in and outside the school. The school management has a mission of preventing extremist tendencies, keeping a sharp watch on school activities, and taking adequate measures when problems occur.

These measures may imply:

- The school formulates a set of social norms and values regarding social contact between students, and sees to that all students are familiar with these standards.
- All teachers know how to deal with extremist behaviour and tendencies.
- The school has firm procedures preventing any teacher from having to deal with the issues alone. Thus the school management shall clarify the guideline directions in order to prevent any uncertainty regarding responsibility.
- The school benefits from a close and trustful collaboration with the parents.

Extremism

The term is used to describe radical, political views or currents that reject the democratic system, the constitutional state, pluralism, and democratic procedures of creating political solutions without using violence and terror. In a democratic perspective, extremism is the exact opposite to democracy.

Fundamentalism

The term is used to describe literal religious observance that may be connected with a political and/or ideological programme. For example Christian, Jewish or Islamic fundamentalism. The term fundamentalism is often used in a negative context synonymous with fanaticism and irrationality. However it would be more correct to describe the phenomenon as an alternative to the relativistic reading of the scriptures of the secular society and its belief in scientific breakthroughs.

Source: The Great Danish Encyclopedia

Interview



Lise Egholm

Consequence Is the Solution

Well-defined rules and a consequent course of action are indispensable measures when it comes to combating extremism and extremist tendencies. Furthermore a school shall never compromise with the fundamental values of the Basic Education Act, says headmaster, Lise Egholm, of Rådmandsgade Skole at Nørrebro.

On one occasion the extremist movement Hizb-ut-Tahrir infiltrated the Rådmandgade Skole at Nørrebro in Copenhagen via the cricket team of the school. When headmaster Lise Egholm discovered this, she took immediate action. She closed the team temporarily and spoke unmistakably to the students of the team.

“I told them that they can support any movement they want, but these activities are not accepted at the school. Furthermore I told them that Hizb-ut-Tahrir was a bad influence on them,” says Lise Egholm.

This approach clearly mirrors her position with regards to combating extremist tendencies in the school. Namely by taking immediate and consequent course of action no matter how insignificant the tendencies or incidents are:

“Both leaders and teachers shall be alert and take action even in connection with minor incidents, as numerous tendencies occur on a small scale all the time.”

Dialogue with Students and Parents

Fortunately, the minor incidents are in majority at the school where 80 percent of the students are bilingual. Palestinian students who cut out the Israeli flag of the class atlas. A student, who refuses to participate in music class, because it is forbidden by the Koran, and afterwards influences his schoolmates. Students, who exulted and waved flags in the schoolyard in the aftermath of the terror attack on September 11, 2001.

When such incidences occur, Lise Egholm or the relevant teacher normally get hold of the student(s) and parents, and unmistakably make it clear that this behaviour will be not tolerated at the school:

“All teachers know the position of the school, and are competent to take on a so-called cultural conversation with the parents. It is a part of our everyday school life. Furthermore the teachers know that they can always contact me for help.”

Lise Egholm warns against the misplaced over-humanistic approach of many teachers towards students who have a different ethnical background.

“I.e. accepting intolerable behaviour on account that they have a different cultural background. This approach is very dangerous, because it favours the most extreme views,” says Lise Egholm, who admits being, on occasions, too over-humanistic herself.

“Perhaps it is a typical Danish mentality. Fortunately, my Kurdish supervisor arrests me when I am about to make this typical mistake. He is very important for our school, because he always sees things in another perspective than me.”

Practical Compromises

Lise Egholm although emphasises that everyday school life is based on dialogue, and that she makes compromises all the time ensuring that everyday school life runs smoothly.

“At a school with so many bilingual students, you have to make compromises,” says Lise Egholm. As an example, she mentions one student who was not allowed to paint human beings in art class, because, according to his father, it is forbidden by the Koran. After having discussed the matter at great length, the father and Lise Egholm agreed that the student was allowed to paint human beings, as long as they were covered a bit by trees and leaves.

“It may seem foolish to agree on that. Though I cannot continue arguing forever, and I did in fact get him to paint human beings. This is an example of the kind of practical compromises I enter into all the time. Then again I never make compromises in relation to the overall fundamental values, which we are obliged to comply with in accordance with the Primary and Lower Secondary School Act.”

Read more on conflict resolution and how to deal with extremism.

The web-site of Centre for Conflict Resolution, www.konfliktloesning.dk, contains among others articles on conflict resolution and strategies on how to handle mobbing.

Danish Centre for Educational Environment has initiated an information campaign in order to spread people's awareness of – and how to use – “constructive conflict resolution” in the Primary and Lower Secondary School. www.brugkonflikten.dk. See the bibliography.

In the following catalogue of examples, you will find examples showing how different schools have dealt with extremist statements: Democracy, Equality and Tolerance at Søholtskolen, and the contributions Democracy and Integration in the School by Palle Kristensen and Henning Grønberg, and value based management by Eva Hofman-Bang.

Catalogue of examples

The Primary and Lower Secondary School

The everyday school life shall be pervaded by a fundamental democratic mindset, which is also stipulated in the objects clauses of the Primary and Lower Secondary School and the Private Independent Schools.

Primary and Lower Secondary Schools and private schools have a key position in relation to teaching students the principles of democracy. Besides systematic teaching of the formal democratic decision-processes and basic rules, the everyday school life shall be organised so that the students experience how democracy function in practice.

The Primary and Lower Secondary School Act, § 1, stipulates the objectives of the Primary and Lower Secondary School:

Section 2. The Primary and Lower Secondary School shall develop working methods and create possibilities for experience, absorption and an urge to learn, so that the students develop awareness, imagination and confidence in their own possibilities and a background for forming independent judgements and for taking personal action.

Section 3. The school shall prepare the students for active participation, joint responsibility, rights and duties in a society based on freedom and democracy. The teaching of the school and its daily life shall therefore build on intellectual freedom, equality and democracy.

The Independent Private Schools Act, § 1, stipulates that the schools shall prepare the students to be citizens in a society based on freedom and democracy, and develop and strengthen the knowledge and respect for basic freedom and human rights, hereunder sex equality.

Teaching both theoretical and practical democracy is characteristic of the Danish school system. Teachers of history and social studies have a special obligation in relation to teach the students about basic procedures and the pillars of democracy, which is stipulated in the curriculum of the two subjects. Furthermore students must be aware of the dangers of departing from the principles of freedom of speech, religious freedom etc.

The everyday school life shall be pervaded by a fundamental democratic mindset, which is also stipulated in the objects clauses of the Primary and Lower Secondary School and the Independent Private Schools. Thus Danish students will in the course of their school life be introduced to the principle of social rights and duties, and they will learn that they have a personal responsibility for the community. In the course of their school life, they will also discover that they are free individuals, though only to a certain extent out of regard for other individuals. Democratic behaviour is based on equality and mutual respect.

Creating an everyday school life where social and cultural differences are respected constitute another key aspect of the education in democracy, though it is vital that the school maintains discipline and cracks down on statements and actions that go against fundamental democratic behaviour.

The following examples treat schools who have initiated special projects on democracy and democratic values that go beyond the prescribed basic curriculum.

The examples refer among others to theme-weeks dealing with democracy, human rights, tolerance, freedom of speech and citizenship. The examples illustrate that the awareness of citizenship and democracy of the students are strengthened by teaching formal democratic structures and by debating fundamental values in a multicultural society.

There are example of schools that attach great importance to student influence on the teaching, and wish to stimulate the students' urge to comment on both educational matters in general and other aspects of school life. Class meetings and student councils provide e.g. an excellent opportunity in relation to practising student democracy. In this context it is vital that student council is a democratic organ in coherence with the everyday school life.

A democratic debate stipulates comprehensible guidelines directions regarding dialogue routines, both in relation to the teaching, and not least between students. Some examples focus on strengthening the social life in a specific class by preparing rules on social interaction. The term *respect* is often mentioned – especially in connection with conflict resolution, and handling of extremist views.

The chapter is concluded by contributions from headmaster Palle Kristensen from Søholt skolen at Brøndby Strand, and headmaster Henning Grønberg from Bakkeskolen in Esbjerg. The two schools attach great importance of teaching students how to interact democratically. Fundamental values, rights and duties shall be comprehensible, and the integration task has a high priority. The contribution focuses on how to handle statements and actions among the students that violate fundamental values regarding tolerance, respect and equality.

Rules and Course Description

The Primary and Lower Secondary School

The Objectives of the Primary and Lower Secondary School are stipulated in the Primary and Lower Secondary School Act § 1.

At any Primary and Lower Secondary School with 5 or numerous age groups, the students are entitled to establish a students' council, and the leader of the school is obliged to encourage the students to establish one in the event that the school has not taken the initiative to establish one, in accordance with the ministerial order on students' councils in the Primary and Lower Secondary School and the Youth School.

According to the Primary and Lower Secondary School Act § 44, the school board is obliged to stipulate the house rules. The objective is to create the best possible conditions in relation to learning, student contentment, the educational environment of the students, and the working environment of employees. In the ministerial order on measures to promote discipline in the Primary and Lower Secondary School, rules have been stipulated on how to deal with students who coarsely violate the house rules. The leader of the school is responsible for taking measures against students who coarsely violate the adopted rules. At

www.faellesmaal.uvm.dk, you will find descriptions of the courses of the Primary and Lower Secondary School, hereunder social studies and history.

Independent Private Schools

The aims are embodied in the Independent Private Schools Act – § 1.

According to the Independent Private Schools Act – §1, the education of the private Primary and Lower Secondary Schools shall comply with the general demands of the Primary and Lower Secondary Schools

Examples

Democracy and Cultural Understanding

DIA Privatskole, Copenhagen

<i>Theme:</i>	Teaching democracy and citizenship
<i>Objective:</i>	The students acquire knowledge on how the Danish society functions, politically, socially and economically. The students learn how to personally gain influence and responsibility in the society by learning its basic rules. The term “society” covers the whole social spectra; the family as a sociological society, students’ councils and common social behaviour, and the political system
<i>Target group:</i>	The students and teachers of the school and others
<i>Perspective:</i>	The students shall feel that they are part of the Danish society
<i>Web-site:</i>	www.dia-privatskole.dk
<i>Contact:</i>	Peter Følle

DIA Privatskole is an Arabic-Islamic private school located on the border between Nørrebro and Østerbro in Copenhagen. According to the objects clause of the school, the school wishes to create a humane, but authoritative educational environment where students from different social backgrounds and different nationalities have an opportunity to develop personally and socially, and attain harmonious relations to class mates and a positive view of the Danish society.

In order to strengthen the students’ democratic sense of belonging, understanding of their own role and opportunities in relation to participating in the democratic society, the school in 2006 decided to integrate the objectives in both social and academic teaching.

DIA Private School also teaches the students how to debate in a proper manner and behave formally in a gathering or a group of people. To promote the sense of responsibility, a students’ council has been established which gathers every month. The older students of the students’ council must e.g. assist teachers on playground duty.

In February 2006, DIA Private School held a feature week on *democracy* concentrating on the following themes:

Introductory period of primary level.	1.-3. grade: Democracy and the family
Intermediate level.	4.-6. grade: Democracy in school
Final years of compulsory schooling.	7.-9. grade: Democracy in the society

1.-3. grade did theatre/role playing. The students acted minor families where the children had joint influence on for example deciding where to spend their summer holiday, or how to furnish the new house. Friday the students acted these role plays in front of the parents. Their parents were generally very content with the feature week.

At 4.-6. grade, a school paper was e.g. completed containing interviews with students and teachers who expressed their views regarding improvements of the educational environment of the school. The students also visited Christiansborg (the Parliament), which significantly interested the students.

At 7.-9. grade, the students formed “political parties.” The students were divided into groups in order to create a political party and promote this party in front of the other students from 7.-9. grade. Hereafter, “elections” were held in the classes. The school had also invited the local politician Peter Schluter who debated social aspects with the students. The atmosphere in the hall was fine during the meeting, and the students were very inquisitive.

The school experiences that the feature week has contributed to make the students aware of the fact that they personally can gain influence and responsibility in the society, if you comply with the fundamental democratic procedures.

Friendship Classes:

DIA Privatskole believes that it is very important that the students interact with the local community and the rest of the country. Accordingly, DIA Privatskole has contacted other schools – and has established friendship classes with among others Ollerup Friskole, Carolineskolen, and Bordings Friskole (the school has without result attempted to establish friendship classes with Primary and Lower Secondary Schools)

When two classes from fourth grade of the DIA Privatskole and Ollerup Friskole meet, differences and similarities in the students’ daily family life were among others debated, and when two classes from seventh grade got together, freedom of speech was on the programme.

Both aims and means are continuously evaluated by the employees and the students in collaboration with their teachers. The objects clause on democracy will be integrated in the specific objectives for all age groups by the end of 2006.

The Juvenile Parliament

Fuglsanggårdsskolen, Virum

<i>Theme:</i>	Teaching democracy and citizenship
<i>Objective:</i>	Developing democracy becomes an integrated part of the daily routines
<i>Target group:</i>	Students on eight and ninth grade
<i>Perspective:</i>	The competition was part of a project on Danish politics
<i>Web-site:</i>	www.fu-ltk.dk
<i>Contact:</i>	Lone Degn Henriksen

Having experienced that students often find democracy and politics boring, a group of teachers of Fuglsanggårdsskolen in Virum decided that one class should join the competition of gaining seats in the Juvenile Parliament of Folketinget (the Danish Parliament) in April 2005.

To join the competition and gain seats in the Juvenile Parliament, which is assembled every second year, the students shall prepare and introduce a Bill. In connection with the preliminary exercises, which are based on teaching material of the Department of Information of Folketinget, the students are divided into groups, consisting of three students, who choose a party to represent and a main issue. At Fuglsanggårdsskolen, the students prepared an election speech, election posters, and recorded an election film. Finally, Folketinget chooses 60 of the proposals submitted, and invites three students from each

winning class to join the Juvenile Parliament. Thus 178 students gain a seat in Juvenile Parliament. Seat 179 is attributed to the Chairman of Folketinget. The final gathering takes place in the Hall of Folketinget.

The Bill of the students stipulated that all students should have a computer. During the course of preparing the Bill, the students e.g. calculated the number of students in question, and contacted computer manufacturers like DELL and IBM etc.

The project was sustained by the fact that Fuglsanggårdskolen is a flexible school, which makes it possible to draw on several teachers their special competences, and organise the teaching with total focus on the project for a period.

In retrospect, the teachers estimate that the project gave the students a completely different and uplifting experience, and as result the students now have a far superior understanding of politics. The students are more eager to bring something up for discussion, and teachers feel that it has become much easier to approach matters from a political angle. In connection with later projects, the students did e.g. not hesitate to contact local politicians, and it appears, in general, that the students are more open towards the political system.

Besides arranging the Juvenile Parliament, Folketinget also offers the opportunity of being “A Politician for a Day.” In the basement under Christiansborg, a visiting centre has been established, where the students can participate in an advanced role play centred around a mini version of Folketinget, complete with the hall of Folketinget, the lobby, committee rooms, and parliament member offices.

Further information:

Further information regarding the offers of Folketinget for senior classes is found at the Child and Juvenile Portal of Folketinget: www.ungtinget.dk

Democratic Education

Marie Jørgensens Skole, Odense

<i>Theme:</i>	Teaching democracy and citizenship
<i>Objective:</i>	Students shall acquire skills that make them able to form personal judgments and deal with fundamental values in a complex world
<i>Target group:</i>	All students
<i>Perspective:</i>	The course General Education and Democracy has been designed with one lesson ones a week during the entire school course.
<i>Web-site:</i>	www.mariejoergensensskole.dk
<i>Headmaster:</i>	Poul Knudsen

Marie Jørgensens Skole, a private Primary and Lower Secondary School in Odense, has designed the course General Education and Democracy, after the school and the school board in many years have focussed on fundamental values. The school had come to the conclusion that the fundamental values of the youth of today do not constitute a general set of values passed on from earlier generations. Instead life is conditioned by separate choices, and thus often disconnected from a greater set of values.

In order to prepare among others the students for these future choices, the school have decided to design a course named General Education and Democracy. The course shall teach the students to form their own personal judgments, and to debate with others in respect of conflicting views. The course deals with debating attitudes and views in relation to each age-group with one lesson a week from pre-school to tenth grade.

The course is based on oral discussions, where fundamental values are debated, views formed and tested with the teacher in charge. The teacher shall naturally express his or hers personal views.

One example

Fourth grade is working with general topics such as: Class contentment, community, the concept of democracy, moral and value concepts, conflict mediation, boys' and girls' roles at home, and school and society.

The students debate in some lessons class rules. A chairman and a note-taker are appointed among the students. Common requests and problems are debated in teams and in the class, among others cleaning and homework café. Occasionally the class votes on the issues by a show of hands. The note-taker records all decisions to be followed up.

A syllabus for the course has been prepared to be evaluated and revises every year. The course is currently being evaluated by teachers and students. Furthermore the parents, who have also embraced the course with great interest, and find it innovative, will also be involved.

The students are engaged in the course and eager to contribute. By debating and examining different views and attitudes – issues they also bring home for further discussion – the students become more capable of handling a complex world.

Further information:

The syllabus of the course General Education and Democracy is found on the web-site of the school. *We have joint responsibility*, Article in the periodical Free Primary and Lower Secondary Schools, June 2005.

Democracy in the School

Carolineskolen, Østerbro, Copenhagen

<i>Theme:</i>	Democracy and democratic values
<i>Objective:</i>	Developing the democratic sense of the students through conservation, joint responsibility and knowledge of rights and duties. Developing democracy becomes an integrated part of the everyday school life
<i>Target group:</i>	Employees of the school, students, and parents
<i>Perspective:</i>	The aims apply to all courses at all age groups
<i>Web-site:</i>	www.carolineskolen.dk
<i>Contact:</i>	Ulla Tirsted

At Carolineskolen, a Jewish private school located at Outer Østerbro in Copenhagen, they have an objective of teaching the students to have confidence in themselves, express their personal views, and joint responsibility through the daily school work in the class and in the students' council. As a consequence, in 2001 the school decided to prepare a written document on how to deal with the objective at the various age groups.

The document describes the general objectives in relation to treating democracy at the various age groups. The 15 teachers of the school prepared the goal setting on the basis of a working paper drafted by the deputy headmaster. The central starting point of the document is: 1. Democracy is a way of life – a certain way of interacting socially. 2. Democracy means freedom and responsibility for personal choices. 3. Knowledge is a precondition for democracy. This leads to the following general objectives:

How do we teach the students to become democratic citizens?

1. By focussing on a way of life: The conservation is a key aspect.

All classes deal with social development. The students shall learn to:

- Take personal responsibility
- Solve personal conflicts
- Join a constructive and mutual binding community
- Make common decisions and understand the necessity of complying with them
- Understand the different academic requirements in regards to the maturity of the specific student.

2. By utilizing certain working methods: Joint responsibility.

The teaching shall respect the ideas and requests of the students. The students shall learn to:

- Formulate personal and common objectives
- Comply with the stipulated objectives in a responsible and constructive manner
- Participate in the planning of the education
- Work goal and project oriented
- Evaluate personal and common activities.

3. By dealing with the topic: Democracy as a system of government.

The students shall acquire knowledge of the opportunities and duties of a citizen in a democratic society. The students shall learn:

- How democracy is constructed and functions in Denmark
- About the rights and duties of democracy
- How to exert personal influence
- How to work constructively in the students' council.

Concrete objectives have been formulated in relation to three different levels: A: Pre-school class; B: third, fourth, fifth and sixth grade; C: seventh, eighth and ninth grade.

The goal setting has contributed to the fact that joint participation of the students has become an integrated part of the school culture. The school estimates that the efforts have meant that the students' democratic debating skills have improved significantly.

Further information:

Objectives for the three levels are printed at the web-site of the school under "Democracy."

Education in Citizenship

Stevnsgade Skole and Sjællandsgade Skole, Nørrebro, Copenhagen

Theme: Democratic values and citizenship

Objective: The students shall learn the basics of citizenship. Inter-cultural competences, the benefits of dialogue, democracy and democratic participation, knowledge of the history of democracy, and right and duties in everyday school life and in the society in general. And develop educational methods of teaching citizenship based on the principle of recognizing

Target group: The teachers and students of the school, hereunder students' council

Perspective: The angle of citizenship is integrated into all courses, and the educational culture and environment of the schools. The starting point is a joint Citizenship project week crossing the UN Day 24 October

Web-sites: www.stv.kk.dk/www.sjg.kk.dk

Contact: Project leader Bo Lauritzen, Stevnsgade Skole, and headmaster Jeanna Jacobsen, Sjællandsgade Skole

For a long period a minor group of students expressed a conflicting attitude towards the school and the local community, and the teachers experienced a tendency of developing a counter culture in contrast with the fundamentals values of citizenship. Consequently, the teachers at Stevnsgade Skole and Sjællandsgade Skole decided to stop this negative development, and have initiated a course (pilot project) in order to strengthen the sense of community, joint responsibility, inclusion, and develop and culture of citizenship.

The ambition of the project is partly to bring the negative atmosphere to an end, reflected by derogatory language, mobbing, and a lack of respect, and partly to hinder more students from leaving the school. The objective is to create a school which, both now and in the future, has accommodation for and represents the great ethnic multiplicity of the local area, focussing on citizenship on the basis of the numerous human resources of the school.

The educational methods of teaching citizenship are based on concrete experiences in relation to the education in topics and procedures of citizenship by means of recognizing.

At the annual Citizenship project week, the students deal with various aspects of citizenship; multiplicity, conflict resolution, human and children's rights, duties, cultural differences, the conditions of minorities, identity etc.

So far the schools have agreed on the following themes for the different age groups. Moreover, the theme citizenship is integrated into all aspects of the annual course of study of the teachers. The objective is that the students get through all themes during their school course, and finally receive a citizenship certificate.

Introductory period of school attendance (pre-school class-third grade)

Rules and duties in the school and in the family
Mobbing and empathy
Tolerance – respecting cultural differences
Respect – ways of communicating and language use

Intermediate level (fourth-seventh grade)

Community (homogeneity and heterogeneity)
Conflict resolution
Cultural understanding
Participation in the democracy
First aid

Final years of compulsory schooling (eighth-tenth grade)

The Constitution
Democratic principles
Values, social norms, and culture
Racism and totalitarianism
Equality, equality of treatment, and non-discrimination
Children's rights
Children's living conditions
Human rights

Further information:

The project runs from 2005-2007. Material is found at the web-sites of the schools.

Socratic Dialogue Groups

Heimdalsgades Overbygningsskole (HGO), Nørrebro, Copenhagen

<i>Theme:</i>	Democratic values
<i>Objective:</i>	Creating a formal setting for debating values
<i>Target group:</i>	Final years of compulsory schooling
<i>Perspective:</i>	The students are divided into groups of 10, who are taught how to philosophize about values
<i>Web-site:</i>	www.hgo.kk.dk
<i>Contact:</i>	Teacher Bo Christensen

Heimdalsgades Overbygningsskole (HGO), at Nørrebro in Copenhagen, in 2002 commenced a triennial pilot project on Socratic Dialogue Groups. The school had just been appointed as a pilot school with emphasise on project organising and joint student responsibility. Thus the teaching is to a large extent organised thematically, focussing on training the students to form personal judgements and improve debating skills. In this context, values and differences in values will to a large extent be in focus. On this background, the school believed that there was a need for creating a formal setting for debating values and attitudes.

The Socratic dialogue group is an ethic way of communicating which is immediately based on personal experiences and conclusion of cultural differences, but which aims at creating an “investigative community,” that goes beyond personal attitudes an cultural differences. The dialogue is based on specific basic rules.

Rules or Philosophical Virtues:

- Think for yourself
- Think openly and existentially
- Think together and in prolongation of each other
- Listen, show confidence and be patient
- Put yourself on the line – reflect on your own assumptions
- Strive for unity, or justify differences
- Help each other to maintain focus.

The participants are not allowed to involve outside authorities in the debate. The students suggest issues to debate, e.g. “What is faith?”, “What is a good friendship?”, “What is a good upbringing?”. The most popular issue is chosen. In the event that the students cannot agree on one issue, a voting is held.

The method of the Socratic dialogue group is in brief as follows:

1. *Issues.* The students choose an issue to focus on through debate and argumentation.
2. *Main example.* Each participant presents a personal example illustrating his or hers perception of the issue. The group agrees on the main example that most perfectly illustrates what the group wants to examine.

3. *Main statement.* The group debates and agrees on a statement regarding the issue on the basis of the chosen example.

4. *Rules.* On the basis of this statement, the group examines the basic assumptions, values and criteria that made the group choose the specific example. During the course the main statement is reformulated.

5. *Principles.* The validity of the statement is examined with regards to both the original main example, and the other initial examples of the participants. Finally, the students debate whether the statement could be phrased more universally and fundamentally.

A facilitator and an observer also participate in order to help the progress.

The students of the multi-cultural school have learned a great deal about their fellow students across different cultures, and have been offered the opportunity for a better understanding of different views and attitudes. Thus they have gained new insights. Moreover, the method gives the students an opportunity to touch some of the complicated issues that youngsters often muse on, but generally are too blunt to talk about. The rules of the method make it legitimate to talk about these issues.

Further information:

Finn Thorbjørn Hansen: *Socratic Citizenship. On Ethics and Democratic Education on Multi-cultural Schools.* The periodical Uddannelse (Education) No. 8, 2002. Published by the Ministry of Education.

Education in Democracy – Strengthening the Students’ Council

Abildgårdskolen, Odense

<i>Theme:</i>	The school as a local democracy
<i>Objective:</i>	The students shall have a joint responsibility for the running of the school
<i>Target group:</i>	Students of the school
<i>Perspective:</i>	Ensuring that the students’ council functions in relation to the school management, class teachers and students
<i>Web-site:</i>	www.abildgaardskolen.odense.dk
<i>Contact:</i>	Teacher Thomas Christensen

Education in democracy can e.g. be realized through the students’ council, because it provides an opportunity to work with democratic procedures in practice. Abildgårdskolen in Odense has in recent years attempted to strengthen the democracy by strengthening the students’ council. Partly because the school wanted to take the objective of teaching democracy seriously, and partly because the students had a request for extra meetings in the students’ council and gain more influence on some of the aspects of the school.

Up to 2003, the contact teacher should convene the council, decide on the agenda, head and take minutes of the meeting. Hereafter, the students' council decided to hand over these tasks to the chairman and vice-chairman. But as the chairman and vice-chairman attended ninth grade, and at the turn of the year no longer had enough time to fulfil their tasks, it was decided that all the members of the students' council should take turns at it. Thus the role of the contact teacher is more that of a coach who can intervene if he considers it necessary.

It has also been important to find issues that will give the students a sense of success, and demonstrate efficiency with regard to themselves, their fellow students and the school. In 2004 the members participated in the organising of a friendly football festival, and in the school year of 2005-2006, the students' council participated in the preparation of the educational environment report of the school. Thus it is not only a matter of teaching students how democracy works, but also a matter of looking after the interests of the students through the students' council. In order to be successful, it is vital that the students' council becomes an integrated part of the democratic work that pervades every aspect of the school culture.

The school respects the students as democratic associates, and already in pre-school class, the school commences to train the students regularly in debating common issues. During the introductory period, it may concern the step-by-step training. Older students debate e.g. the environment of the class. The students shall learn to take the class meeting seriously as the forum where you debate and identify issues concerning the contentment of the specific student and the general environment of class. At the class meeting, the students get formal training in heading a meeting, preparing it, taking minutes, and carrying out the resolutions.

According to the school, having a committed contact teacher and a supporting headmaster is not adequate. Formal and regular training, and preferably in a multi-cultural context, is necessary. Otherwise, informal ways of debating take over.

The course has been evaluated because it formed part of a research and development project by employees of CVU Fyn/Odense Seminarium. In this connection, it is estimated that the students, to a higher extent, listen, speak in turns, and are aware of and notices the conclusions of the debates. Furthermore the students' council has decided that only one of the two persons appointed as chairman and vice-chairman may come from ninth grade, and that this person is up for election in January.

The students' council is always on the programme at the staff meetings, and approximately every third month the students' council is placed on the programme for discussion. A well-functioning students' council requires wide support from all teachers.

Further information:

A working list on the students' council is found at the web-site of the school.

Read also the article by Jens Peter Christiansen and Stefan Ting Graf at www.folkeskolen.dk about the contrast between teachers' and students' perception of the students' council – *Students' Council – A Unique Opportunity*

Class Meeting – An Opportunity for Understanding Democratic Processes

Vestre Skole, Odense

<i>Theme:</i>	The school as a local democracy
<i>Objective:</i>	Creating space for self-management in relation to the common school life of the class
<i>Target group:</i>	Students from sixth grade and further on (possibly already from fourth grade)
<i>Perspective:</i>	Class meetings as a part of the education
<i>Web-site:</i>	www.vestre.odense.dk
<i>Contact:</i>	Edith Hjuler

At Vestre Skole in Odense a teacher has regularly held class meetings with the students since their early ages. The idea came because it was a so-called difficult class. Originally, the class meetings were held with the teacher totally in charge. But in connection with a democracy project, the teacher decided to let the students to a still higher degree conduct their own meetings. This was successfully carried out from sixth grade and further on.

The class meetings were conducted twice a week for the duration of 15 minutes. The meetings have a clear and well-defined form. At each meeting, a chairman, a rapporteur, and a “policeman” are appointed. The rapporteur is primarily responsible for ensuring that the students do not interrupt each other, speak properly to one another, and has also the right to call for a timeout in relation to the process. So far the teacher has carried out this assignment.

The students have the opportunity to bring up issues, and they are all together responsible for reaching a possible resolution. In the class there is a list where the students may submit any issue they wish to discuss, and at the class meeting, the student who has proposed to bring up the issue must give an account of the issue in question. If the class fails to reach a solution, the teacher will inform the students on the circumstances, e.g. when it has to do with the rules of the school.

The method has contributed to creating a superior environment in the class, and most remarkable, the quiet and bilingual students have now become visible and are not afraid to speak up. The efforts have united the class, who wanted to resume the class meetings after a pause, because new problems had occurred. All in all, the number of conflicts has decreased due to the common understanding that has evolved during the public séances in the class.

In relation to debating political topics – in the subject history the students e.g. discussed an eventual lowering of the age limit in connection with political elections – it became apparent that the students had developed a superior understanding of the different views of the political parties.

The attempt to involve the students in the process of conducting the class meetings has been evaluated, because it formed part of a greater research and development project conducted by employees of CVU Fyn/Odense Seminarium.

Further information:

Jens Peter Christiansen and Stefan Ting Graf – *The Class Meeting – Democratic Conflict Resolution and Development of the Community* – at www.folkeskolen.dk, and in the periodical *Unge Pædagoger* No. 4/5, 2005.

A School Free of Mobbing Creating Opportunities

Vejlby Skole, Århus

<i>Theme:</i>	A sound educational environment
<i>Objective:</i>	Improve latitude and contentment at the school – for both students and teachers
<i>Target group:</i>	All students at the school
<i>Perspective:</i>	A common effort aiming at creating a culture that puts an end to mobbing
<i>Web-site:</i>	www.vejlby-skole.dk
<i>Contact:</i>	Sven Hejgaard, sven.hejgaard@skolekom.dk

On the basis of a memorandum from the students' council, Vejlby Skole declared in 1999 that it was a school free of mobbing. Ever since it has been the official politics of the school that it will not tolerate mobbing, that it intervenes when it occurs, and that it develops instruments to carry out the objective. The school has focussed its effort of eradicating mobbing in close relation to other initiatives, e.g. order in class, and development of the inclusive school.

Declaring the school free of mobbing does not mean that it does not exist. But the school consequently intervenes each time it occurs. Due to the fact that the school has prepared a plan regarding prevention, and a plan on how to intervene, the teachers know to handle the problems.

The school has gradually developed a number of instruments to support the vital effort of preventing mobbing:

Social education forms part of the timetable, which means that all teachers are obliged to deal with social education at class meetings. A tool kit to enhance the social competences of the students has been prepared. It is a commented list consisting of different instruments to be used in relation to the efforts of combating mobbing at the introductory period of school attendance, at intermediate level, and at the final years of compulsory schooling.

In each class a set of rules on good conduct is prepared and revised once a year. The school has also implemented friendship classes. Thus a pre-school class has a friendship class at fifth grade, a class in first grade has a friendship class at sixth grade and so on. This ensures that the youngest students always have friend among the older students.

Finally, an Anti Mobbing Council, AMC, has been established consisting of two representatives from each of the classes from sixth grade and further on, and which is responsible for keeping in touch with the youngest classes. The council meets with the teacher who is responsible for the efforts once a month, and eventual problems both in the young and older classes are reported. These students also attend other arrangements outside the school and they are thus challenged in many ways.

The plan which takes effect in the event of mobbing has *four* stages:

- *Firstly*, the CCC teacher (conduct, contact, contentment) commences a conversation with the involved students. The conversation is systematically built up and is very efficient. Most cases end at this level.
- *The next stage* engages the class who agree on how to solve the problem. Only few cases reach this stage.
- *The third stage* engages the parents actively in solving the problem. This takes place at the school office.
- *At fourth stage*, the case is handed over to the social authorities. The last two stages have not yet been utilized.

A CCC teacher is responsible for ensuring that the school maintains its objectives. It has also proved necessary to constantly revise the efforts. The school conducts an evaluation of the extent of mobbing once a year, based on an inquiry form prepared by the National Council for Children. Based on empirical methods, this evaluation can illustrate to which extent the efforts bear fruit.

In 2002 Århus Kommune passed a bill on school politics to ensure all children a safe daily life: It states that *all students shall feel that the school is a place that promotes community and protects them from mobbing and other kinds of violation*. In 2003 Århus Kommune prepared a tool kit to deal with mobbing. It contains different material, among others inspiration to preparation of an action and contingency plan, and inspiration for activities and education.

Further information:

At the web-site of Vejlbj Skole is among others a status review and a description of the tool kit. The tool kit of Århus Kommune is found at www.aarhuskommune.dk.

The School for All Children in the School District

Bakkeskolen, Esbjerg

<i>Theme:</i>	The inclusive school
<i>Objective:</i>	Creating a sound school life based on high educational standards, confidence, transparency, and inclusiveness
<i>Target group:</i>	All employees, students, and parents of the school
<i>Perspective:</i>	The efforts form part of a resolution by the local authorities stipulating that all schools shall make an effort to create the inclusive school
<i>Web-site:</i>	www.esbjergkommune.dk/bakkeskolen
<i>Contact:</i>	Headmaster Henning Grønberg

The efforts of Bakkeskolen in Esbjerg were motivated by a resolution by the local authorities stipulating that all schools shall make an effort to create the inclusive school. The objective is to create an inclusive local school that respects and embraces all students who live in the local area of the school. Thus the school has undergone a process where the concept of education was made wider in relation to students with specific needs, and where the school had to alter the organisation of the teaching to achieve the objective.

Throughout the process of creating the inclusive school, it has been an objective to alter the organisation of the education so that the specific class and student would have fewer teachers. In order to strengthen the academic learning, the school has established year group teams, subject teams and a number of academic centres that provide academic support in relation to the year group team. The year group team is responsible for all basic teaching, including special needs education and Danish as second language as the Law stipulates that Danish as second language is a dimension in all teaching. The teachers shall be ready to meet the students and not the opposite. All resources lie with the year group team that is responsible for organising the teaching in accordance with the specific individual needs of the students – using differentiated teaching and alternating formation of teams.

The academic centres shall assist the year group team with academic resources, and they are also responsible for taking initiatives in relation to educational development and implementation of central projects. Furthermore the school allows the teams to allocate teacher resources across the specific year group teams if necessary for the benefit of an early and preventive effort.

Academic Centres

- All-day school
- Language centre
- Centre for support
- Centre for special classes
- Centre for educational guidance
- Educational service centre
- Special centre with CCC team
- Educational team
- Interdisciplinary team
- Administration
- Service
- Management.

The school puts great efforts into ensuring that the students master Danish, and is constantly focusing on reading. Subject teams for all subjects have been established focussing on subject themes and didactics, and not least evaluation of the teaching. The team sets annual objectives to be evaluated in the course of the year. The evaluation is systematic and in writing and must be followed up.

In order to comply with the objective of inclusive all students in the school district, the school holds every year a briefing session where the management and parent representatives inform the future parents about the school politics. The school experiences that an increasing number of parents from the school district now choose to enrol their children at Bakkeskolen.

Furthermore the efforts are evaluated once a year by the educational team, and the last evaluation was conducted by the means of a questionnaire examination among the teachers. Moreover, the school has experienced that destruction of property at the school has diminished substantially indicating that the students fell a joint responsibility in relation to the school.

Although the school is planning to significantly enhance the educational latitude, it is expected that approximately five to six percent of the students will still require special needs education. But they will not qualify for special needs education before the preventive initiatives have been applied and afterwards considered inadequate. Furthermore the school warns politicians against the inclusiveness trap that arises in connection with insufficient resources and competences.

Further information:

Henning Grønberg: *Challenges in the Class Room*. The periodical Uddannelse No. 7, 2007. Published by the Ministry of Education.

Rules of Good Form

Bryndum Skole, Esbjerg

<i>Theme:</i>	A sound educational environment
<i>Objective:</i>	Ensuring that the development and contentment of the students are in focus
<i>Target group:</i>	All employees, students, and parents of the school
<i>Perspective:</i>	Implementation of a resolution of the local authorities on development of a democratic culture at the municipal schools
<i>Web-site:</i>	www.esbjergkommune.dk/bryndumskole
<i>Contact:</i>	Headmaster Lars Agerskov

In continuation of the school policy of 2005-2008 of the Commune of Esbjerg, which states that the schools within the district of Esbjerg shall develop a democratic culture, Bryndum Skole made the decision to commence the project *rules of good form* starting from the beginning of the school year 2005-06. The project was prepared by a working group in cooperation with the educational council and the council for security and co-operation, and was finally approved by the school board.

The new school year begins with a theme week in which all school classes debate and complete a list of rules to be hung up the class. This list functions as a framework of reference for eventual debates in the future. At the parent-teacher meeting in August and September, the headmaster will present the project for the parents and encourage them to back up the school.

All parents receive a leaflet stipulating the guidelines on how to behave at the school:

At Bryndum Skole:

- We take care of one another, making sure that all students are content and able to develop
- We speak properly to one another, making sure that all students are safe and appreciated
- We arrive in time, are well-prepared, and have brought along the required school materials
- We maintain order and safeguard school materials, buildings etc.
- We pay attention to the vibes we send out, and always wear appropriate clothes.

It is a well-known fact that the school will not tolerate extreme behaviour. For example, deliberately disturbance of the teaching, threatening or violent conduct, obscene and insulting language towards schoolmates or personal, or destruction of property. In case of violation of the rules, the parents will be contacted in order to prepare a concrete plan of action for their child. At the worst, older students may face expulsion from the school.

During the preparation of the project, the school has held a day seminar in order to ensure that the personal is consonant in spite of different levels of tolerance, and to make them aware of the fact that they all hold a common responsibility in relation to the common decisions and tasks, and finally ensure that the personal improves their mutual communication skills with regards to maintaining the common decisions.

Further information:

The leaflet *Rules of Good Form at Bryndum Skole* is found at the web-site of the school.

The Good Class

Valhøj Skole, Rødovre

<i>Theme:</i>	Conflict resolution
<i>Objective:</i>	By means of role plays and forum plays, the students get an opportunity to test themselves in conflict situations. Knowledge of how conflicts arise and develop, will make it easier to handle future conflicts more constructively
<i>Target group:</i>	Sixth grade
<i>Perspective:</i>	Related to the course Danish and the class teacher role
<i>Web-site:</i>	www.rk.dk/valhoj-skole
<i>Contact:</i>	Birthe Dalsgaard

Respect is a key word in the Primary and Lower Secondary School defining the students' request for personal integrity. Thus the class teachers of a sixth grade at Valhøj Skole in Rødovre decided to introduce the conflict resolution seminar "When Is Enough, Enough" in their teaching.

It is essential that the teachers are aware of the social interaction in the class. However the different social roles of the students can be difficult to break down. Thus a conflict resolution seminar is a fine instrument because it provides new perspectives on firmly cemented social patterns among the students. At the seminar, they had to learn to become better to express their feelings, and stand up against insulting remarks or actions that violate their integrity. This is achieved at the seminar by letting the students play someone else.

The seminar has brought about a common frame of reference that the class often turned to in the aftermath of the seminar. It furthermore brought about a number of common rules that mean that the students have become to better to listen, and not to interrupt one another, the class is more keen to keep the class tidy, and issues regarding asocial behaviour are debated at the class meetings.

The students are now also more aware of the role of the teacher, and respect that she is responsible for the academic welfare and the overall social circumstances of the class.

All in all the seminar has provided the class with instruments for maintaining focus on creating a sound school environment, and not the least, the teacher has now a basic frame of reference that she can always refer to.

Further information:

Information on the conflict resolution seminar "When Is Enough Enough" is found at the web-site www.inet-spf.dk.

Formation of Respectful, Helpful and Subtle Ways of Communicating

Hellig Kors Skole, Copenhagen

<i>Theme:</i>	A sound educational environment
<i>Objective:</i>	Heightening the awareness on language
<i>Target group:</i>	All students and teachers at the school
<i>Perspective:</i>	The students shall learn to speak in a respectful, helpful, and subtle manner. This implies that the teachers are highly competent with regards to language and cultural understanding, and that the perspective of language forms an integrated part of all teaching
<i>Web-site:</i>	www.hks.kk.dk
<i>Contact:</i>	Headmaster Klaus Mygind

In recent years the language of students has changed. It has become more rough, and students use expressions that are very insulting. Consequently, Hellig Kors Skole at Nørrebro in Copenhagen has decided to combat this development.

The school experienced more and more that conflicts among the students were related to international conflicts, and that an increasingly number of bilingual students expressed their anger with regards to asocial behaviour and discriminating remarks etc. Thus it is vital that the school creates confidence and dialogue among the students, and that the teachers relate to international issues, and contribute to cope with international issues.

Students are often foul-mouthed in connection with aggravating conflicts, which often expresses helplessness. Thus the teacher shall step in and make use of e.g. conflict resolution methods, and de-escalating language (non-violent communication). Accordingly the school has prepared a plan of action focussing on developing respectful, helpful and subtle ways of communicating.

Hellig Kors Skole wishes to create an environment based on respectful, helpful and subtle ways of communicating:

- Without threats
- Without racist tendencies
- With sexist tendencies
- Without stigmatising language.

The objectives are:

- The students shall learn to speak in a respectful, helpful, and subtle manner
- The teachers are aware of and responsible for integrating the perspective of language in all teaching
- The teachers are highly competent with regards to language and cultural understanding.

The school has prepared a working document named *Language Usage at Hellig Kors Skole*, which describes the effort of the school in relation to developing respectful, helpful and subtle ways of communicating.

The document was prepared by the management of the school on the basis of debates among the teachers at staff seminars, and later approved by the educational committee and the school board in March 2005. Furthermore the content of the document has been debated in the school classes and in the students' council.

The efforts of the school will be evaluated internally in the autumn of 2006.

Further information:

The working document *Language Usage at Hellig Kors Skole* is found at the web-site of the school.

Democracy, Equality and Tolerance

Søholtskolen, Brøndby Strand

<i>Theme:</i>	Handling of extremist views/citizenship
<i>Objective:</i>	Strengthening the students' awareness of democracy, equality, tolerance and intellectual freedom, and set up a plan of action for handling extremist tendencies
<i>Target group:</i>	Employees, students and parents
<i>Perspective:</i>	Setting up a plan of action with regards to emergency situations, and initiative an influential school process that will eliminate the need for implementing the plan of action
<i>Web-site:</i>	www.soholtskolen.dk
<i>Contact:</i>	Headmaster Palle Kristensen and CCC teacher Thomas Michaelsen

Søholtskolen in Brøndby Strand experienced that a number of Muslim students began to show a problematic behaviour. They had a significant lack of respect towards parents and teachers, began to sabotage the teaching, and had a very aggressive behaviour. They paid much attention to how other Muslims were dressed, whether they observed the Ramadan, and those families, who did not behave correctly, could potentially receive threatening letters. The CCC teacher (conduct, contact, contentment) received telephone calls with complaint about something specific teachers had said in class. Parents-teacher meetings could be invaded by persons who had no relations to the students. At the same time the school learned that Hizb-ut-Tahrir was recruiting in the area. Consequently, the school decided to initiate a multi-faceted strategy in order to combat extremist views.

The school immediately commenced a coordinated effort. The teachers began to study the material of Hizb-ut-Tahrir that circulated at the school, and talked about it internally with the perspective of being capable to argue against it in class. The school convened meetings with the parents to brief them about what took place in the local area. Furthermore the school began to cooperate with the ethnic council, local police authorities, and housing associations in the area. In the preliminary phase a number of initiatives were implemented in order to deal with the problems to the extent they would occur in the future.

The initiatives comprised:

1. Systematic briefing of the parents by arranging meetings for the parents and sending out letters.
2. Preparation of a document stating the fundamental values of the school, hereunder the views of the school in relation to a substantial number of practical questions.

3. Maintaining focus on the problem.
4. Contacting the families whose children the school estimates are in the corner.

Søholtskolen has prepared a plan of action to combat extremist behaviour:

1. The CCC teacher steps in. He observes the class and henceforth talks with the involved students.
2. The school management makes contact with the parents. If the school considers that the parents are cooperative, the student will remain under the supervision of the CCC teacher.

On the basis of a resolution by the school board, the school chose to arrange an educational a project week on respect for all classes in seventh grade with the intent of debating democracy, equality, tolerance, and intellectual freedom. After a common start where the teachers explained the concept of democracy and their perception of the concept of respect, the students worked in various workshops with painting, decoration, film, newspapers and fair play. The school also invited the parents to join the activities during the week.

All in all, the course has contributed to establish a common standpoint at the school, and the above-mentioned problems have diminished. Moreover, the plan of action has made teachers more confident in relation to eventual problems in the future.

Further information:

The plan of action with regards to extremist behaviour is found at the web-site of the school under "Information"/"Handleplaner."

Contribution



Palle Kristensen



Henning Grønberg

Democracy and Integration in the School

By Palle Kristensen, headmaster at Søholtskolen in Brøndby Strand, and Henning Grønberg, headmaster at Bakkeskolen in Esbjerg.

Søholtskolen in Brøndby Strand has 500 students of whom 82 percent are bilingual. Bakkeskolen in Esbjerg has 580 students of whom 67 percent are bilingual. Many of the students come from countries where democracy has never existed, and thus a number of fundamental values we consider natural are under pressure in the melting pot consisting of many different cultures and religions.

We have considered how one best institutes the education in the Primary and Lower Secondary School in order to ensure that the students will understand and observe the ways of democracy.

In the Primary and Lower Secondary School, the term “education in democracy” is rarely used. However, we believe that students shall learn how democracy works via the teaching and the general practices of the school. It is a complex matter, and there are no simple solutions.

The management is responsible for preparing the vision of the school and formulating its fundamental values in collaboration with the school board and teachers. Thus the school ensures that the efforts of all parties rest on a firm foundation, and that they all have the same objectives. Furthermore it is important that all parties have a common understanding of what high-class education means. We are focussing on the academic, personal and social competences of the students, which mean that the teachers and the management shall upgrade their expertise hereon, so that they are competent to implement the objectives of the inclusive school.

The narrative aspect is similarly important. Each school projects a story, and the management must contribute to the evolvement of the story. Our school tells a story of social commitment, caring for the weak, and a strong wish for social mobility. “We Can Do It” is our motto, and this has a self-increasing effect.

Another central aspect is a positive, trustful, and respectful collaboration between the various institutions – parents, the school, and leisure time facilities. A sound many-sided collaboration between these will prevent numerous misunderstandings, and aims at establishing a smooth transition from day-care-centre to Primary and Lower Secondary School/leisure time facilities.

When the students start in the Primary and Lower Secondary School, it is important that the school presents the fundamental values and the daily routines of the school, so that both students and parents understand the purposes of the daily procedures and routines of the school. Furthermore, the school shall also emphasise the rights and duties of all students.

An early effort is a key slogan at our school. We make a huge effort to elucidate the fundamental social norms, and we assume that this is the reason why we rarely spend money on repairing damages property. In order to establish the best possible teaching at multi-cultural schools, it is essential that consensus exists regarding the basic code of conduct. In this context the efforts of the school management have vital importance.

Proper order in class is another vital importance aspect with regards to establishing the best possible teaching. In some cases an early effort regarding social norms proves to be inadequate. Hence external authorities can contribute to originate personal responsibility among the students via social education. In the event of asocial conduct, an instant and consequent intervention is crucial, and here the management plays an important role.

The Inclusive School

Students who have a different cultural and social background are often considered a liability instead of a resource, which may seem illogical in these global times. Thus we need to introduce educational processes that benefit from the students’ knowledge and understanding of different cultures and religions, which will improve the general teaching of all students, and boost the self-assurance of the bilingual students. Preparing general objectives and carrying out evaluations are essential instruments with regards to didactic considerations, and the trend in these years goes towards an increased focus on these instruments that are becoming an integrated part of the school culture. This is to the benefit of all students, and will most likely

especially be to the benefit of the bilingual students. At multicultural school, it is essential that Danish as second language is an integrated dimension in all courses, which requires supplementary training of social educators, teachers, and management.

It is important to avoid that the demands regarding stage and final objectives of the bilingual students are lowered, which happen at some educational institutions. The specific school is responsible for ensuring the best possible education, and in the event that the expectations are lowered, it can have a negative prophetic effect in accordance with the Rosenthal effect, and thus make it impossible to create equal opportunities and break down the social legacy.

An inclusive educational practice is a must. Recognition has a positive effect on all people, and social educators, teachers, and leaders are responsible for looking after the specific student. The task of the teachers is to accentuate their strong sides and not their insufficiencies.

Unacceptable Conduct

Bakkeskolen often experiences cultural conflicts such as completely unacceptable conduct by parents and specific students towards our female teachers. In these cases, the management needs to intervene immediately and make it clear that the school will not tolerate a violation of equality of status and intolerant conduct.

Most recently we have experienced tendencies of social control. Bilingual parents, who have accepted that all their children at school attend Christianity, e.g. suddenly take their children out of the course, because a more fundamental Islamic priest has been inaugurated in the district, even though their older children have attended the course during their entire school life. We also experience that Muslim students use a very brusque tone towards other Muslims. "You are not a real Muslim" is a much said expression, and this is an unmistakable example on the disregard for Danish culture and Danish values. In these cases, it is important that the teachers and management step in immediately and make it clear that such conduct will not be accepted in the school.

Søholtskolen has experienced numerous dramatic incidents. After September 11, 2001, and the war in Iraq, a polarisation between Muslims and Christians has arisen. The radical Islamism has made progress, and there are many quarters where the majority of inhabitants are Ethnic Danes in the area. This creates a foundation for extremist views and an eventual rejection of the society and Western/Danish values, which to a great extent complicates the integration process.

The school has experienced that a number of students took on a most disturbing changed conduct. They began to guide/pressure/threaten their Muslim classmates to show "proper Muslim conduct," and "praise Islam." Moreover prayer caps were used to demonstrate the right attitude and send the right signals. Extremist fundamentalist views were proclaimed, provocations against teachers in and outside the class room were made, and numerous students showed in several cases a rigid, reserved, disrespectful, and impertinent attitude conduct towards their teachers. The above-mentioned conduct has been new to us at the school, and when we ask the students where they get their ideas and views from, they point e.g. to different places in the local housing association.

We have been very concerned, and have made the decision to brief the parents on the problems we become aware of. We are responsible for briefing all involved parties, and have introduced numerous instruments in an attempt to solve the above-mentioned problems.

We have held a *week on respect* where we debated democracy, equality, tolerance, and intellectual freedom, and the general fundamental values of which the Danish Primary and Lower Secondary School is based on in accordance with the Primary and Lower Secondary School Act. Furthermore we have put down in writing the fundamental values of Søholtskolen, and added the paper to the school plan. We have told about our experiences and suspicion of recruitment of students by religious fundamentalists to the local community and to the local authorities. All classes have held obligatory teacher-parent meetings to inform about the problems. We have cooperated with the school board, the ethnical council, the local police, and the housing associations. Furthermore we try to keep our eyes and ears open in relation to the students in order to stop the development of a fundamentalist wave.

We also encourage the parents to keep an eye on their children, especially the older boys. Where do they spend their leisure time?, and with whom do they associate with? The parents shall be open for dialogue with their children, and pay attention to what they say and generally grapple with in their daily life.

Children are easily influenced by their classmates, often to an extent that can frighten adults. We must stand shoulder by shoulder in the attempt to stop the spreading of fundamentalist thoughts. If we fail to do so, we may in a few years experience that deep-rooted gaps have arisen in the local area between youngsters and their parents, between the sexes, and between different ethnical groups.

Parents hold the overall responsibility for the children. They know them the best, and have the greatest opportunity to push them in the right direction. Take the negative development seriously both right now – and in the future.

Vocational Training

The joint student responsibility and the opportunity to influence the daily school life constitute another important democratic element in vocational training.

Like the Primary and Lower Secondary School, and upper-secondary education, vocational training shall develop the students' academic, social, and democratic competences so that the students become active citizens.

Objects Clause on Democracy

The Vocational Training Act stipulates that *the education shall contribute to develop the students' interest in the democracy and their ability to participate actively in a democratic society.* The main executive order for the course of education furthermore stipulates that the education shall contribute to develop the students' ability to cooperate, communicate, and their ability to form personal judgments. Later on the objects clause stipulates that *the education shall promote global open-mindedness.*

The executive order on social and health care training programmes e.g. stipulates that *the education shall contribute to develop the students' appreciation of having a sound educational and social environment, and their ability to participate in a democratic society* (Executive Order on Social and Health Care Training Programmes).

The basic courses of vocational training, for example foreign languages, social studies and psychology, contain democratic elements, or elements that are relevant as regards to communication and cooperation. The course description for social studies e.g. stipulates that *the course shall contribute to develop the students' democratic and cultural education from a social point of view.*

Social Studies in Vocational Training

Democracy is the main theme of social studies. The objective of the teaching is to strengthen the students' knowledge of the structure of society, democracy, economics, and decision processes in a democracy. The students shall acquire knowledge on how the society functions, the political parties, and formal democratic processes etc. The objective is to stimulate their interest in social problems and social processes, ability to debate potential solutions hereon, and inspire the students to participate actively in the society and the democratic processes. In order to participate actively in democratic processes, the students shall learn to argue in favour of their viewpoints, and understand and evaluate the premises of other viewpoints. These basic skills are fundamental competences in a democratic society.

The joint student responsibility and the opportunity to influence the daily school life constitute another important democratic element in vocational training. The students are i.e. involved in the organising of the teaching. They have a great influence in relation to choosing the specific content of the education in accordance with the personal education plan of the student, and optional teaching, optional subjects, and optional special subjects form part of the education. The students also play a part in relation to the quality assurance of the education, which is being implemented through various evaluations, e.g. testing of contentment.

The vocational training centres shall establish students' councils. But the conditions for student participation vary depending on the education. The conditions at technical schools can e.g. be difficult in relation to council work if the students only attend school in shorter periods in between longer trainee services. All vocational training centres have a students' council, but some schools have difficulties recruiting new members. A fulltime job leaves little time for participating in council work.

The business colleges and higher technical examination have other conditions because the education lasts from one to three years without breaks.

Social and health care training centres focus on personal competence, i.e. social competence and learning and development competence. The course description e.g. stipulates that *the students among others shall acquire an understanding of their own cultural background in order to be able to establish a respectful cooperation with others in consideration of social and cultural differences*. The basic subject social studies, the area subjects social and health subjects, and cultural and health subjects all contain elements that promote the understanding of democracy, because the students among others shall acquire knowledge of the significance of various living conditions, cultural backgrounds, outlook on life, and religious beliefs of people in order to respect any individual and his or hers personal background.

The examples of the next chapter all describe various efforts of different vocational schools in relation to democracy. The examples deal with joint student participation, educational courses that directly deal with the concept of democracy, or employment of cultural differences in the teaching.

Several examples describe various centres that have implemented a number of concrete initiatives in order to comply with the overall objectives regarding democracy and joint student responsibility and the creation of a democratic school culture. E.g. a social and health care school that focuses especially on developing social competences, and has the objective that *the students shall acquire an understanding of their own cultural background in order to be able to establish a respectful cooperation with others in consideration of social and cultural differences*. The chapter is concluded by a contribution by Eva Hofman-Bang, director of CPH West – a vocational training centre in West Copenhagen. The contribution deals with value based management in relation to democratic education, cultural encounters, and disciplinary problems.

Rules and Course Description

Vocational Training

- The Vocational Training Act, § 1, stipulates that *the education shall contribute to develop the students' interest in the society and ability to participate actively in a democratic society*.
- The Executive Order on Students' Councils at Vocational Centres stipulates that students' councils are statutory.

- The Main Executive Order on Vocational Training, § 5, stipulates that *the centres shall establish procedures for evaluation and quality development. The employees and the students of the centre, and the local educational council shall cooperate on the evaluation.*
- The joint students influence on the teaching is stipulated in the Main Executive Order, § 49. *The centre shall involve the students in the organising of the teaching, hereunder choosing the specific content of the education in accordance with the personal education plan of the individual students.*
- The vocational training centres shall stipulate rules for the students. The centres are responsible for establishing rules of proper conduct, and stipulating measures in the event that the rules are violated. See § 36 of the Main Executive Order.
- The Executive Order on Basic Subjects in Vocational Training describes among others the content of the basic courses, social studies, psychology and languages, and general education, communication and cooperation.
- See also *Social Studies in Vocational Training – Council and Advice: pub.uvm.dk/2006/eudsamfund*. Here you will find inspiration on how to deal with various democratic issues in the teaching.

Social and Health Care Training Programmes

- The Executive Order on General Social and Health Care Training Programmes, § 1, stipulates that the education among others shall contribute to develop *the students' appreciation of having a sound educational and social environment, and develop the students' ability to participate actively in a democratic society.*
- In accordance with the Executive Order on General Social and Health Care Training Programmes, the students are entitled to form a students' council, which the school management is obliged to inform them about.
- The education focuses on personal competence, i.e. social competence and learning and development competence. The course description e.g. stipulates that *the students. The students shall acquire an understanding of their own cultural background in order to be able to establish a respectful cooperation with others in consideration of social and cultural differences.* (The Executive Order on General Social and Health Care Training Programmes, § 11).
- In relation to the basic subjects social studies, the area subjects social and health subjects, and cultural and health subjects, the Executive Order stipulates that the students *shall acquire knowledge of the significance of various living conditions, cultural backgrounds, outlook on life, and religious beliefs of people in order to respect any individual and his or hers personal background.*

Examples

Process Writing on Democracy

Hillerød Handelsskole – Lyngby Uddannelsescenter

<i>Theme:</i>	Teaching democracy and citizenship
<i>Objective:</i>	The students are trained in process writing, and acquire an increased personal awareness of the concept of democracy as a basis for participating in democratic processes in and outside the school
<i>Target group:</i>	Students who attend the basic programme at commercial colleges
<i>Perspective:</i>	The educational course is a permanent part of the subject Danish, and is based on a pilot and development programme
<i>Web-site:</i>	www.knord.dk
<i>Contact:</i>	Karina Kipp, kki@lyngby.nu

In 1997 Lyngby Uddannelsescenter was contacted by the Teachers Training College for Vocational Training of Denmark and asked to participate in a pilot and development project on democracy in the school. A number of teachers joined the development project, and afterwards democracy was put on the agenda at the school in various ways. The course of process writing on democracy, which is a permanent part of the education, is a direct result of the project. The course is divided into five faces: brainstorm, contemplation, outline, draft, finishing touch. Finally, the students hand in an individual written discussion paper on democracy.

Initially the students receive material on the content of the course and the method of process writing. The teachers also go over the method by using an overhead, and the students read about the method in their textbook. Hereafter the students choose a partner to discuss their results with in between the five stages. The college has allocated significant time to discuss the results and problems of the students in between the five stages.

It has proved significant to ensure that all students initially have knowledge of the concept of democracy. Consequently, the initial brainstorm is conducted twice. The students conduct a brainstorm individually and hereafter discuss the result with their partner. The teachers must be aware that the students have different reactions. Some students are easy to activate, others find it more difficult to find entry words and need help from the teacher who e.g. can provoke them mildly by mentioning an eventual removal of the travelling allowance or the Danish Education Support. Military service is e.g. a hot issue among the boys. In the next phase, the students choose a couple of entry words to write about, and hereafter, they carry on the process of preparing a discussion paper on democracy.

The teacher and the class may decide to carry out the evaluation of the discussion papers in stages. Firstly, the partner evaluates, secondly, the teachers comment on the paper without conferring with the partner, and finally, the papers are discussed all together. This form of evaluation provides an opportunity for improving the students' understanding of the criteria for the evaluation of their written papers.

In the upstart phase teachers often hear students proclaim e.g. that "The word democracy has no meaning to me," and "I think politics is very boring." But experience shows that these students later on often become very committed – especially when the process takes on a personal perspective. Thus the process writing course deals with specific processes regarding joint influence in relation to the content of the teaching, study trips etc. The course teaches the students to bring up social matters, take on personal

responsibility, and moreover contributes to increase the students' awareness of the opportunities for obtaining democratic influence.

Further information:

The course is described in the publication *Democracy in Teaching and School – examples from Vocational Centres* at <http://pub.uvm.dk/2001/dus/>

Democracy and Student Participation as a Central Part of the Fundamental Values of the School

Social- og Sundhedsskolen, Silkeborg

<i>Theme:</i>	The centre as a local democracy
<i>Objective:</i>	Developing the democratic sense of the students in a school based on democracy, openness, individual participation and respect for diversity
<i>Target group:</i>	Employees and students of the school
<i>Perspective:</i>	The fundamental values of the school and the democratic processes of the school are based on a long lasting focus on democracy and student participation
<i>Web-site:</i>	www.sosusilkeborg.dk
<i>Contact:</i>	Headmaster Inge Bertelsen

In 2003 Social- og Sundhedsskolen in Silkeborg prepared a document on fundamental values on the basis of meetings and day projects among the employees, and discussions in the students' council. Thus the fundamental values reflect the objective of providing employees and students with democratic influence.

The basic values are based on the fundamental values of the social and health care sector, and the pedagogic sector of the labour market, and it relates to all students, teachers, administrative workers, service workers, and the management. The objective of the education is to teach students to conduct social welfare work, and teach them how to interact socially in a mutually binding community. Thus the centre focuses on teaching democracy and openness towards others, and the centre itself thus makes a great effort to ensure that the educational environment is pervaded by a democratic spirit allowing student participation and room for diversity.

The democratic aspect is primarily put into practice in the daily teaching. The education is based on self-determination of the teaching teams, who agree on the overall content of the education in cooperation with the classes, and the centre attaches great importance to ensuring that the students have significant influence on their personal educational programme, e.g. through conversations and agreements with the teachers.

In relation to optional subjects, efforts are made to ensure that the students have a significant influence on both the planning and the implementation. Already in the introductory course, the students are briefed on the opportunities of having influence on:

- The amount of optional subjects
- The specific content of the optional subject
- The implementation of the optional subject.

A council for optional subjects is set up with representatives from each contact teacher group and each class who, in cooperation with the teacher, prepares a list of optional subjects: topics, content, implementation.

The written and oral evaluations constitute another important element with regards to student participation. The students are among others asked whether they are content with the opportunities for having personal influence on the education, and this feedback is used in connection with the development of the education.

Further information:

The fundamental values of the centre are described at the web-site of the centre. The publication *Optional Subjects in Pedagogical Training and Social and Health Care Training – different opportunities and student participation* (2002), prepared by teachers of the centre, is found at:

www.emu.dk/eud/doc/pub/valgfagipguogsosu/valgfagipguogsosu/doc.

Strengthened Student Participation

Horsens Handelsskole

<i>Theme:</i>	The college as a local democracy
<i>Objective:</i>	Strengthening the student democracy of the centre by ensuring that the students obtain a greater influence on centre decisions, and ensuring that the students' council and the team council play a significant role
<i>Target group:</i>	All students
<i>Perspective:</i>	A quality development of the college with a better student feedback
<i>Web-site:</i>	www.horsenshs.dk
<i>Contact:</i>	Niels Olsen, contact teacher of the students' council, no@horhs.dk

In 2004 Horsens Handelsskole decided to bring a “well-functioning student democracy” into focus in the school document on fundamental values. Concurrently a group had examined the opportunities for creating a more active student democracy. The feedback of the student representatives had previously been inadequate, and these proceedings resulted among others in altered structures in relation to the procedures of the students' council, the establishment of a contact council, and increased resources to create student democracy.

The college has now established two students' councils – one for the upper secondary education, and one for the vocational training. Furthermore the college has established team councils covering two or three classes with two representatives from each class. One of the representatives in the team council shall also be the member of the students' council to ensure overlapping between the two councils. Furthermore the college has chosen to finance the participation of the students' council in regional and national student associations.

A contact council, consisting of representatives of the teachers, management, and the students' council, meet at least once a month. Moreover the team councils meet at least once a month with the team teachers to debate the educational course.

The students are represented in the school board, and numerous other councils dealing with among others the canteen, narcotics policies, web-site, evaluation etc. Implementation of project days on the basis of student requests is an example of student participation. The topics could e.g. be crises management, grief, narcotics etc.

There are four student representatives in the web-site council, and at the web-site of the centre, you will find the statutes of the student councils, record of the meetings of the students councils and the contact council etc.

At the end of the first year (2004-2005) with the new structure, the college carried out a quality measurement by asking the representatives of the student councils. And in the spring of 2006, the college carried a similar quality measurement by asking all students. The college is planning to put the results out on the internet.

The college estimates that the students' councils are now taken more seriously, and that the students have gained greater influence in the centre board.

Intercultural Understanding in the Basic Commercial Programme

Haderslev Handelsskole

<i>Theme:</i>	The inclusive college
<i>Objective:</i>	Strengthening the mutual cultural understanding via a specific educational basic commercial programme course
<i>Target group:</i>	Students in the basic commercial programme
<i>Perspective:</i>	Interdisciplinary compulsory evaluation project on internationalization
<i>Web-site:</i>	www.hhs.dk
<i>Contact:</i>	Student counsellor Ellen Øgendahl

Many educational institutions, among others the commercial colleges, experience in these years a substantial increase in applications from ethnical youngsters. This development constitutes an excellent occasion for developing educational courses that will strengthen the cultural and intercultural understanding. On the basis of a process of development among the teachers, Haderslev Handelsskole has thus chosen to introduce an educational project on internationalization.

On the basis of a research and development project in collaboration with Fredericia/Middelfart Handelsskole and DEL-Syd, the college has during the last five to six years implemented an educational project on internationalization as a permanent part of the curriculum for first-year students. The project is a interdisciplinary course involving a number of different subjects.

During the educational course, the students shall reflect on and debate cultural differences on the basis of the individual with the intent of creating a greater understanding of and respect for these differences.

The perspective of the project is constituted by the transition between the personal, national, and international aspect. Firstly, the students shall present a picture of themselves through words and illustrations based on a number of questions about their family background, life story, and future expectations. Secondly, the students shall present a picture of Denmark based on 12 features: a painting, an item etc. Thirdly, the students shall present a similar picture of an English-speaking country.

The commercial college estimates that each individual student is happy to introduce her- or himself by means of various creative expressions – and by doing so, also to introduce one another to each other in order for the student to get to know another student's personal background better. Furthermore, experience shows that it has a very eye opening effect on the students when they have to put their own personal and local "picture"/experience into perspective in discussions on international relations.

Further information:

The educational project and the initial project are described in the publication *Intercultural Understanding and Multicultural Educational Environment* at: <http://fou.emu.dk>.

Focus on Knowledge, Tolerance and Respect

CPH WEST – Uddannelsescenter København Vest, Ishøj

<i>Theme:</i>	The inclusive college and democracy
<i>Objective:</i>	A positive utilization of the bilingual students, and elaboration of a clear school policy
<i>Target group:</i>	All students and employees at the college
<i>Perspective:</i>	By establishing a policy on bilingual students and a bilingual committee, the college is attempting to avoid marginalisation of the bilingual students, and furthermore provides guidelines regarding various cultural issues (e.g. Muslim festivities) in order to prevent conflicts
<i>Web-site:</i>	www.hsit.dk
<i>Contact:</i>	Michael Jensen (basic commercial programme) and Trine Ladekarl (higher commercial programme)

In 1999 students, teachers, administrative personnel, and management of the basic commercial programme and higher commercial examination of the college in Ishøj formulated a policy regarding bilingual students. Concurrently, a bilingual committee was set up. The objective is to benefit positively with regards to the numerous different nationalities, and demonstrate a clear school policy.

The bilingual committee consists of representatives of the teachers, students, administration, and management of the day school. The committee has established various activities to promote the mutual understanding between the various nationalities and prevent conflicts. Each year the bilingual committee arranges a cultural day with dancing, music, good food, and academic presentations and debates focussing on various nationalities and religions, and several older brothers and sisters and parents of the bilingual students have positively contributed to this annual event.

Furthermore the college focuses on democracy in the teaching, and in connection with project days, for example when third-year students in the fall of 2005 debated terror etc. with journalist Jens Nauntofte. During the debate both the UN, Bosnia, the USA, and Iraq were debated.

Extract from the policy for bilingual students at the school in Ishøj:

In order to promote respect and tolerance between the various nationalities at the school, the educational environment and the teaching shall be organised so that it promote democracy, respect, and understanding of different cultures. Moreover common events shall be arranged having cultural understanding as the main theme.

In order to ensure that the academic career of the bilingual students takes a favourable course, the school invites their parents and interpreters before the academic year to inform them on relevant issues. Moreover the college offers to brief the parents on the educational opportunities at the end of a youth education.

The school shall also make an effort to employ teachers who have a different cultural background than Danish.

The college has chosen not to establish praying facilities, but students are allowed to retire discreetly to say prayers in an empty room.

The vocational college also participates in development projects on integration, tolerance, extra tuition, and drop-outs among the bilingual students, among others in collaboration with Ishøj Amtsgymnasium and higher commercial examination at TeSe. Some of these projects also involve the Danish students as well. Moreover the project days and seminars of the teachers often put focus on e.g. democratic education, religion, and Danish and bilingual students.

Student democracy, student participation, contemplation, and engagement constitute a considerable part of the basic values of the college. This is e.g. reflected in connection with the publication of the student evaluations at the morning assembly, and the subsequent debates in the classes and in the students' council, or when the Danish and bilingual students all together honour the football team of the college.



Accomodation and Attention

Center for Erhverv og Uddannelse Storstrøm (CEUS)

<i>Theme:</i>	Educational environment and the inclusive college
<i>Objective:</i>	The college shall keep a close and attentive eye on all students in order to ensure that their academic career takes a favourable course
<i>Target group:</i>	Student at technical colleges, and students in the basic commercial programme
<i>Perspective:</i>	The efforts of the college comprise organisation, physical conditions, and supplementary training
<i>Web-site:</i>	www.ceus.dk
<i>Contact:</i>	Claus Westerholt, clw@ceus.dk

Center for Erhverv og Uddannelse Storstrøm (CEUS) has for a number of years focussed on creating a sound educational environment ensuring that the greatest possible number of the college students complete the basic programme and the advanced level programme. This comprises students who for some reason require special attention, and the college try to realize the objectives by focussing on the organisation and physical conditions of the college, and the supplementary training of the employees.

The decentralized college is organised so that the premises of the specific educational programmes are concentrated in the same area. The staff room is moreover centrally placed, so teachers and students can easily get in touch. (200-300 in each college section)

The increased attention of the staff will enhance the students' self-esteem. The efforts comprise basic measures – such as contacting students who hang out in the corridors during classes. The college has also established a solid contact-teacher-network to strengthen the daily contact between teachers and students. Both measures provide fine opportunities for getting in touch with students, who may fail to complete the education due to a significant absenteeism rate (after 30 hours of absence, the contact teacher is obliged to carry out a social talk with the student).

The physical closeness and the contact teacher arrangement also provide a fine opportunity for immediate intervention in connection with eventual conflicts or mobbing. The college attaches much significance to precise rules and immediate response.

The college has also taken initiatives in relation to supplementary training. The management has been on a study tour dealing with the aspects of student inclusiveness, and a staff member has taken a master degree in conflict resolution. In some educational sections, the teachers have attended a seminar on conflict behaviour and resolution. Finally, in the spring 2006, all EDU-teachers (110) participated in a day seminar where the non-academic aspects of the teacher role were debated.

The results are positive. The premises are in a fine state, although the college is 30 years old, and there have been numerous positive reactions from students and bosses.

Contribution



Eva Hofman-Bang

Value Based Management

By rector Eva Hofman-Bang, CPH WEST – Uddannelsescenter København Vest

In the 90s, just after I was began my career at CPH WEST, a group of young well-dressed, and very polite young men of Arabic origin, who just wanted to have a word with our Muslim students, turned up at the college. As a democrat by conviction, I immediately engaged myself in a serious debate with these men on religion and education, religion and the society, and religion in general, but soon discovered that my words fell on deaf ears. Our views were incompatible, and a sound democratic conversation was not possible. Not that you always have to reach some kind of consensus, but some times you just have to come to terms with the fact that a democratic conversation is based on mutual respect.

I really made an honest attempt to explain that the college is responsible for students, who are under the age of 18, and that we cannot accept any kind of political or religious agitation. On the other hand, we make a great effort to present different cultures and views in the teaching. The college shall – in collaboration with the students – decide on the educational plan. Not external individuals.

As a democratic dialogue was impossible, I asked the young men to leave the college, which offended them severely. But that is how my little story ended, and this approach still stands. When the college has a call from political or religious agitators, or both at the same time, we simply ask them to leave any eventual information at our administrative office.

This has been our policy for many years, and has proved to work very well in practice.

The school is based on mutual respect and tolerance

The technical and vocational school has 2,500 students with a very diverse social, cultural and ethnic background. Consequently, the management shall – to a higher extent than other schools – consider what measures to take to ensure the democratic school. Thus the school has a huge responsibility with regards to the society, parents, students, and employees. Not least the employees face significant challenges, which the management shall be aware of. A couple of years ago, the school experienced that a significant number of external youngsters caused trouble at the school, and in some cases committed acts of violence. Moreover some students had a very aggressive and threatening behaviour towards especially the female teachers. More than once, an employee has received psychological help due to intimidating threats. It was evident that an immediate response was required.

A meeting with the Ministry of Education made it clear to me that we should not rely on them for assistance. They sympathized with our problems, but after all, we were the ones who had the practical experience. They sent us a consultant of “the flying squad” of that time. He was not able to solve the problems, but it served as a catalyst for the process we initiated afterwards.

Firstly, I held a meeting with the Chief Constable, and we established collaboration with the local school-police consultants. Secondly, we held numerous meetings with the education authorities, and the social services of the surrounding municipalities. Furthermore we held numerous meetings at the school focussing on the fundamental values of the school, and the required measures to combat the negative development. Who are we, what are our objectives, what shall we do, in the event that... These questions were debated. The practical realities were often in focus, but in order to deal with these specific realities properly, a clear set of fundamental values and rules are required.

The initial result was a so-called “handbook on procedures,” stipulating the code of conduct in relation to specific situations, and these rules were actually obeyed.

Given the past and present realities of the school, it is absolutely vital that the management is active, dynamic, and visible. The employees must feel the presence of a strong management that will always assist them, and is not afraid to step in and take the right decisions when it is required. Basically, this stipulates that the code of conduct is transparent, and we had to add to the school rules that “the school is based on mutual respect and tolerance. Bullying, threatening, noisy, or aggressive conduct shall not be accepted”. In practice such conduct gives rise to expulsion, which the students are aware of.

It is equally important that the management reflects on the educational role of employees in the school. What are our objectives? What kind of school do we want to create in collaboration with students and employees? This requires numerous meetings and much debate because all involved parties must stand behind the common concept.

Democratic Education

Our school aims at providing a liberal education focussing on democracy, broad-mindedness, openness, respect, and tolerance. Thus democracy and social matters shall be an integrated part of the teaching, which comes naturally at a technical and vocational school where all students e.g. attend social studies. However other initiatives are required. The school makes a great effort to ensure a fruitful debate at the school on cultural aspects and politics via councils and other schools events. In particular the school always focuses on general elections and EU elections, which are debated in classes and in connection with specific

debating events, where the school invites either local youth politicians or local senior politicians of the parliaments in Denmark or the EU to debate political issues with the students. These events are always a great success. Furthermore the school each year sends off a couple of classes to the so-called youth parliament in Strassbourg to test the linguistic, academic, and political competences of the students in an EU context.

It is a great challenge for a young student to debate political issues in front of more than hundreds of young students from other EU countries – moreover it provides an excellent opportunity to learn how to do well in an international context. Furthermore lectures are continuously held at the school on political, economic, commercial, and cultural issues.

The students' council plays an important role in relation to the above-mentioned, and it is most important that it functions well each year. Thus the school is prepared to assist in keeping the council on the right track, and support the arrangements initiated by the students' council the best we can. Partly because student initiatives and student participation play an important role in relation to the objectives of creating a democratic school, and partly because these processes prepare the students for participation in a democratic society. The students are e.g. to a large extent responsible for the very popular Friday café.

Due to the numerous ethnical nationalities, the school has also established a bilingual council, which among others arranges a cultural day with dancing, music, good food, and academic presentations and debates focussing on various nationalities and religions.

Our general values e.g. means that we decided on a pragmatic attitude towards saying one's prayers. After I was contacted by a colleague from another youth educational institution, I realised that the Ministry of Education had no rules or guidance on this issue. I hereafter contacted four other schools who all had four different set of rules. We have chosen not to establish praying facilities, and just a few students have made requests hereon. However the school accepts that students retire to an empty location to say prayers during e.g. the Ramadan. This level of religious conduct is most acceptable to us, but, naturally, we also pay much attention to ensure that none of the students force others to take on a specific religious conduct against their will. We have experienced this on one occasion, and we have a clear school policy to intervene immediately in such cases. Next year a prohibition of covering your face in class will be added to the code of conduct of the school, because the teaching is based on dialogue which requires that we can see each other. We have not yet seen students wear the Burka, but have already decided on our position hereon.

Quality Development and a Culture of Success

Quite a number of years ago, the school management decided to work systematically in an attempt to continually develop the school, and this work is implemented at numerous levels in compliance with a carefully prepared concept:

The school has in many years participated in a common quality development process, where the results of student and employee surveys, and a financial survey, are benchmarked with seven other schools, providing a clear picture of the deficiencies of the education, and a substantial basis for the further development of the school.

The results are carefully scrutinized by the management, departments, teachers, and classes. Hereafter the management is responsible for pointing out areas where an increased effort is needed, although the classes

are also entitled to join this developing process of creating a better school. These efforts have a positive academic effect, and are above all an excellent tool for creating a better school.

We focus strongly on continues development of the school, and attach great importance to the development of the academic and democratic teaching, although the school has meagre financial resources.

Finally we have introduced a culture of success. I often hear people say that our school is located in an area with many social casualties. It is a fact that a significant number of our students initially have poor competences in relation to completing the education, because they to a large extent are brought up in a milieu with little focus on education. But they are going to be part of the society like anyone else. Thus we attempt to create a culture of success, which implies that all students are motivated to try one's utmost. It is our objective that all students become content and active citizens who are prepared for further education, or a good job within the Danish private sector. Generally speaking, students who are prepared to take on the responsibilities and tasks of a democratic citizen. Thus all students need to acquire the best possible competences academically, personally, and socially.

Ambition is a positive word at our school. Thus participating in sports competitions has a high priority at our school. Many of our students play football at the highest level, and we have won the Danish championship for students at commercial colleges the last five years. The students also participate in business competitions, the previously mentioned juvenile parliament where the school brought home a prize the first time we participated, and lately we participated in Young Enterprise, and likewise brought home a prize the first time. Celebrating the victories and complementing the students hereon are part of the overall concept, because we hereby indicate that it is possible to win the gold medals.

Furthermore we make sure that resources are available in order to keep the school proper and clean. Both employees and students must take pride in their school, which is difficult if the school is in a poor condition.

All together, the various efforts shall contribute to establish an educational environment where the students learn that education is important, irrespective of personal background, and that we all have a common mission in relation to the school and the surrounding society. As a result, it is e.g. now often the students who inform the management first when outsiders turn up at the school. We do the best we can to comply with our task of contributing to strengthen the social cohesion and competitiveness of the Danish society, and we are happy when we succeed to live up to our objectives, and take pride each time we say goodbye to a new brood of graduates.

Upper Secondary Education

Thus both academic teaching, other school activities, and the social life, form part of the democratic education of the upper secondary education.

A main perspective of upper secondary education is the cultural and educative aspect, and it is thus a significant objective of the education that the students become competent and authoritative citizens in a democratic society.

Objects clauses on democracy

According to the Act on Upper Secondary Education, the education forms part of a common educational system, which is educative and qualifies for academic studies, along with higher preparatory examination, higher commercial examination, and higher technical examination (chapter 1, § 2).

The general upper secondary education *shall have a cultural and democratic perspective focussing on developing the students' personal authority. Thus the students shall learn to relate to their surroundings in a responsible and reflective manner: fellows, nature, society, and their personal development* (chapter 1, § 2, section 4).

Furthermore the teaching and the school culture *shall prepare the students for active participation, joint responsibility, rights and duties in a society based on freedom and democracy. The teaching of the school and its daily life shall therefore build on intellectual freedom, equality and democracy. The students shall acquire the required competences with regards to active participation in a democratic society, and an understanding of the opportunities with regards to contributing individually and commonly to development and change, and an understanding of the nearby as well as the European and global perspective* (chapter 1, § 2, section 5).

The above-mentioned objects clauses make it clear that it is not sufficient to focus only on theoretical teaching of democracy. Democracy shall also be an integrated part of all other school activities as well.

Equal and respectful dialogue between authoritative citizens constitutes the foundation stone of a democratic society. If the democratic dialogue shall function in practice, it is a necessity that the citizens acquire the sufficient knowledge and insight into social matters, and moreover are able to argue in favour of the acquired insights in order to contribute to the development of the society. Thus both the academic teaching, other school activities, and the social life of the school, form part of the democratic education of the general upper secondary education. The academic teaching provides knowledge, insight, and linguistic competences, so that the specific student acquires a self and universal understanding, and the ability to express himself. Furthermore debates and reflections provide an opportunity for meeting alternative views that call for respect.

All subjects form thus part of the democratic education, and in certain subjects, the concept of democracy constitutes a specific theme in the curriculum. Several parts of the curriculum of social studies state that the objective of the subject is to stimulate the students urge and ability to participate in the democratic debate, and, through various working methods, and the educational content, enlighten the students in relation to the democracy and the development of the society. Consequently, several schools have implemented educational courses that are finalised by genuine democratic procedures, e.g. panel debates and consensus conferences. Besides social studies, history and religion also provide an obvious opportunity for dealing with the concept of democracy and integration in various ways, and thus contributing to the students' intercultural competences. In connection with the educational reform of the general upper secondary education, the concept of democracy, human rights, and the legal system, were united more closely, providing an excellent opportunity for dealing with the concept of democracy in a broader, among others global perspective.

The majority of the general Upper Secondary Schools inserted in the fundamental values document that the education is based on democracy, and consequently, the students are involved both with regards to student participation on the teaching, and the school life in general. Thus the students are often represented in the various councils of the schools.

Several of the examples of the next chapter have *the school as a local democracy* as the overall theme dealing with the students participation on the organisation of the teaching, homework, and educational environment. The schools aim to support the students' joint ownership and sense of responsibility, both with regards to the individual and common educational courses. One of the examples illustrates three general Upper Secondary Schools that have embarked on a common project focussing on the collaboration between student and teacher teams, and on student influence in relation to organisation, implementation, and evaluation of the teaching.

General Upper Secondary Schools of today are characterised by a significant diversity amongst the students. Thus given the various ethnic, cultural, and educational backgrounds, it is most important that the education is based on intellectual freedom, equality, and democracy, in order to ensure that all students can assert themselves, and fully benefit from the teaching. Moreover, the diversities provide an excellent opportunity for the students to acquire the intercultural competences that are required in a global world. The catalogue of examples illustrates how treating diversity as a resource in the school can contribute to broaden the students' understanding of others and themselves. Other examples deal with "changing the cultural patterns and the negative social heritage": How can a tutor arrangement help especially the ethnic students, who have a non-academic background, in the transition from the Primary and Lower Secondary School to upper secondary education, and how can the teacher help especially the less qualified students in their personal and academic development.

The chapter is concluded by a contribution by Ole Thorup, former rector at Avedøre Gymnasium, who writes about teaching democracy and redefining the objectives and values at a "Danish multicultural school."

Rules and course descriptions

- The ministerial order on students' councils for upper secondary education, higher preparatory examination, and single subject courses, stipulates that the students are

entitled to establish a students' council, and the management of the school is obliged to encourage the students to establish one in the event that the students have not taken the initiative to establish one.

- According to the ministerial order on educational rules and the code of conduct at general upper secondary education , the leader of the school is responsible for stipulating the educational rules and the code of conduct. Furthermore the order stipulates possible sanctions in the event that the leader of the school finds that a student has violated the general code of conduct of the school etc. See also the appurtenant instruction.
- The descriptions of the subjects of general upper secondary education contain links to subject oriented ministerial orders, curriculum, and instructions: <http://us.uvm.dk/gymnasie/fagene/index.htm?menuid=1530>.



Examples

Give the Students a Joint Ownership to Their Upper Secondary School

Avedøre Gymnasium

<i>Theme:</i>	The school as a local democracy
<i>Objective:</i>	Focussing on those areas where increased student participation was achievable and desirable. Debating the processes of democracy
<i>Target group:</i>	All students
<i>Perspective:</i>	Due to a malfunctioning students' council, the school arranged project days on democracy in the autumn of 2003 and 2005
<i>Web-site:</i>	www.agweb.dk
<i>Contact:</i>	Marianne Dideriksen

In connection with a project on democracy in social studies at Avedøre Gymnasium, the students formulated a wish for increased influence on a number of central daily issues. This led to the arrangement of two democracy project days in 2003 and 2005 where these matters were debated:

The students at Avedøre Gymnasium/HF wanted influence on:

1. The teaching – in particular teaching methods and co-ordination of written assignments
2. The budget
3. The physical environment
4. The image of the school
5. The arrangement of timetables – in particular the break structure.

The first democracy project day was held in 2003, and was organised by a group who assembled students and teachers from the activities committee and the development committee, and students from the students' council. The objective was to initiate a process where the students gained the desired influence on school matters, if it was possible. In connection with the democracy project day, the students were divided into 25 groups crosswise of the various classes based on birth day. Each group was backed up by two teachers and a student of the preparatory committee during the debates, and all groups were assembled in the school canteen.

The day was opened with a speech by Manu Sareen, politician from the Social-Liberal Party, and film presentations focussing on the lack of democracy at the school, produced by students from the film classes. The group debates were centred around a number of question/issues, which the preparatory committee had prepared. At each table lay a stack of slips containing a question. Hereafter a slip was drawn, and when the issue had been fully debated, another slip was drawn, and so on. Written records were taken.

Slip examples:

1. How do we embellish the school?
2. We want classical music in the homework café
3. The educational environment in the class is unbearable. Some students are noisy, others suck up to the teachers, and others bully the reasonable students during breaks. What can you do as a student? What can you do as a teacher? Who do you contact?
4. I want to have influence in relation to the purchase of math books. How can do that?

All groups handed in a written record, which was coordinated by the preparatory group, and afterwards hung up on bulletin boards in the lobby.

At the end of the project day, all the school committees presented themselves, and afterwards the students had the opportunity to sign up for the committees.

It is most important to ensure that the results of the project days do not fall into oblivion, and that financial resources are available to carry out projects. E.g. extra teachers in the homework café, or arrangement of student locations with personal computers etc. With regards to the democratic processes, it is vital that the students shall observe and learn that their initiatives bear fruit.

In the fall of 2005, two day projects were held on *joint ownership to the school*, and in connection with the last project day, financial resources had been allocated to initiative projects, that were singled out via a referendum in all classes based on the debates and the following coordination.

The Class Meeting

Avedøre Gymnasium

<i>Theme:</i>	The school as a local democracy
<i>Objective:</i>	The students shall have influence on those aspects of the daily school life that concern them the most, and experience shows that these aspects concern the daily teaching, which is not part of the agenda of the students' council
<i>Target group:</i>	All students
<i>Perspective:</i>	In the daily teaching in class, it can be difficult to find extra time to debate issues regarding the Primary and Lower Secondary School life of the class. Thus it is often a necessity to cancel the regular teaching, and in stead conduct a class meeting, where attendance is compulsory, an agenda is prepared, and minutes are taken
<i>Web-site:</i>	www.agweb.dk
<i>Contact:</i>	Marianne Dideriksen

Numerous Upper Secondary Schools have scheduled compulsory class meetings, where the students debate school issues that are relevant to them. The following model has been applied at Avedøre Gymnasium since 2002.

At Avedøre Gymnasium, class meetings are held four times a year. They are scheduled at the beginning of the school year, and take place at different week days, and always in the lesson before lunch. The class meeting focuses among others on student participation, teacher-student-relations, working morale, educational environment, remissness, school locations, and subjects.

The class meeting is organised by a class committee, consisting of the class teacher, and possibly one of the other teachers of the class, and two or three students: it is recommended that the representative of the students' council participates. The class committee gathers before and after the meeting. At the first gathering, the agenda is prepared, and at the gathering after the class meeting, the minutes are coordinated with the intent of implementing the meeting results. The teachers do not participate in the class meeting, but the class can invite them if it is considered necessary by the students, though the class teacher always participate in the first meeting in the basic year to assist the conduct of the meeting.

The Great Meeting

Rysensteen Gymnasium, Copenhagen

- Theme:* The school as a local democracy
Objective: Strengthening the democracy at the school
Target group: Students and teachers
Perspective: The students' council organises once a year a hearing, which commences in class and finishes with a great meeting where all students and teachers are assembled
Web-site: www.rysensteen.dk
Contact: Klaus Olsen

Rysensteen Gymnasium in Copenhagen naturally attaches great importance to school democracy and student participation. At the web-site, it is stated that the conversation between two equal parties constitutes the essence of democracy, and that all citizens are worth listening to. Democracy is about dialogue and conference, and finding reasonable solutions. Consequently, Rysensteen Gymnasium



organizes once a year a great meeting where all students and teachers are assembled in order to debate issues that the students find relevant. E.g. smoking policies and arrangement of timetables.

Experience shows that the students' council often is isolated in relation to the other students, and lacks knowledge of the concerns and views of the other students. Thus a great meeting is an excellent opportunity to involve all students in relation to issues that concern all students and teachers. Furthermore the students become aware of the possibilities of exerting democratic influence on school issues.

Firstly, the specific classes agree on this year's issue. Secondly, the classes debate the issue in class, and, subsequently, the representatives of the students' council hand in the minutes of the debate, which is used to ensure that all views are dealt with at the meeting, and to prepare the agenda for the great meeting. The representatives are in charge of preparing and running the great meeting, and ensuring a free democratic debate.

All teachers and students are assembled at the great meeting, where the participants vote on the various proposals submitted by the students in relation to the overall topic. The participants are handed a red and a green card, which are used to reject or accept a proposal.

The students are very committed in the debates. They are doing an excellent job conducting the meetings, and the school believes that the great meeting contributes to the fine atmosphere of the school. The great meeting has not yet been evaluated, but it will be examined in connection with a larger evaluation process taking place in the course of the school year 2006-2007.

Student Responsibility and Democracy

Århus Statsgymnasium

<i>Theme:</i>	The school as a local democracy
<i>Objective:</i>	Strengthening the students' council, and establishing a structure that works well in relation to the teaching, and ensuring that the students have more influence on the planning of the teaching
<i>Target group:</i>	All students
<i>Perspective:</i>	The debate on democracy at the school included the structure of the students' council, and student participation on the general school life, physical environment, and planning of the teaching
<i>Web-site:</i>	www.aasg.dk
<i>Contact:</i>	Anton Vinderslev

In order to strengthen student responsibility and democracy at Århus Gymnasium, the school initiated in 2002-2003 a democracy project aiming at ensuring both continuity and the quality of the work of the students' council with the intent of creating a higher morale among the students with regards to the social life and the physical environment of the school. Formerly, the students' council gathered at weekly meetings during the lunch break, but it was difficult to be efficient due to the number of participants (one or two students from each class), and time trouble (thirty minutes). Furthermore the students' council also gathered for a longer interval during lectures to deal with arduous issues.

In the document on the fundamental values of the school, it is stated that “*Århus Gymnasium attaches great importance to student democracy, and supports financially and organisationally the work of the students’ council. By collaborating with the teachers through the numerous committees of the school, the students have directly influence on both the daily life of the school and the future development.*”

The motive force of the democracy project was the so-called democracy committee, consisting of three teachers and a varying number of students of the students’ council. It was important to make sure that the new committee was also constituted by the rank and file members of the students’ council as well as leading members. The democracy committee also collaborated with the joint committee of the school, which is responsible for the code of conduct etc, and an “Information Officer.” Furthermore the work profited from the electronic conference system, which was used to inform the committee and the students’ council, and exchange of views between the various bodies.

A New Structure of the Students’ Council:

A new structure for the students’ council was developed. The council is now divided into three bodies: A council that gathers one or two times a month during class lessons, a board of 11 members, which gathers once a week, and finally a management is appointed, consisting of three students, who take care of the daily procedures of the students’ council.

Furthermore the calendar year of the students’ council was altered so that it now runs from December to December, in order to avoid that students in the last term drop out in the fall, just as it is easier to enrol new students in December.

In order to ensure continuity in relation to the work of the students’ council, the council has prepared a leaflet of welcome for the new students. Furthermore an introduction meeting with the new students is held in August to present the students’ council, and the student organisations (DGS/GLO).

In September the students’ council arranges a weekend trip so that the students can get acquainted, and debate issues related to the students’ council.

At the first regular meeting of the students’ council in August, a handbook regarding the procedures of the council is handed out to the members, which has been prepared in collaboration with the democracy committee.

In order to focus on democracy, among others the first-hand democracy issues at the school, the democracy committee arranged in March 2003 a (half) project day on democracy. The committee had prepared twenty themes, which the teachers and students debated crosswise of class and subjects. The following themes were e.g. debated: Why is it easy for the students’ council to get support for single issues, for example smoking policies or cutbacks, while the daily lengthy work in the students’ council, and in the other committees rarely arouse major interest? The boundaries of democracy? Is it acceptable to force another country to adapt your (democracy) system? How democratic is the EU? Etc. The project day went very well.

Engaging the students in the planning of the form and content of the teaching has been attempted in four of the classes. It was typically put into practice like this: A group of students (three to six) joined up, and meet with teachers after school to debate the curriculum, teaching methods, materials, examination form and syllabus etc. The project has been evaluated very positively by the students, and continues in several classes.

Inclusive the knowledge and Experiences of the Students

Avedøre Gymnasium

<i>Theme:</i>	The inclusive school
<i>Objective:</i>	Inclusive the knowledge and experience of the specific student
<i>Target group:</i>	All students who attend history teaching
<i>Perspective:</i>	Didactic considerations in connection with the planning of the course of history at Upper Secondary Schools
<i>Web-site:</i>	www.agweb.dk
<i>Contact:</i>	Kirsten Jensen

The teaching shall always be organised so that the students can associate it with the experiences they already have. This also applies to multicultural Upper Secondary Schools where the bilingual students should be considered a positive resource, who can contribute to new perspectives in relation to the teaching. In the middle of the nineties, the number of bilingual students reached one third, and in certain classes, more than half of the students were bilingual. Thus the school decided to call itself a multicultural Upper Secondary School, which required new didactic considerations.

Routinely, history teaching often commences with the Viking Age, but at multicultural Upper Secondary Schools, it can be a good idea to commence the course with e.g. the Arabic expansion and the Crusades. Both themes are linked to European history, but also provide an opportunity for inclusive the bilingual students, and rich opportunities for putting our present days into perspective.

The essence and the curriculum of history teaching with regards to the past, the presence, and the future perspectives, are continuously changing nationally and internationally, and the history teaching shall reflect this. Thus the history course can e.g. take on connected themes like “Us and them,” “Developing democracy and human rights,” and “the Communist collapse,” in order to focus on the new world order and the new enemies.

Example of an overall curriculum of the history course in upper secondary education:

Arabic expansion in the Mediterranean area from the year 600: The Arabic Peninsula, the expansion and the conquered areas, the Arabic Golden Age around the year 700, the Moors in Spain 711-1492.

The Crusades: Background, path, consequences, the history of Islam, the relationship between Europe and Turkey – 1300-1800, “Us and them” in a historic perspective.

European expansion: European expeditions and colonization, why Europe? The world picture of the Europeans – 1200-1600.

The Atlantic slave traffic: Colonization, slave traffic, the plantation system.

World history after the Second World War: The situation in the aftermath of the Second World War, the Cold War, the U.N., decolonization, the Middle East, the Communist collapse.

In relation to up to date conflicts, it is most valuable when students have the opportunity to acquire contemporary information on the circumstances of the countries and areas they read about in the newspapers. As an example, Turkish students could enlighten the class on how history teaching is conducted in Turkey, providing a fine occasion for debating the present history teaching in Denmark.

Further information:

The article *Teaching Strategies in the Multicultural Upper Secondary School. A Pragmatic Approach to Cultural Values and the Democracy Project* by Kirsten Jensen. A contribution to the publication *The Resources of Diversity. Teaching in the Multicultural Class. Upper Secondary Education and Single Subject Courses. The Ministry of Education, 2004.*

In the year 2000, Avedøre Gymnasium/HF published a leaflet describing how the Upper Secondary School had dealt with the increasing number of bilingual students at the school. One chapter describes the social life of the school, and integration of bilingual students. In another chapter, the teachers of the various subjects describe educational challenges and consequences in relation to the altered student population: Ole Thorup and others (editors): *Black and White. Bilingual Students at Avedøre Gymnasium/HF.* Avedøre Gymnasium/HF, 2000.

Student Teams and Student Participation

Risskov Amtsgymnasium, Århus Statsgymnasium, Amtsgymnasiet in Paderup

<i>Theme:</i>	Student participation in the teaching
<i>Objective:</i>	The students shall gain greater participation in the decision-making process in relation to the content and planning of the teaching. The creation of a forum for debating the social life of the class, academic workload, etc.
<i>Target group:</i>	All students enrolled after the reform
<i>Perspective:</i>	The overall organisation of the school
<i>Web-site:</i>	www.risskov-gym.dk
<i>Contact:</i>	rector Jan Becher Sørensen, jp@paderup-gym.dk

The three Upper Secondary Schools conducted in the school year 2005-2006 a pilot and development project on student teams. Each class appointed a student team with the intent of increasing student participation in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the teaching. The student teams are responsible for:

- Ensuring student participation in the planning of the curriculum
- Ensuring that the social life of the class functions well
- The contact between students and the teacher team
- Contributing to the agenda of the meetings with the teacher team. The agenda /issues are prepared with the class
- The contact between students and the student counsellors with regards to common issues like study methods etc.

According to the objectives of upper secondary education (§ 2, section 5), the education and the school culture shall in its entirety prepare the students for active participation, joint responsibility, rights and duties in a society based on freedom and democracy. The teaching of the school and its daily life shall therefore build on intellectual freedom, equality and democracy. The students shall acquire the required competences with regards to active participation in a democratic society, and an understanding of the opportunities with regards to contributing individually and commonly to development and change, and an understanding of the nearby as well as the European and global perspective.

Student teams can thus be perceived as natural furtherance in relation to the above-mentioned, because the three Upper Secondary Schools aim at benefiting from the students' experiences in relation to the teaching, and provide the students the opportunity to gain influence on the teaching etc.

A seminar has been held by the three schools in order to exchange good ideas and experiences.

Amtsgymnasiet, located in the city of Paderup, furthermore arranges each year a democracy seminar where the students' council, the rector, and a teacher representative participate. At the seminar, the role and the perspectives of the students' council are debated within the context of the school structure. The students' council has excellent opportunities to gain influence, because it has two seats in all the committees of the school.

An Expanded Tutor Arrangement

Vestfyns Gymnasium

<i>Theme:</i>	The inclusive school – A project on changing cultural patterns
<i>Objective:</i>	Supporting in particular students, who have a non-academic background, in the transition from the Primary and Lower Secondary School to upper secondary studies, by means of an expanded tutor arrangement
<i>Target group:</i>	Students in all three year groups
<i>Perspective:</i>	The efforts form part of a project on changing cultural patterns, implemented in 2004-2006. The third part of the project dealt with the perspective of changing cultural patterns at Upper Secondary Schools
<i>Web-site:</i>	www.vestfyns-gym.dk
<i>Contact:</i>	Jette Birk & Kristian Bahr, alsgaard-bahr@saknet.dk

Vestfyns Gymnasium has in numerous years applied older students as tutors to support the new students in the transition from the Primary and Lower Secondary School to upper secondary studies, as contact persons, and to brief the new students on working habits, and preparation. The purpose of the expanded tutor arrangement is in two parts. One part concerns the education of a small corps of tutors. The second part concerns activities to relieve the transition from the Primary and Lower Secondary School to upper secondary studies with regards to students, who have a non-academic background, although all students in the first year receive the offer.

In collaboration with psychologist Lene Iversen, the school prepared

- a short educational programme focussing on among others:
 - How to identify problems among the students
 - The importance of role models
 - The role of the voluntary corps members
 - Ethics and professional secrecy
- Continuous supervision of the tutors
- Consultation and evaluation.

The school divided the 24 tutors, so that each new class had two tutors from the second year group, and two tutors from the third year group. The tutors signed up voluntarily, and in their application, they were asked to state the reasons why they wanted to become a tutor, and to estimate the significance of the tutor arrangement. On the basis of the applications, 24 (34 students had made an application) were selected.

During the intro period, the tutors participated in:

- The first school days
- The introduction camp

- The introductory meeting of the student counsellors regarding preparation and working habits
- The first parent-teacher-meeting
- The consultation after the arrangement of the Association of Student Counsellors in Funen.

For many years, it has been a permanent job of the tutors to be very visible in connection with the reception of new students from the very first school day, and to help the new students arranging a banquet and entertainment in the class before the introductory school festival where all students at the school are invited. Furthermore the tutors are responsible for supporting the student counsellors in connection with the introduction of working habits.

The new strategy also comprised other assignments in the course of the autumn, where the student counsellors were responsible for announcing and supporting the activities, as well as coaching the tutors, but not the direct contact to the new students.

The tutors played a role in connection with the introductory camp, where themes like “the good student,” and “the good education” etc. often are introduced. Another interesting theme is “domestic matters,” where the tutors really could come in handy.

Furthermore the tutors played a role at the first parent-teacher-meeting. Issues related to the school transition, and which the school previously had debated in groups at the parents’ days, could be taken up again. Moreover the meeting provided an opportunity to present the expanded tutor arrangement as a focus area in relation to the school start, and an offer to students and parents.

Both tutors and the new students were pleased with the arrangement. According to them, the arrangement has been very helpful and has bridged the class distinctions, and the relation to the school as a whole (teachers, the subjects etc). Although students report that they have not directly utilised the tutors, they have proven to play an important role in terms of creating self-assurance among the new students.

Student quote:

“The arranged tutor arrangement helps the less qualified students”

Changing Cultural Patterns and Democracy

Holstebro Gymnasium/HF

<i>Theme:</i>	The inclusive school – supportive education
<i>Objective:</i>	Strengthening the communicative skills of the specific student with the intent of boosting his/hers self-confidence, and accordingly the changes of completing a youth education
<i>Target group:</i>	Students attending higher preparatory examination. All subjects
<i>Perspective:</i>	The efforts form part of a project on changing cultural patterns, implemented in 2004-2006. The third part of the project dealt with the perspective of changing cultural patterns at Upper Secondary Schools
<i>Web-site:</i>	www.hogym.dk
<i>Contact:</i>	Jane Leth Nielsen

The overall objective of the project “supportive education” is to back up students, who have a non-academic background, among others ethnic students. A higher preparatory examination class was chosen as the project class, because numerous students here have a non-academic background, and the drop-out rate of this youth programme is traditionally high. In order to support the students from the beginning of the school start, it is important to start in the first year of the youth programme.

The project concept:

Exploiting the Marte Meo-method in relation to the interaction between teachers and students, and students and other students.

The basic notion of the project is as follows: “The Marte Meo-method has proved to release development potentials in relation to the interaction between parents and children, thus the method should also apply in relation to releasing interaction and communicative potentials in relation to the interaction between students and teachers, and students and students.”

The Marte Meo-Method

The Marte Meo-method was developed by the Dutch therapist Maria Aarts in the 1970s with the intent of improving the interaction between parents/educationalists and children, but the method is now utilised in various areas around the world. Since 1994 the method has been utilised in Denmark at day and residential institutions, and within family treatment, and eldercare etc.

Marte Meo means “by own force” (latin mars martis), and the basic notion of the method is to develop the interaction and communicative potentials of the specific individual. According to Maria Aarts, all individuals contain potentials that can be developed via proper interaction between people.

The pioneer method broke new ground because it was based on providing concrete and resource oriented solutions. The core of the method is filming of daily interactions. The films are analysed in accordance with the principles of developing dialogues, and hereafter shown to the educationalist. In relation to therapist work in families, who experience domestic

problems, Maria Aarts shows scenes where the parents confirm the child's initiatives positively, reflect its feelings, and generally has good contact with them. In that way the parents become their own role models, and their self-esteem accordingly increases, and they are presented with concrete instructions on how to strengthen the communicative and development potentials of their child.

The Marte Meo-method contains concrete instructions on how to support and confirm the initiatives of children, and how the adult properly practices positive management. The development project has utilised the method in the context of youth education.

The method helps the teacher to focus on the contact with the students. The teacher will be motivated to create a good atmosphere, which is a precondition for learning, and perhaps be more prepared to support extraordinary initiatives from an insecure student. Furthermore the teacher will be more aware of applying an open and inclusive body language and tone of voice, encouraging the specific student to participate in a dialogue based on confidence and trust.

The concrete method is based on filming teaching situations, and analysing social interaction on the basis of the principles of the method, in order to give proper feedback to the filmed teachers and classes. The feedback is naturally based on the Marte Meo-methods, and as merely positive scenes are shown, it will boost the self-esteem of the teacher, and serve as an inspiration for the future. The students are generally very interested in seeing and debating teaching scenes. The positive examples serve as an inspiration for future dialogue, and the class has a change to debate the positive outcome of social interaction based on confidence and trust, which is a precondition in relation to ensuring that all students feel free to open up. The students are also presented with non-positive scenes showing inadequate behaviour in the e.g. the class. Experience shows that the students are very interested in debating educational practices, and that the method can contribute to improve the social atmosphere in the class so that all students feel free to speak up.

Further information:

Steen Elsborg, Ulla Højmark Jensen, Peter Seeberg: *Development and Research in Social Interaction. The Project on Changing Cultural Patterns 2004-2006. Report 3*. Published by Syddansk Universitetsforlag, 2006.

Contribution



Ole Thorup

Democracy – A Process Towards Integration in the Educational System

By Ole Thorup, former rector at Avedøre Gymnasium

Democracy as a project

In the beginning of the 1980s the first bilingual students enrolled at Avedøre Gymnasium. At present approximately 40 percent of the students are bilingual, and this percentage share has been constant in recent years.

A pragmatic approach to cultural values is practical and essential at multicultural schools. The fundamental values and the cultural background of the specific student shall be considered with regards to the teaching and the general school culture. The more multicultural a school is, the more important it is to focus on the fundamental values of Danish school culture, which in its essence is based on democracy and democratic values.

Experience shows that the students' knowledge of democracy (regardless of ethnicity) is very weak when they enrol for upper secondary studies. The factual knowledge of democracy and different political systems are generally very weak.

This also applies to the knowledge of the content of the human rights. The youngsters praise democratic freedom rights, but they regard mostly these as an individually given right, and not as part of an overall political project, which requires constant negotiation and struggle.

Students who have little knowledge and experience with democratic decision-making procedures are more easy targets for populist and undemocratic groups. In order to ensure a democratic development, the students shall learn to defend and further develop the democracy, and the school system is a key player in this context.

The management shall ensure that projects on democracy, human rights, political systems, citizenship, and collaboration, form part of the various subjects, and initiative regular common projects on these themes. Furthermore it is vital to ensure a democracy culture in the class room. I.e. the students shall participate in the decision-making procedures regarding the content of the teaching, working methods, likewise the students shall learn to communicate and debate in a democratic fashion.

The students shall participate in the democratic decision-making procedures of the school, which requires active support by the teachers, because only very few students have practical experience hereon from e.g. political youth organisations. Information about the organisation chart and the committee structure of the school is a compulsory part of the introductory course, but the students moreover need support to ensure that the representatives of the students' council and the other committees genuinely represent the general views of the class.

In this context conducting class meetings a couple of times quarterly is e.g. a possibility to put these matters order. At class meetings the students learn to prepare an agenda, conduct a meeting, and takes minutes. Normally, this will also require the support of a teacher as contact person.

It is important to assist the students' council with the required knowledge and organisational support. Thus it may be beneficial to appoint a teacher to assist the students' council in order to ensure that it is in compliance with the organisational demands of the school board and the management. In recent years there has been a growing tendency of refusing to join the students' council and the other committees, and the bilingual students never participated in the organisational work. This development has changed due to an active effort by the coordinator of the students' council and the class teachers to ensure that bilingual students are represented in the democratic bodies of the school. The bilingual students have personally benefited from the work in the students' council, and presently, several classes are represented by bilingual students, who also serve as positive role models. The efforts pay off. In the school year 2004-2005, the two student representatives of the school board were both bilingual students.

The democracy project shall function in practice, which requires an active effort by the management to ensure active participation and engagement of the coordinator of the students' council and the class teachers, and support and acceptance from the entire teaching staff. Extra financial resources are also required to ensure the implementation of the democracy project. Furthermore the management shall create the basis for democratic decision-making allowing deficient resolutions.

A Multiethnic Danish School

Since the beginning in 1973, a significant number of the students have had a non-academic background, so the teachers are used to organize the teaching in accordance with a culturally very mixed student

population. Nevertheless, the new bilingual students were considered a special group with particular problems, and very different compared with the ethnic Danish students.

As the number of bilingual students rose during the 1980s, it became evident that there was a very significant academic gap in the group of bilingual students, which called for educational efforts. During the period, the teachers debated language problems, cultural differences, and not least the fundamental cultural values. Which cultural diversities were acceptable, and which were not acceptable?

The school established two groups crosswise of ethnic background. A group consisting of academically skilled bilingual and Danish students, and a group consisting of lesser skilled bilingual and Danish students. The social and familial background of the bilingual students is very diverse, and is not immaterial whether their parents come from Bosnia, Turkey, Iran, or Pakistan. Furthermore it is not immaterial whether the family has roots in modern city, or in a traditional peasant society – or from a Danish perspective – a family of fishermen in Northern Jutland. In relation to the academic career of the students, the social and familial background plays a far superior role than the ethnic background.

Thus the school decided to focus on the following aspects in relation to the future work:

The student population consists of different groups. A large well-functioning group consisting of bilingual and Danish students, and a smaller group consisting of bilingual and Danish students who have a number of mutual problems, e.g. language problems, insufficient faculty of abstraction, and insufficient knowledge of surrounding communities, culture, and general code of conduct.

The school shall treat all students equally, and embrace equally the cultural heritage of the bilingual students. The school culture shall build on high academic standards, community, differentiated teaching, and equality.

Considering all students as valuable human beings constitutes the most important fundamental value of the school. All students shall meet the same demands, in order to avoid that the ethnic students are marginalised and sustained in the role as problematic individuals.

The school shall provide the students with knowledge, skills, and competences that prepare them for participation in a society in constant development. Thus the school shall focus on the fact that the students population consists of 21 different national languages, and at least an equivalent number of different cultural backgrounds.

Altered Objectives

On the basis of the above-mentioned, the school had to alter its objectives. The objectives of the school now clearly states that:

- The school is a multicultural Danish educational institution based on Danish cultural school values.
- The school shall develop the students' international perspective, and their ability to associate with others crosswise of cultural background.
- The school shall ensure academic integration, so that students, who have different cultural background, acquire the same positive attitude and awareness of the significance of knowledge, and thus are capable of contributing, and benefiting from the teaching on equal terms with the Danish students.
- The educational attention of the teachers regarding the understanding of words and concepts of the specific students shall be heightened.

Concurrently with the stipulation of the new objectives, the school declared in an explicit way which fundamental values and codes of conduct the school was based on. I.e. tolerance, openness, respect, and dialogue and decision-making based on democracy. After long discussions, the school agreed on a new set of rules regarding the code of conduct. The first two sections are as follows:

- All individuals shall respect other persons, their views, and their basic beliefs.
- Violating conduct towards others shall not be accepted.

Dialogue

Cultural clashes are naturally part of the daily school life at multicultural schools. The constant demands regarding student participation, decision-making, personal reflection, and argumentation, may confuse bilingual students. Some students may feel that their traditional values are threatened, and some respond by taking on fundamentalist views to preserve the old family traditions, and the religious norms and values. In order to prevent this, the school shall constantly be prepared to enter into dialogue with the students, and argue against fundamentalist views, which are often a catalyst for internal cultural and religious control amongst the various bilingual groups.

It is important to tell the students that we are all in the same boat, and that the school is based on mutual respect and democracy. The academic teaching however constitutes the key area with regards to dialogue and democracy. The teachers shall make it clear that academic progress is equivalent of personal development, and furthermore explain the students that there exists numerous ways of comprehending the world, and the traditional comprehensions are important to know about. The academic teaching strengthens the language and the faculty of abstraction, and in the classroom the teachers have the opportunity to debate general aspects regarding the education.

The dialogue shall ensure that the students adopt the fundamental values of the school, and thereby creating the opportunities for democracy, development, and change. Some fundamental values are infeasible in accordance with the code of conduct, which e.g. concerns:

- Boys' attitude and behaviour towards girls.
- The school is a secular institution, and thus the school has not established facilities to say prayers.
- Fundamental values and views are debated in the basic courses, religious issues are debated in the religion course, and major philosophies of life are eventually debated in study groups.
- The physical surroundings are likewise important. Thus we make a great effort to keep the school proper and clean.
- The school festivals and other social arrangements shall be organised so that all students (regardless of ethnic background) can participate.

The Educational Foundation

The debates regarding the new social circumstances and objectives of the education made it clear that the atmosphere, engagement, and recognition of the specific students, are absolutely vital aspects with regards to the adoption of the fundamental democratic values, and the personal development. The specific student shall define himself or herself, and decide his or hers future path in life. Thus the education shall be organised so that each specific student and teacher feels that their personal integrity is respected, is able to recognize himself or herself in a historical and socio-cultural context, and understands the educational perspectives.

The school shall thus create a school environment that respects the various cultural values, so that each student may form his/hers own identity. Furthermore it is important that the students shall learn that they hold a responsibility in relation to their academic and personal development. It is likewise important that the teachers reflect the fundamental values of the school, and organise the teaching in accordance with the cultural and ethnic diversity of the student population.

Working group

The preparation of this publication has received valuable sparring from an appointed working group, established of headmasters from Primary and Lower Secondary Schools, vocational training centres, schools for upper secondary education and higher preparatory examination, the Danish Centre of Educational Environment and The Ministry of Refugee, Immigration and Integration Affairs. Equally, the Resourcecentre for Bilingualism and Interculturalism (UC2) has attended to a great research and authorial work.

The working group comprised the following members:

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Bibliography and other sources of inspiration have not been translated into English.

