

E*N*I*R*D*E*L*M

Newsletter

European Network for Improving Research and Development in Educational Leadership and Management – the friendly European network



Dear colleagues and fellow ENIRDELM'ers

Antwerp is preparing to host you at this year's ENIRDELM Conference. Both the board and the local executive committee have been working hard to make it another great conference. Our website is open and will provide you with important information on registration, submissions and accommodation (<http://int.nascholing.be/enirdelm2018/default.aspx>).

This year's conference theme **'Leadership in E-motion'** is related to the emotional and relational dimensions that are part of school leadership, but that often remain underexposed. Learning, leading and learning to lead are constantly in Emotion, not only influenced by structures and rules, but also by relational aspects, collaboration, motivation, trust, climate, culture, attitudes,

Upcoming Conference

collaboration, motivation, trust, climate, culture, attitudes, (external) expectations, support, (shared) responsibilities, beliefs, emotions...

We are happy to announce that we found great key note speakers prepared to contribute: professors Jan Vanhoof (University of Antwerp), Geert Devos (University of Ghent) and Ferre Laevers (University of Leuven).

Further, we selected a great and exclusive location for our official opening on Thursday and we can tell that our diner will be one to remember as we selected an historical building in the city centre offering great food and wines. On top of that, we booked a great music band to provide us with live music during the evening (and night). On Sunday, you can register for our social program offering the best of Antwerp's beers, food and culture.



Many good reasons to go to our website and register promptly, while there is still an early bird reduction! Please bring new ENIRDELM-members from your country and help our friendly network grow.

Looking forward to see you in Antwerp!
Kristin Vanlommel
Conference chair



(FMS) FOCUS on EMOTION

University of Antwerp

KATHOLIEK ONDERWIJS VLAANDEREN

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SPRING 2018 EDITION

LIFE AFTER ENIRDELM

For many years this time of transition to spring has been my busy time spent preparing the ENIRDELM newsletter. Now that I have passed this task to Karol, I can offer a few thoughts for anyone interested, about how I have filled the gap left after these voluntary labours have ended.



First let me say that opting out of a vibrant, self-regulating voluntary network after 27 years, over a generation, or around half of my professional life, has left me a little ambivalent. Detaching from the extended network of friends, most who share my humanistic orientation towards education and hence were able to confirm my biases, is never easy.



I have been lucky to live long enough to make this conscious decision to hand over to the younger generation. So many dear friends died before they had the chance: Eija Haapenen; Ray Bolam; Peter Karstanje; Jaroslav Kalous. And I must mention the passing of Fons van Wieringen whose initiative founded the first ENIRDELM Board in Utrecht in November 1991 at the ESHA Congress before moving on to other eminent educational roles. Fons was a younger man than me but his initiative lives on in the friendly professional network that he created after the fall of the Berlin wall to bring east and west educational leaders together. His whimsical humour and capacity for fun set the tone for the warm and friendly culture that has emerged over the years at our rather special but modestly sized conference events.

Unlike the hero-organisers of the annual conferences all over Europe, I played a secondary, mainly behind-the-scenes role both on the founding and later Boards and eventually as Voluntary Permanent Secretary. I was tasked with using my native English in producing an on <https://enirdelm.net/1-page/history/>, editing

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conference proceedings, minutes, mailing lists, newsletters and maintaining the ENIRDELM web-site to keep our connections alive between conferences. As a former secondary school Deputy Head, this secondary role suited me fine as others took the lead in organising the big annual event. As a beneficiary of the platform they offered, I did present and publish many papers and organise several workshops and even found an outlet for the singing talents of a performer with 'a promising past' who chose teaching over music as a career in his early twenties after a brief burst of vocal fame in Canada in the 1960s!

As many ENIRDELM friends know, and possibly became tired of, I strove through workshops and writing in recent years to orient the network more towards the serious global socio-ecological issues of what we now call the Anthropocene Epoch. Humanity is now the major force in changing the planet and prospects that a safe operating space for humankind can be sustained are increasingly unpromising. Education should be the means of deep understanding and adaptation to this changed dynamic that has occurred in my lifetime. Regrettably, in line with their political and economic masters, education systems are not yet really functioning as society's adaptive tissue for a sustainable future. (Continued)

My modest efforts to make this critique continue, in my life after ENIRDELM, through the www.case4all.org website blog and resource platform to which ENIRDELMers Mike Bottery, Jaroslav Kalous and Kamran Namdar helped lead me. Post-ENIRDELM the website continues to grow as a repository of links that deepen understanding of our current existential predicaments. If only I was smart enough to discover, in addition to occasional lectures, how to follow the website and share these understandings of the action needed to sustain ‘Spaceship Earth’ upon which all our futures depend!

But life after ENIRDELM has also boosted what seems most fundamental for a flourishing personal life – the engagement with family and loved ones and more social time with friends. My 27-year marriage to ENIRDELM lasted longer than that, so far, to former fellow ENIRDELMer now also retired, Polish professor Dorota Ekiert. We will celebrate the 18th wedding anniversary of our personal European union on midsummer’s day this year. We are very active in our local Seniors’ Club here in Silesia and are currently preparing a public outdoor performance of the tango in June in Tychy’s central square to show that the over 65s, and even the almost 80s, can ‘trip the light fantastic’. The Club has also encouraged us to participate in Nordic walking, writing for its magazine, fashion photo-shoots, language learning and even ‘laughing yoga workshops’.

In addition to website and Senior Club activities I am keeping my mind alive by reading copiously, corresponding with friends around the world and writing an autobiography for my descendants' benefit.

The tentative title is “The Journey through Life of a Fortunate Man” and is based on 40 personal journals and diaries that I have written since my university undergraduate days.

I also send a circular Letter from Poland a couple of times each month to 70 friends around the world. If any ENIRDELM friends would like to receive this, please let me know. I have one remaining voluntary institutional role at the Silesia Botanical Garden where I assist in editing materials, books and papers written in English and hold regular seminars on the central interest that now pre-occupies me – the socio-ecological challenges of the Anthropocene Epoch - which involves re-defining our concept of ‘progress’ and re-examining so many taken-for-granted assumptions about our ever-more unstable global situation.

In sum, I have discovered that there is life after ENIRDELM. It involves ‘a sense of wonder at being alive at this strange moment in history’ and greatly appreciating the gift of sufficient health and well-being to realise this. I wish you all a similar level of enthusiasm for living as you continue to keep alive the work of a network that has meant so much to both me and my good lady. And, when you time to start life after ENIRDELM comes, I hope that you will be lucky enough to share my good fortune.

*David Oldroyd,
Tychy, Poland d.oldroyd@wp.pl*



Diving into deeper learning | Marc Chun | TEDxDenverTeachers

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k6BmbdzPcrY>

Thrive and Meaning-wellbeing at Frederik II upper secondary school in Norway



In our research project; Thrive and Meaning – wellbeing at Frederik II upper secondary school, we’ve completed our analyses of letters from students, parents and employees and delivered a report to the school.

Using a Whole school approach, we invited students, parents and teachers to write letters about how they had experienced the school as an arena to promote wellbeing and what they believed was important.

In the next step in the project, we will use appreciative inquiry , investigating deep learning practice among teachers and how they share their experiences.

We will also give an introduction to restorative practices to improve relations in school for a group of students and staff.

One of our main findings was that the staff’s wellbeing is important to promote the wellbeing of students. One of the student wrote, “ think the school should go for making teachers love their job.”

*Kjersti Lien Holte,
Associate Professor at Østfold University college*



ENIRDELM collaboration on developing moral leadership in students

Karol Sadleir, a school leader from Dublin, Anette Oxen-swärdh, Kamran Namdar, senior lecturers and researchers from Uppsala and Mälardalen Universities respectively, met at the ENIRDELM Conference in Krakow. This brief initial meeting and identification of common interests was followed by an exchange of e-mails, some telephone calls, and finally a visit by Kamran to Pobalscoil Neasáin, a charming secondary and high school in Dublin.

The purpose of the collaborative venture, initiated by Kamran’s visit, was to carry out an action research process for finding out how students could be taught in ways that would enhance their inner growth as humans and would equip them to become globally-minded citizens, leading lives that serve to create a better world. This kind of approach to education is in line with the Reconstructionist philosophy of education.

With the dedicated and skillful collaboration of one of the Pobailscoil Neasáin teachers, Aoise Raynor, three year nine classes were identified to be introduced to this new approach to learning at school. As always, the thoughts, visions, and aspirations of young students were inspiringly deep and perceptive.

They responded positively to the idea of being key important persons in constructing a better society, and had immediately several very meaningful and practical ideas about kinds of initiatives that were needed, from helping the homeless to assisting other students at the school. They responded positively to the idea of being key important persons in constructing a better society, and had immediately several very meaningful and practical ideas about kinds of initiatives that were needed, from helping the homeless to assisting other students at the school.

In order to best help realize the potential residing in the students and to create an effective support structure for teachers that would be later on involved in the process of teaching for personal development and social reconstruction, it was thought that a number of students could be trained for a special moral leadership role in which they could lead their fellow students in formulating and implementing various projects, as well as learning in general. After numerous short interviews with lots of students interested in this role, 20 students were chosen to receive a

one school day training.

The entire research and development project at Pobalscoil Neasáin has been named LEAP. LEAP leaders received enthusiastically their first assignment to plan the practicalities of a mutual school trip at the end of the term for all year 9 students.

Since then, they have been engaged in a fundraising effort for two schools in Calcutta, as well as in planning the end of the year award ceremony. The full impact of the LEAP leaders will, however, be felt next term when hopefully several more teachers and classes will join this experimentation.

At that point, Anette, an expert in collective learning, will be able to help to prepare teachers in further developing their teaching processes.

This has been an excellent example of how ENIRDELM can help people find each other and collaborative opportunities. It is also an interesting example of how sometimes students can lead a change process in a school before the teachers join it in larger numbers.

*Kamran Namdar,
Senior Lecturer and researcher
Uppsala and Mälardalen
Universities*

EYE ON IT

Interesting Publications

1. [Leading school improvement – it’s difficult isn’t it?](#)
2. [The five types of school leaders](#)
3. [Succession planning – ‘contributive leadership’](#)
4. [What is distributed leadership?](#)
5. [Leaders in Conversation](#)
6. [Leading school improvement - it’s difficult isn’t it?](#)
7. [Assessing Global Competences](#)



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Interesting Conference Opportunity



I am delighted to invite you to our Conference on Supporting Higher Education to Integrate Learning Analytics (SHEILA) that will be held on 5th June 2018 in Brussels, Belgium. The conference is organised by the team of the EU-funded SHEILA project (<http://sheilaproject.eu/>) that has developed a policy and strategy framework to support higher education institutions to integrate learning analytics.

The conference is intended for a broad spectrum of stakeholders including but not limited to senior institutional managers, government representatives and officials, policy and decision makers, students, teachers, researchers, technology vendors, and non-for-profit organisations.

The conference program will:

- feature a keynote by Prof. Dr. Blazenska Divjak, Minister of Science and Education, Government of Croatia

- present an outstanding line-up of speakers representing a wide range of key stakeholders

- discuss empirical findings of various perspectives to learning analytics collected by involving several thousands of stakeholders from across Europe

- present the SHEILA policy framework for learning analytics adoption in higher education institutions

- demonstrate several case studies that were used for the development and validation of the SHEILA framework

- facilitate an interactive session that introduces the practical use of the SHEILA framework

- create opportunities for networking with stakeholders sharing common interest in adoption and implementation of learning analytics in higher education and beyond.

The conference includes:

- presentations by international leading experts, practitioners, and researchers in learning analytics
- interactive discussion sessions with institutional and thought leaders in learning analytics.

The full conference program, including the registration instructions, is available at http://sheilaproject.eu/2018/03/27/sheila_conference/

Registration for the conference is free and includes access to the entire conference program, coffee breaks, and lunch.

Conference venue:

House of the Dutch Provinces, Trierstraat
59-61, B-1040 Brussels, Belgium
(<https://www.nl-prov.eu/directions/?lang=en>)

Dr. Maren Scheffel

**Open University of the Netherlands
Welten Institute - Research Centre for
Learning, Teaching and Technology**

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Assessment approaches in Junior Cycle from a Children's Rights perspective.

There are many initiatives in curriculum development and reform in Ireland and internationally to improve the educational experiences and life chances for students (Walsh, 2016). The Framework for Junior Cycle was published in 2015 (DES, 2015) and sets out the vision of how teaching, learning and assessment practices will develop in lower post-primary education to ensure the learning experience is appropriate for the needs of Irish learners at this stage of education. It is highlighted in the Framework for Junior Cycle 2015 that most momentous change in this reform is around assessment (DES, 2015). If we are to improve educational outcomes for our students, a useful instrument to reflect with is the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the most widely endorsed human rights treaty in the world (Lundy, 2012). Freeman (2007) argues that allowing individuals their rights is to respect their dignity, he suggests rights can be used as an advocacy tool but also as a valuable means to critically reflect on policy, process or practice. This paper focuses on assessment approaches in Junior Cycle reform from a children's rights perspective, specifically on a child's right to a non-discriminatory experience of education. This is articulated through an examination of three different approaches to assessment in the 'Framework for Junior Cycle 2015' and the resulting educational experience that is offered to a more diverse group of children.

The CRC, Lundy (2012) suggests, reflects more fully the complexity of the multifaceted nature of the right to education in the UDHR. Article 29 takes a holistic approach to education (Devine and McGillicuddy, 2016), referring to the quality of education and expanding on this right 'through' education (Lundy, 2012), as it suggests that education should be 'directed to the development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential'. **Framework for Junior Cycle 2015 and the CRC**

The Framework for Junior Cycle 2015 (DES, 2015) describes a vision of how teaching, learning and assessment practices will change to support the provision of a quality, inclusive and relevant education for students in the first three years of post-primary education. Junior Cycle reform is regarded as a historic change in Irish Education, with the changes in assessment regarded as the most significant change in the reform (DES, 2015). Junior Cycle reform allows for new ways of learning and a broader range of skills to be properly assessed, with a dual approach to assessment providing opportunities to embed classroom-based assessment and formative assessment for learning, while at the same time appreciating the role of external state assessment (DES, 2015). As might be expected, the introduction of such a significant policy reform generates questions relating to its transformation from policy to classroom practice (Ozga, 2000). Change of this scale creates uncertainty and doubting of long-held practices, it is therefore an opportune time to examine assessment policy and practice of assessment in light of international human rights standards.

Non-Discrimination

described in Article 2 of the CRC applies to all of the other basic rights. Ireland is not exempt from expressions of concern, in their concluding observations for Ireland the Committee drew attention to a number of issues to ensure non-discrimination in education. Discrimination against Traveller and Roma children, was of concern to the committee. This paper considers three aspects of the approach to assessment in Junior Cycle reform in the realisation of children's rights to non-discrimination: Classroom-Based Assessments, Curriculum Differentiation and Level 2 Learning Programmes.

Classroom-Based Assessments (CBAs)

The Junior Certificate exam (present exam students sit) considerably narrows student learning experience to preparation for the exam. Junior Certificate students themselves feel that the system does not consider the variety of abilities and disabilities among the student population (Roe, 2011). Effective implementation of the dual approach to assessment described in the 'Framework for Junior Cycle 2015' (DES, 2015), which includes both classroom-based assessment and terminal state examination standards-based assessments are regarded internationally (Klenowski and Wyatt-Smith, 2010) as a way of improving performance of students and also satisfying accountability requirements. In the Framework for Junior Cycle 2015 (DES, 2015), teacher summative assessment was introduced in the form of CBAs to tackle some of the issues with students disengaging in second year and the focus on the exam in third year. The CBAs provide opportunities for students to show their understanding and skills in ways that are not possible in formal written examinations. Within the structure of the CBAs students are given more responsibility, choice and flexibility in their approach, as a result the assessment supports student learning and allows students to develop their individual personality, talent

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and abilities, while recognising that every child has unique characteristics, interests, abilities, and learning needs (UN, 2001). The CBAs, if implemented correctly, have the potential to further support the UN's General Comment on education (UN, 2001) when it states that education 'must be of direct relevance to the child's social, cultural, environmental and economic context and to his or her present and future needs and take full account of the child's evolving capacities; teaching methods should be tailored to the different needs of different children' (UN, 2001:4).

Curriculum Differentiation

Examination results can influence students' life chances by reducing opportunities for certain student groups, in addition to this, examination grades can affect how students are positioned in subjects both by themselves and by their peers and teachers (Elwood and Murphy, 2002), this has also been identified in Irish students' experience of the Junior Certificate exam (Smyth, 2017). The requirement to take Junior Cycle and Senior Cycle exam subjects at higher or ordinary level in Ireland, acts as a form of curriculum differentiation (Smyth 2017), which results in differing exposure to curricular material and consequently differing access to certain pathways in Senior Cycle and elsewhere. Student work in lower-level classes is less demanding, may influence students to put less effort into learning, potentially leading to lower grades, lower educational ambitions

and an increased likelihood of leaving school earlier than students in higher level classes (Werblow et al., 2013).

Evidence from studies of the English national curriculum assessment also show the negative impact of labelling how students perceive themselves as learners (Elwood and Murphy, 2002). Smyth (2017) notes that schools' perceptions can have a negative impact as working-class and minority group students are more likely to be assigned to lower-level classes, this type of ability grouping can worsen social inequality among students. Devine and McGillicuddy (2016) support this view, arguing that schools can impact students' experience of who they are, and also of what they will become.

Smyth's (2017) study found that schools influence student decisions about subject levels, this influence differed between schools, with some schools allowing students very little choice and other schools encouraging students to take higher level. This curriculum differentiation tends to fuel disengagement among those students who were labelled lower-performing and served to set a ceiling on potential academic performance, with negative consequences for their pathways into upper-secondary education and beyond. The ceiling on student achievement created by differential access to higher-level subjects combined with low expectations in lower-level classes has serious consequences for student outcomes (Smyth, 2017).

Education policy and practice can help students overcome these barriers, but OECD (2016) asserts that the policy agenda to tackle low performance needs to include multiple approaches. Countries and economies specifically targeted some of the main risk factors of low performance in recent education reform by changing the structure of the school system. In Germany for example the age of student selection into different academic programmes was increased with the aim of reducing the influence of socio-economic status on education outcomes (OECD, 2016).

In Ireland, Junior Cycle reform has adopted a similar approach by assessing subjects at a common level, ultimately delaying the labelling and grouping of students until Senior Cycle. The inclusion of further resources to ensure that students have access to guidance in their educational and career choices (DES, 2015) is also a positive step towards supporting all groups of students. These are positive steps in prevention of the capping of achievement for many students, the three core subjects in Junior Cycle however, English, Irish and Mathematics, continue to be assessed at higher and lower levels. This ultimately means that curriculum differentiation will continue to negatively impact certain groups of students. While acknowledging that some differentiation in testing is necessary, research is needed to find acceptable alternative models that fit well with concerns about equity and performance and monitoring of the impact of the current Junior Cycle reform on student performance.

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Level Two Learning Programmes (L2LPs)

Since the introduction of the Junior Certificate in 1989 the profile of Junior Cycle students has diversified and now reflects a wide range of learning needs, including students with special educational needs. In addition to this, the Education Act of 1998 'promotes the right of parents to send their children to a school of the parents' choice having regard to the rights of patrons and the effective and efficient use of resources' (GoI, 1998), resulting in an increase of students with disabilities attending mainstream education. However, despite their right to attend mainstream schools, students in the low-mild to high-moderate general learning difficulty have little or no access to examination in Junior Certificate (DES, 2015). The Committee in the concluding observations for Ireland highlighted the need for a comprehensive strategy for the inclusion of children with disabilities in mainstream education (UN, 2016), while the General Comment on disability (UN, 2006) specifically states that children with disabilities should enjoy all the Convention's rights 'without discrimination of any kind'. Due to the inaccessibility of the state standardised examination these students have been discriminated against in Junior Certificate, as a result, this group of students completes three years of post-primary education with no recognition or certification of achievement, thus further highlighting difference from their peers.

The introduction of L2LPs as part of the Junior Cycle reform (broadly aligned with Level 2 of the NFQ) aimed to make the curriculum more accessible to students with special educational needs. In light of the earlier discussion about curriculum, the introduction of L2LPs could be argued to have a similar negative impact. L2LPs are however, tailored to the individual needs of each student. A student completing L2LPs for whom one or two subjects at Level 3 are also accessible, can be accommodated to undertake learning at both levels, so all of their achievements can be recognised, it also removes the achievement ceiling and conversely Level 3 students are not allowed to opt for Level 2. To ensure the learning and assessment is accessible to this cohort of students, assessment of L2LPs is classroom based with no final state exam. The students' work is assessed and reported on by their teachers. The Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement (JCPA) documents the student's achievement and is reported by the school. This is the first time this cohort of students will receive certification and recognition for their achievements.

Discussion and Reflection

Lundy (2011) argues that the CRC provides a guide of how to realise a 'good' childhood, that it provides a structure within which to hold government to account for the impact of educational policies. Devine and McGillicuddy (2016) further argue that to be achieved in practice, however, it needs to be rooted in teacher habitus, shaping their outlook toward children's rights to non-discrimination in education, this however would require more investment in continuous professional development (CPD) for teachers. Teachers and schools, through the Framework for Junior Cycle and CPD are supported to make a

positive impact on student engagement and performance by promoting high expectations for all students through common level examinations, by embracing a more flexible approach to curriculum provision, by actively engaging students in learning, using a wide range of assessment approaches and by developing a climate of learning based on good relationships. These elements of good practice are central to Junior Cycle reform, if they are embraced and effectively implemented, the children's right to non-discrimination will be more comprehensively addressed, meaning students in lower-secondary education in Ireland can enjoy their right to education as stated in Article 29 of the CRC (Lundy, 2010).

The reform of Junior Cycle is in its first phase, English the only subject to have completed the three-year cycle, there is significant potential for research to investigate the relationship between curriculum differentiation, CBAs, the impact of formative assessment and provision of mainstream curriculum for students with special educational needs in order to better understand social inequalities within the educational system. Impact assessments and evaluations of Junior Cycle are needed, and key actors must also be flexible and open to acting on evidence to ensure Junior Cycle assessment approaches enable students to enjoy their right to a quality education. Assessment and testing have the power to influence children's education (Black and Wiliam, 1998; Smyth, 2017) and ideally, Junior Cycle reform leads to an improved understanding of assessment's potential for ensuring children's rights in education (Elwood and Lundy, 2010) as opposed to the current narrow focus of assessment for monitoring and accountability.

*Ursula Diamond,
Doctoral Candidate
Queens University Belfast*

All references available on request