UnFinnished Business:
Education Policy Lessons from Finland

Pasi Sahlberg, PhD
Director General
CIMO (Ministry of Education)
Helsinki
FINLAND
Education system performance over time in Finland and developed nations

Learning, Participation, Equity, and Efficiency

Policy Paradoxes
Paradox #1: Excellence through Equity
Percentage of variance of student reading performance due to socio-economic status

OECD 2010

Reading literacy PISA score 2009

Percentage of variance of student reading performance due to socio-economic status

OECD 2010
Equity in education
variation of student performance in science

Germany
Czech Republic
Austria
Hungary
Netherlands
Belgium
Japan
Italy
Greece
Slovak Republic
Turkey
Switzerland
Korea
Luxembourg
United States
Portugal
Mexico
United Kingdom
New Zealand
Australia
Canada
Ireland
Denmark
Spain
Poland
Sweden
Norway
Iceland
Finland

PISA 2006
Variation of performance between schools
Variation of performance within schools
Equity in education
variation of student performance in science

PISA 2006
Paradox #2:

Less is More
Finnish teachers teach less...

Net contact time in hours per year in public institutions

Middle School Teachers

OECD 2011
Finnish pupils study less...

...in and out of school

Total compulsory instruction hours between 7 and 14 year-olds

OECD 2011
More money, less learning

Cumulative cost per student in USD (2006)

OECD 2010

Learning

PISA science score in 2006

Cost
Paradox #3: Test Less, Learn More
Finnish Students are Tested Less

National averages of 15-year-old students learning outcomes in mathematics 2000-06

OECD 2001-2007
Standardized tests in three education systems

1st  3rd  6th  9th  12th

Grades in school

Flags of the United States, Finland, and Canada with 'T's indicating standardized tests at different grades.
Standardization

FOR A FAIR SELECTION EVERYBODY HAS TO TAKE THE SAME EXAM: PLEASE CLIMB THAT TREE.
Paradox #4:
Teaching is A Dream Job
Applicants to primary school teacher education

![Bar chart showing the number of applicants to primary school teacher education from 2001 to 2010. The y-axis represents the number of applicants ranging from 0 to 7000, and the x-axis represents the years from 2001 to 2010. The bars are color-coded to represent male and female applicants.](chart.png)
Applicants to primary school teacher education

![Bar chart showing the number of male and female applicants accepted into primary school teacher education programs from 2001 to 2010. The chart indicates a general increase in both male and female applicants over the years.](chart.png)
Teacher salaries relative to workers with college degree

OECD 2010
UnFinnished Business
Global Educational Reform Movement

Standardization

Finnish Way

Personalization
Global Educational Reform Movement

Choice  Equal opportunity

Finnish Way
Global Educational Reform Movement

Finnish Way

Accountability X

Trust
Meaning of Finnish Lessons

1. Teacher Policy: Professionalization

2. Accountability Policy: Trust-based responsibility

3. Testing Policy: Purposeful assessment
“One thing I never want to see happen is schools that are just teaching to the test because then you’re not learning about the world, you’re not learning about different cultures, you’re not learning about science, you’re not learning about math.”

“All you’re learning about is how to fill out a little bubble on an exam and little tricks that you need to do in order to take a test and that’s not going to make education interesting.”

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"The story of Finland's extraordinary educational reforms is one that should inform policymakers and educators around the world."
—Linda Darling-Hammond, Stanford University

“A terrific synthesis by a native Finn, a teacher, a researcher and a policy analyst all rolled up into one excellent writer.”
—David Berliner, Arizona State University

"This book is a wake-up call for the U.S. It is the antidote to the NCLB paralysis."
—Henry M. Levin, Teachers College, Columbia University

Kiitos!

www.pasisahlberg.com    Twitter: @pasi_sahlberg