

CURRENT TRENDS ON INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Finland



FINNISH NATIONAL
BOARD OF EDUCATION

1. Education Policy		2. Provision for Education	3. Curriculum	4. Implementation of Instruction	
law & decree	structures of education	underlying values & concept of learning	history	school culture	interaction between teacher and pupil
			conception		
strategies	resources	administration	structure	learning	teachers' activities
			objectives contents	working approaches	learning environment
TOOLS for Inclusive Education					
8. Challenges changes in society		7. Assessment	6. Special Support	5. General Support for Studies	
curriculum	teachers	student assessment	special needs education	pupil welfare	guidance and counselling
participation ↓ sense of community ↑ exclusion	comprehensive education	evaluation of school's operation		Early support	cooperation between home and school

Inclusive education

- ◆ The education is organised so that every pupil gets an adequate and well-timed support to her/his learning and growth.
- ◆ It is a question of both developing the system and structures and developing the school culture and pedagogical methods that promote the success of all pupils in their studies.

Education policy

- ◆ the national guidelines aiming to enhance coherence
- ◆ practical arrangements are based on these
- ◆ dialogue between national decision-making, administration, municipalities and educational institutions is open and flexible.

Education policy

- ◆ The key objective of Finnish educational policy is to provide all citizens with equal access to education – regardless of age, place of residence, economic circumstances, sex, or mother tongue.
- ◆ Education is considered to be a fundamental right of all citizens.
- ◆ Basic education helps to increase both regional equality and equality among individuals.

Provision for Education

The values



- ◆ At school level, values can be seen especially in three levels that are linked to each other: in school culture, in social relationships and in the content of education

Conception of learning

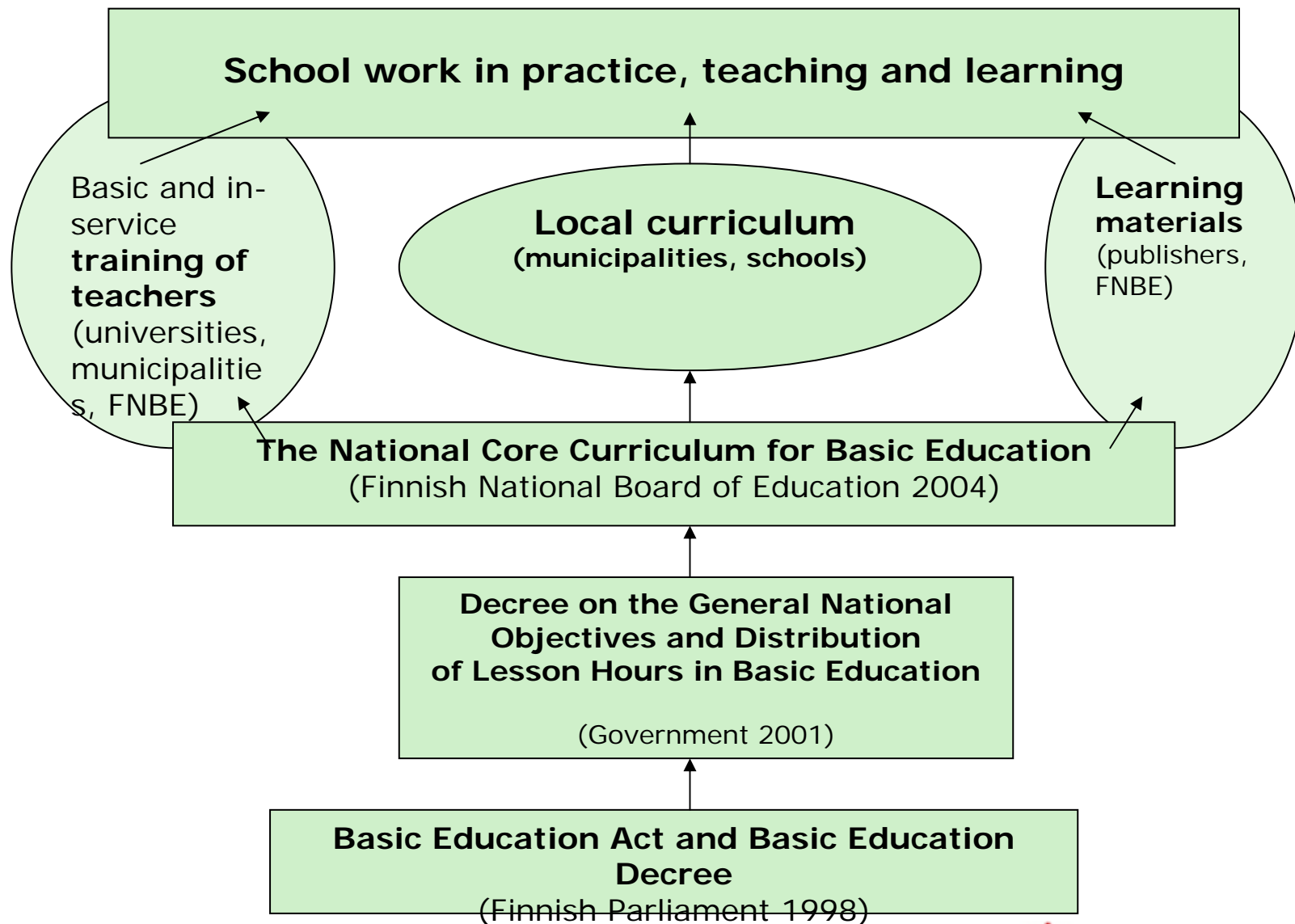
- ◆ The National Core Curriculum has been formulated on the basis of a conception of learning as an individual and communal process of building knowledge and skills.

Curriculum

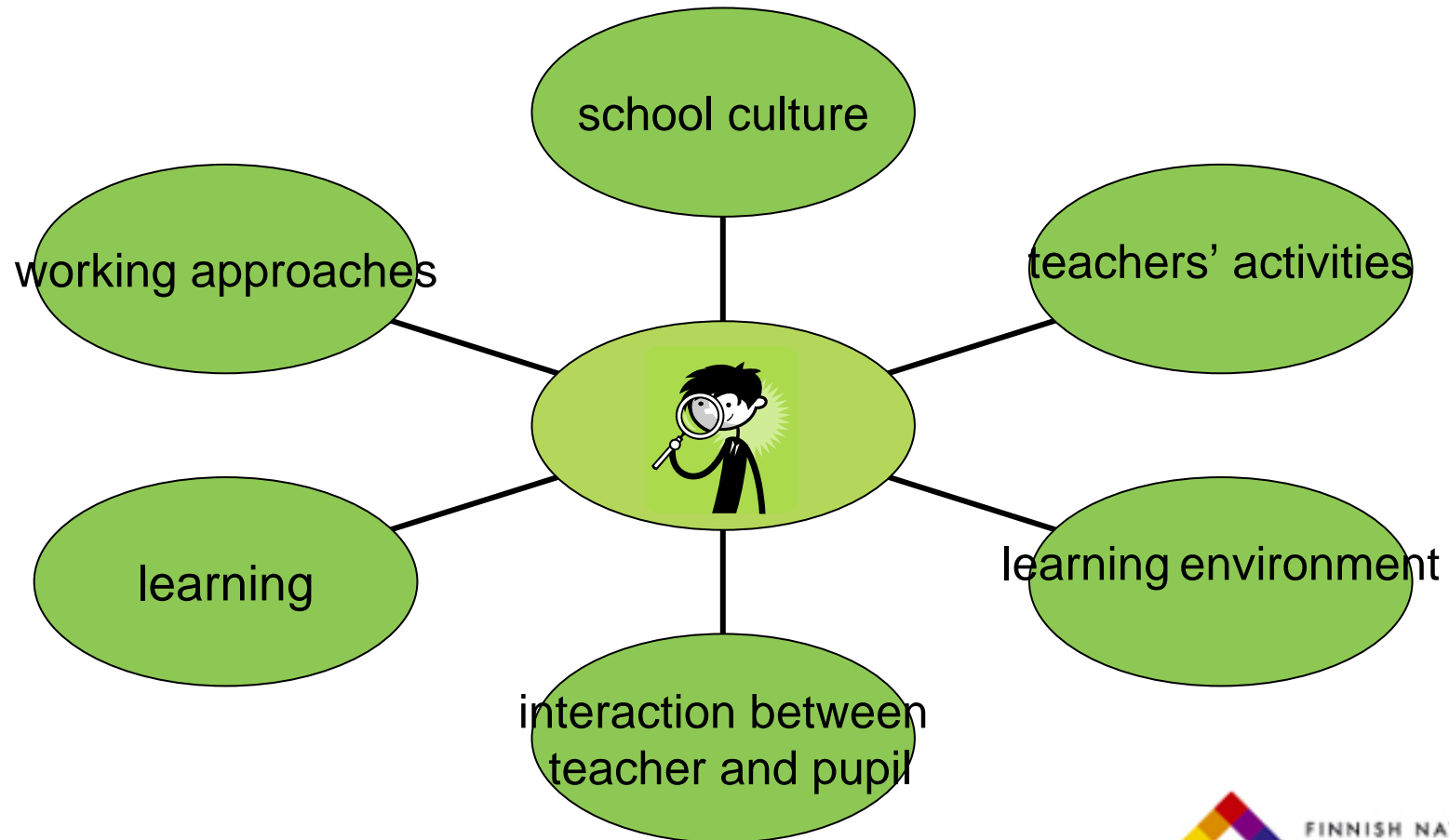
- ◆ from centralised to decentralised system and then a little bit back again towards more central guidance and support
- ◆ goal- oriented and extensive
- ◆ central role in school development
- ◆ covers all the areas of school life
- ◆ guides the school's practical teaching and educational work

The latest guidelines for the National Core Curriculum for basic education were issued in 2004.





Implementation of instruction



General support for studies

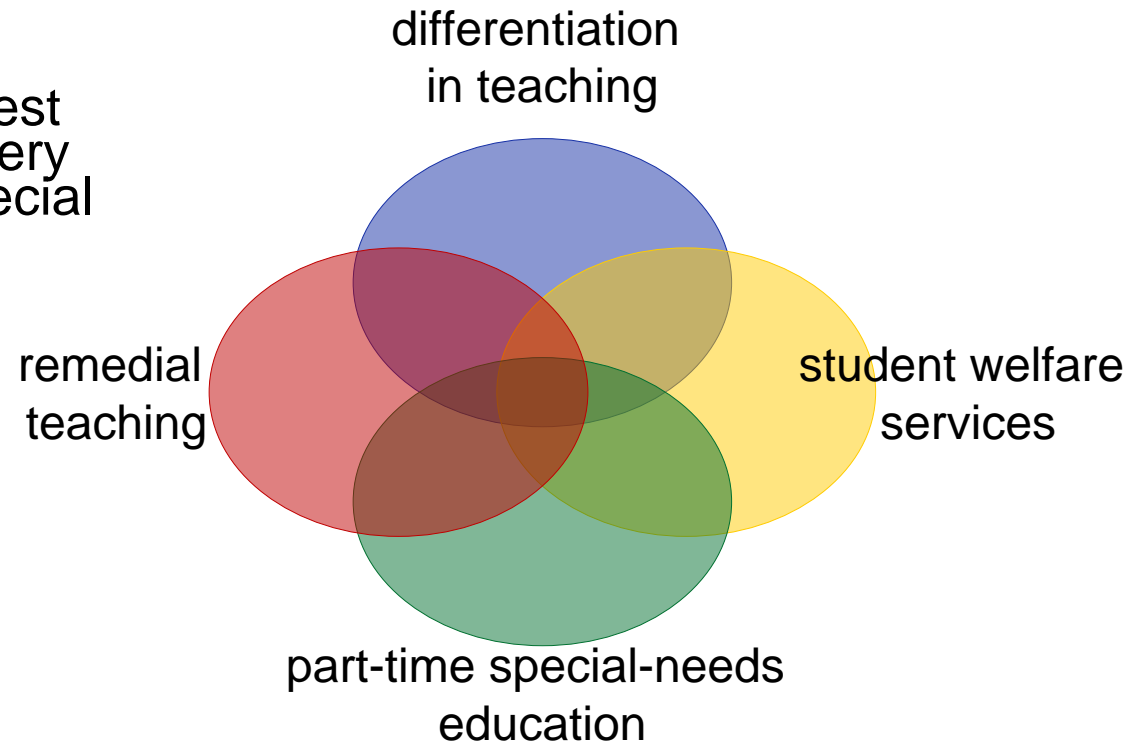
Pupil welfare

- ◆ concern of all persons working in the school community
- ◆ implemented in close cooperation with the home
- ◆ can be coordinated and developed by a multi-professional pupil welfare team

General support for studies

Early support

- ◆ all are used in the highest possible way from the very moment the need of special support is noticed



General support for studies

Guidance and counselling

- ◆ Every student has also a right to student guidance and counselling. Schools are expected to guide students in study skills, in choosing their elective subjects and in planning their post-compulsory studies.

Cooperation between home and school

- ◆ Mutual respect and equality among the parties must serve as the starting point for cooperation.

Special support

mainstream education



special needs education (2%) → administrative final act →
the status of a pupil will change → extra financial resource

Assessment

Evaluation of school's operations

- ◆ Local authorities are obliged to take care of the *continued evaluation and development* of the local education system and curriculum.
- ◆ The aim of self-evaluation is to make activities transparent to parents and other external interest groups.
- ◆ It also helps people working in education to form a common, integrated understanding about the main aims, working procedures and effects of their school and the whole local education system.

Assessment

Pupil assessment

- ◆ goes together with the concept of learning
- ◆ the target of assessment is in the learning process: in the progress of the learners learning path
- ◆ supportive, versatile and guiding
- ◆ always based on and related to the goals

There are neither tests nor inspections
in the Finnish education system.

lifelong learning • happiness of learning • life skills



Assessment

Special Support

General Support

Implementation of Instruction

Curriculum

Provision for Education

Education Policy

positive mind
wisdom
encouragement
support



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Challenges

- ◆ Inclusive education requires systemic changes.
- ◆ The whole Scandinavian region is also working on improving inclusive education.
- ◆ To fulfil our goals of equity and equality we need still to focus on individual support in learning.
- ◆ We believe stronger than ever before that growing up and studying in heterogeneous groups is good both for individuals and for the whole nation.
- ◆ Developing the good models and procedures will need enthusiastic work.

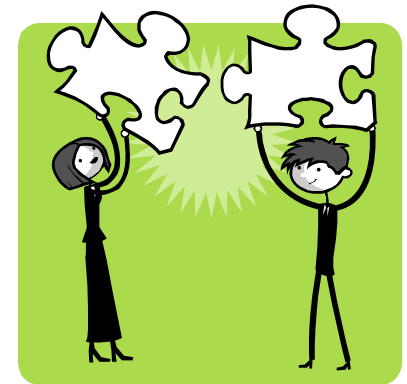
Curriculum

- ◆ Curriculum development is an important tool for to reach the future needs of the school.
- ◆ We will have to connect the needs of everyday school life to the future challenges of the national and international education policy.



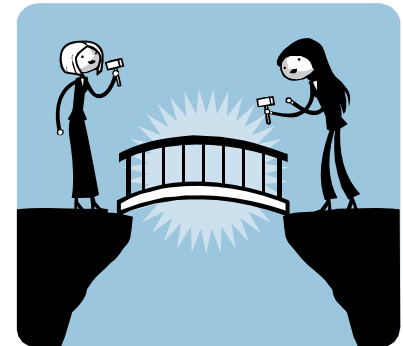
Comprehensive school

- ◆ to abolish the division of comprehensive school into primary and secondary years
- ◆ to emphasize the educational unity and coherence of the nine-year comprehensive school
- ◆ the coherence of the preschool education and the basic education



Teachers

- ◆ supporting students individually is a big challenge
- ◆ the school life doesn't develop unless new changes will happen in the teachers' professional and pedagogical thinking
- ◆ the teachers' old-fashioned thoughts of total autonomous
- ◆ calls for strong skills in cooperation and pedagogical leadership



Sense of community

- ◆ important to have the essential skills for getting along with other people; working together, coping over conflicts and approve differences
- ◆ means mutual cohesion, trust, joint responsibility and positive dependence
- ◆ arises from common values, provisions, structures, operation modes and common contents of the work



Participation

- ◆ active participation of students in planning and developing, not only their own studies, but the whole learning environment and good cooperation among students
- ◆ responsible people who are motivated to learn through their entire life



Exclusion

- ◆ find better ways to encourage all students to go on with their studies in upper secondary education
- ◆ the drop-out percentage is very small during basic education, after basic education we lose some 5-6% of students



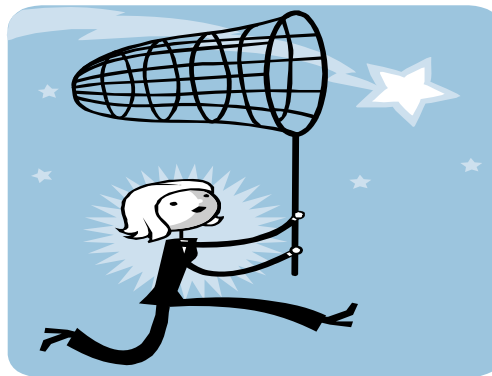
Changes in society

- ◆ have an effect on education in many ways
- ◆ people are moving from the countryside to towns and nationally the number of children is falling off
- ◆ schools must carry a larger responsibility of pupil's well-balanced development, welfare and health.



Our responsibility

...is to support
versatile the growth and development
of an unique personality of a child.



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