

## TITLE

Parents and students as apprentices

## KEY CONCEPTS

Transparency, participation, apprentices, innovative, collaborative reflection

## NARRATIVE OVERVIEW:

Michael, a mathematics teacher, wants to involve parents and students not only in a task but considering how the task should be organised, the quality of the support provided and other aspects of pedagogy and specialist knowledge. He identifies energy saving in the school as a context; introducing the topic and illustrating how formulas and calculations can be used to work out the carbon footprint of the school and to calculate alternative energy sources. He gives students specific tasks; mainly researching, collecting and analysing different types of data around the school. Parents and students are also involved in the planning and the evaluation of the project as “teacher apprentices”. Using an online space, Michael has bi-weekly “teaching sessions”.

Michael emphasises that the success of this project relies on the “apprentices” trying to see things from the perspective of inexperienced teachers. Teacher and apprentices reflect on the tasks and the overall learning experience. This raises awareness about the challenges and the potential of innovative pedagogies that go beyond knowledge transmission. The project helps develop a more rounded notion of teacher professionalism in parents and students. More importantly, it has a positive impact on the relationship between teachers, parents and students.

## TREND/S

### A new professionalism

There has been lately a great emphasis on teacher professionalism. It appears that many education systems have come to the conclusion that the quality of teachers is the most important factor to improve learning. This is leading to incentives for those teachers deemed to be good, to tighter recruitment of graduates, and stricter controls on the quality of teaching.

### Enhanced professional development

There is a trend of increased emphasis on teacher professional development, in which the use of technology plays an important part. For example, technology is used to create collaborative platforms and communities of practice to bring life to the “hard to teach” and “hard to understand” areas of the curriculum, like MST (Mathematics, Science and Technology), thus engaging students with such crucial subjects.

### Learning goes outside, does the teacher follow?

Education has always been associated with schools. However, this relationship is now under stress as new technologies move learning outside of the school walls. This trend poses challenges to the traditional role of the teacher. Some specific opportunities and risks are: educating outside school hours, more emphasis on facilitation, mentoring and guidance, increased workload, linking with families, some risks of establishing informal links with students (e.g. using emails and texts).

## VISION (ASPIRATIONS & AIMS)

- to develop a more rounded notion of teacher professionalism in parents and students
- raise awareness about the challenges and the potential of innovative pedagogies that go beyond knowledge transmission

## ENVIRONMENT

- the classroom
- the school and its surroundings
- home
- online space

## PEOPLE & ROLES

- teacher as a facilitator and a subject specialist
- students as researchers
- parents and students as “teacher apprentices”

## INTERACTIONS (INCL. PEDAGOGIES)

- enquiry based and “real world learning”
- collaborative reflection and dialogue between teacher, parents and students

## ACTIVITIES

- traditional lesson
- research activities (data collection and analysis)
- “teaching sessions” held online to meet with apprentices

## RESOURCES (INCL. TECHNOLOGIES)

- mainly a web-based space (Second Life or something with similar functionalities) to meet “apprentices”
- “teaching sessions “ could be face-to-face if families do not have broadband and computers (and/or familiarity with such tools) in their homes