

Education for a better world: an ongoing debate at a global scale

We are facing unprecedented challenges – social, economic and environmental – driven by accelerating globalisation and a faster rate of technological developments. At the same time, those forces are providing us with myriad new opportunities for human advancement. The future is uncertain and we cannot predict it; but we need to be open and ready for it. The children entering education in 2018 will be young adults in 2030. Schools need to prepare them for jobs that have not yet been created, for technologies that have not yet been invented, to solve problems that have not yet been anticipated. Through the OECD project *The Future of Education and Skills 2030*, 29 countries and economies are collaborating to find answers to two far-reaching questions:

- What knowledge, skills, attitudes and values will today's students need to thrive and shape their world?
- How can instructional systems develop these knowledge, skills, attitudes and values effectively?

The project does not seek to establish a “one size fits all” approach to education because that will not help answer these questions. Instead, it provides a platform for developing a shared understanding on the design of curricula. Future-ready students need to exercise agency, both in their own education and in life itself. Agency implies a sense of responsibility to participate in the world and, in so doing, to influence people, events and circumstances for the better. Agency lies in the power to frame a guiding purpose and identify actions to achieve it. A thriving, forward-thinking education prepared young people to think for themselves and work and live with others. It involves developing the ability to solve complex problems, to question the established wisdom of our time and integrate emerging knowledge, to communicate effectively and to promote well-being. Young people need knowledge that is acquired through more than just rote learning and memorization. Multiple forms of assessment, active teaching and learning methodologies, interdisciplinary work, bringing the real world into the classroom - these are all core ingredients for this goal of promoting better and deeper learning.

Building on the OECD Key Competencies (as developed by the DeSeCo project - Definition and Selection of Competencies), the Education 2030 project has identified three further categories known as the *Transformative Competencies*:

- *Creating new value*: People should be able to think creatively, develop new products and services, new jobs, new processes and methods, new ways of thinking and living, new enterprises, new sectors, new business models and new social models. Increasingly, innovation springs not from individuals thinking and working alone, but through cooperation and collaboration with others to draw on existing knowledge in order to create new knowledge.
- *Reconciling tensions and dilemmas*: Individuals will need to think in a more integrated way that avoids premature conclusions and recognizes interconnections. In a world of interdependency and conflict, people will successfully secure their own well-being, and that of their families and their communities, only by developing this second transformative competency: the capacity to reconcile their own goals and perceptions with the perspectives of others.

- *Taking responsibility*: Dealing with novelty, change, diversity and ambiguity assumes that individuals can think for themselves and work with others. Equally, creativity and problem-solving require the capacity to consider the future consequences of one's actions, to evaluate risk and reward and to accept accountability for the products of one's work. This suggests a sense of responsibility, and moral and intellectual maturity, with which a person can reflect upon and evaluate their actions in the light of their experiences and personal and societal goals; what they have been taught and told; and what is right or wrong.

Many different stakeholders will need to play a role for these competencies to be developed. To help develop the agency of learners, we need not only to recognize their individual diversity and potential, but also to acknowledge the wider set of relationships that influence their learning - with their teachers, peers, parents and communities. A major concept underlying the learning framework is therefore 'co-agency' – the interactive, mutually supportive relationships that help learners to progress towards their valued goals. In this context, everyone should be considered a learner, not only students but also teachers, school managers, parents and communities. If learning is at the center, the development of learning communities is critical.

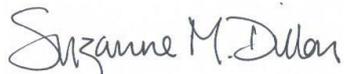
The Advisory Group members of OECD's Future of Education and Skills 2030 leading the working group of 29 countries and economies are:

- João Costa, Secretary of State for Education, Portugal



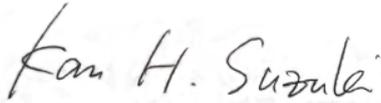
João Costa

- Suzanne Dillon, Assistant Chief Inspector, Department of Education and Skills, Ireland



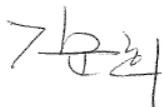
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- Kan Hiroshi Suzuki, Special Advisor to the Minister of Education, Sports, Culture, Science and Technology, Japan



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- Moonhee Kim, Minister, Permanent Delegation of the Republic of Korea to the OECD, Korea



7/12/21

- Jørn Skovsgaard, Senior Adviser, Ministry of Education, Denmark

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In collaboration with the OECD

- Andreas Schleicher, Director of Education, OECD

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Andreas Schleicher', written in a cursive style.