

## Chile

### Escuela Celestin Freinet

*A school aimed at students from disadvantaged backgrounds with special needs, the Escuela Celestin Freinet employs the Freinet pedagogy and horizontal teams to provide educational support to all students. The Freinet pedagogy is focused on the possibilities and needs of the child, introducing a natural method to learn in school in the same way you can learn in life. As such, there is an emphasis on inquiry-based learning. Learning is facilitated by interdisciplinary specialists, including psychologists and a speech therapist. Parental involvement is also common, and parental class attendance and the supportive and classroom climate are thought to contribute to enhancing learning. Teaching and learning are a team effort, with periodic evaluations with standardized tests and daily breaks for silent reading and enjoyment of classical music.*

**Main Focus of Innovation:** LEARNERS, CONTENT, RESOURCES, ORGANISATION

**Other Keywords Keywords:** alternative philosophy, equity

#### General Information

**Name of the ILE:** Escuela Celestin Freinet

**Location/Address:** Venancia Leiva N° 1949 La Bandera

**Rationale**

*Why do you suggest that it should be included in the project? How does it respond to 21<sup>st</sup> century learning challenges?*

This program has been implied to innovate at the learning environments for students with special needs in the context of urban poverty. The school uses the pedagogy of Celestin Freinet. The idea is to give affection to students in order to make students express themselves better. The school fosters inter-school mail; work in horticulture and also school conferences and assemblies. The common objective is “*give the word to the child*” so they can learn from the aspect they most care about. Students have shown progress at the cognitive and emotional level. Parents are present in many of the classes and this generates trust and links that affect positively student’s progress. A good class environment is important to generate good learning outcomes. Teamwork is relevant at school. Everyone is involved, periodically evaluating work and participation, including during non-traditional activities such as 20 minutes of silent reading every day books the students choose. Also they include poetry reading and book workshops where many students participate.

**Learning Aims / Intended Learning Outcomes of the ILE**

*What are the core learning aims and which knowledge, skills or attitudes are to be acquired? (These may include outcomes related to learners’ social, interpersonal, or meta-cognitive development)*

The main idea of the school is to work horizontally and provide mutual help for each member of the educational community. “Give the word to the child”

At school there is real teamwork allowing everyone to be involved, with periodical evaluations with standardized tests and silent reading for 20 minutes a day with books the same students choose. Also they have public speaking and literature workshop with a high rate of participation.

**Learners**

*Which group(s) of learners is it aiming at? Who is eligible to take part? How many learners are there? What are their ages?*

Even though this project is for students, parents are also present in this work. Parents attend classes. This has been helpful to generate a sense of trust and links which coincided positively in students advances. Research has demonstrated that family and community involvement in a child’s education fosters better learning outcomes for that child. On the emotional level each student feels more comfortable in a supportive and positive good classroom climate and oftentimes such an environment generates better learning.

**Facilitators**

*Who are the teachers/facilitators? Who are the leaders? What are their professional backgrounds? What are their roles?*

Inside the school there is an interdisciplinary team formed by three specialist teachers: two psychologists and one speech therapist.

**Organization of the ILE**

*How is learning organised? How do learners and facilitators interact? What kind of pedagogy do they follow? What curriculum is used?*

During the breaks and before each class, students listen classical music, in accordance with a planning which includes different composers. The students are divided in groups according to their ages and they have special activities organized for them.

They also have turns to use the computers during half an hour in lunch time, and when they finish with the formal activity they are free to use whatever they want. Students really appreciate to be able to use computers and they are always in use. The teachers complement the work developed in the classrooms with worksheets they give to the staff in charge of the computer laboratories.

Every day the students have half an hour of silent reading and each class has a library, with books that children can take home with them, not only for them but also for their parents to use, so everyone enjoys the pleasure of reading.

The Freinet methodology: as said is an approach to education that is focused on the possibilities and needs of the child, introducing a natural method directed to learn in school in the same way you can learn in life. So there is a group of techniques called “Freinet techniques”:

**Free text** (the children express freely through written word, using their own ideas, live experiences and questions. Readings are read and comment4ed in class.

**Press machine:** use of a little printing machine where the student works easily with types, instruments, visuals and paper. By doing this they reading and writing are reinforced, and the fine movements, coordination, visual perception and collaborative work are enhanced.

**Publication:** using the press machine the children’s creation are reproduced.

**School conferences:** in charge of the students about aspects they have prepared by themselves.

**Library:** The needs and interests of boys and girls are considered and they are responsible for taking care of the facilities of this room.

**Class meeting:** directed to solve in a pacific way the conflicts inside the classroom. This activity is directed by the same children and it is the time they have to solve problems and offer solutions.

**School vegetable garden:** so boys and girls get closer to Nature.

### **Learning Context**

*In which context does learning take place? What does the physical learning environment look like? Are community resources used to facilitate learning and how?*

This school is located in La Pintana, a school located around away from downtown Santiago. In this place there is high vulnerability and serious economic and social problems.

The school also has a project of school integration since 2004 for 74 students with special permanent or transitory needs. They have a special team of professionals to be in charge of this project. All of them have stayed at the school for more than 6 years now.

All year long there is a youth/child centre at the school, in order to work with students when the classes finish. There they can learn to defend their rights, and they also receive care, attention and protection from the dangers the environment offers like drugs, crime and alcoholism, among others. A special team of educators and a psychologist work with them.

**History of ILE**

*Who initiated it? For what reasons was it started and with what purpose? Have these changed since?*

This school has its foundations on the work of Celestin Freinet. The method was an idea of the French educator Celestin Freinet which searched to renovate the essence of the educational system with the introduction of a mean of communication inside the classroom. Technology modifies the relationship of students with knowledge. By doing this they became more assertive communicators, more creative, and able to transmit their own ideas.

**Funding of the ILE**

*How is it funded?*

This school is a private subsidized school, where parents pay a percentage of the tuition. Many of the initiatives that the school carries out are financed through projects financed by the Ministry of Education and other sources.

Parents also participate directly by giving their own time to concrete the ideas students and teachers have.

**Learning Outcomes**

*What are the learning outcomes achieved by the ILE, including academic, social, interpersonal and meta-cognitive outcomes? How is learning assessed?*

Periodic evaluations are performed inside the schools using standardized test, silent reading of 20 minutes every day, using books students select. Also they have tournaments of poetic recitation and book clubs with a very high participation.

In terms of the results, teachers highlight the advance of students at cognitive and also at emotional level, by saying that it is clear they have at the school happier students, who speak up and attempt to get their goals even when they understand it is difficult given the conditions that the environment offers, with delinquency, dysfunctional families and lack of opportunities.

The fact that there is a printer machine inside each classroom supports the process of acquisition and reinforcement of reading and writing and also coordination, visual perception and collaborative work.

**Documentation describing or evaluating the ILE**

*Is there documentation on this learning environment? Is there a website? Films? Research reports or evaluations? Other forms of documentation? (please supply references or links)*

Teachers reaffirm some of the indicators are: computer rooms are always being used, the sports are practiced, after school workshops keep being on demand, and most importantly, students are finishing 8<sup>th</sup> grade, with a very low dropout rate and that is a real evidence that the method used is working.