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World Education Leadership Symposium Online Conferences 2021 (WELSmain)

Initiator and Organizer / Initiator und Leiter:

Prof. Dr. Stephan Gerhard Huber

Host WELSmain 2021 (since 2009) / Veranstalter WELSmain 2021 (seit 2009):

Institute for the Management and Economics of Education (IBB) /
University of Teacher Education Zug (PH Zug)

Institut für Bildungsmanagement und Bildungsökonomie (IBB) /
Pädagogische Hochschule Zug (PH Zug)

Cooperation Partners / Kooperationspartner:

Association of school leaders and teachers, ministries and authorities as well as further universities and partners / Schulleitungs- und Lehrerverbände, Ministerien und Behörden sowie weitere Hochschulen und Partner

Making schools post-pandemic – what we can learn from the challenges in Germany and New Zealand

J Prof. Dr. Britta Klopsch / Associate Prof. Dr. Jo Fletcher

Situation of Schools during the pandemic

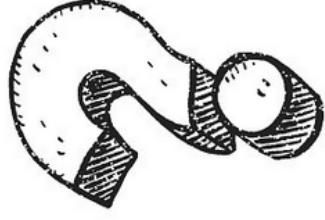


Role of Schools in a crisis



- A crisis occurs when there is a catalyst to an incident or incidents which overwhelms the coping strategies within society (Collins & Collins, 2005)
- economic, physical and emotional wellbeing of the population are considerably challenged
- Life circumstances of parents (and families) dramatically change
- Schools need to
 - develop empathy and understandings,
 - help parents to become key players in supporting their children in learning at home
 - develop strategies for remote learning

Research Question & Method



What are the barriers and supports that influence leadership, and supporting and teaching students effectively, during lockdown conditions in a pandemic?

- Semi-structured interviews (48 participants: teachers and school leaders in primary and secondary schools)
- Data analysis: Grounded Theory

Findings - Germany

I) Professional Collaboration

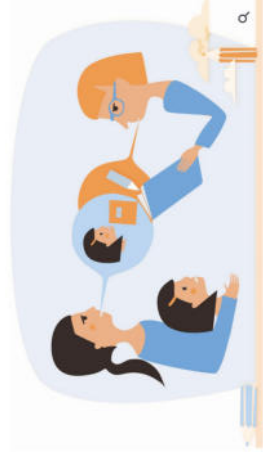
- Existing professional collaboration
 - Teachers respond to every child as individually as possible with designing online student-centered learning events
 - Teachers are in close contact with students (phoning them, visiting them at home, making learning videos for single students)
 - Teachers design learning for a whole class together (e.g. week-long learning plans)
- Non-Existing professional collaboration
 - Teachers report losing students
 - Learning growth is placed on parents



Findings - Germany

II) Parental involvement

- Schools rely on parents as learning support
- Parents are asked for feedback (with letters and on the phone)
- Those parents who were interested in school before the pandemic were much more engaged than those who were not interested



Findings - Germany

III) Dealing with social justice

- Educationally disadvantaged families have bigger issues during the pandemic

“We have not heard from some of them for weeks. We do not know whether these families are still in Germany at all.” (T-GERPS9)

- Schools established extra support for children at risk
 - They can go to emergency care
 - They get private tutoring



Findings New Zealand

I) Parents

- This role of reassuring and listening to the anxieties of parents
- For many teachers in primary and secondary schooling the connections with the parents and students appeared to be effective. However, other teachers reported a less positive situation.
- Both teachers and principals discussed how teachers were situated within their own homes dealing with their own family situation, including their own children, whilst at the time taking on the role of the online teacher.



Findings New Zealand

II) Digital technologies and social justice

- Not all families had digital technology available that their children could access for online learning during lockdown.
- The compounding issue to digital technology availability in some homes was Internet accessibility.
- Some schools were already well set up for a rapid move to online teaching, particularly for certain age levels.



Findings New Zealand

III) Communication amongst staff

- Very apparent in the interviews with principals was their compassion and care not only for the students and their families, but even more so for their own staff.
- Staff connected on Google hangouts, had dress up Zoom meetings, and made staff fun videos to share with the students and parents



What do we need „after the pandemic“?

- need for effective use of digital technologies to help support and resource teaching and learning
- Learning communities between teachers and a child's home
- Learning support on different levels for disadvantaged children