

Fostering positive attitudes within the teachers and whole school personnel towards sustainability education

PRIMARY AND LOWER SECONDARY SCHOOL



Resources

HUMAN



TIME



COSTS



What was the intervention about?

Aims

Fostering positive attitudes and engagement within the teachers towards sustainability education. Talking about and actions for sustainability would increase. Sustainability would become as visible and integrated in whole school culture. Establishing continuous teachers' and students' teams both at primary and secondary school. Sustainability become as lenses for critical reflection, if our practices are sustainable and meaningful or not.

Acts

Facilitating discussions about roles and links of different subjects to sustainability education. Facilitating value discussions, organising vegetarian cooking evening for teachers. Organising a recycling market WhatsApp group for teachers, integrating sustainability teams' issues in every staff meeting, choosing sustainability as the theme for inquiry-based/ phenomenon-based learning week for three years, organising a testing of sustainability education escape room game for teachers, organising a school visit in a pioneer sustainability education school for group of teachers and a well known pioneer teacher (from the school the visited) came for a visit and talked to all the teachers.

Challenges

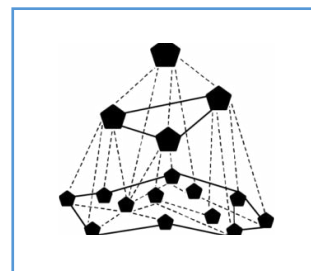
- » Multiple tasks and duties in teachers' work, sustainability considered as an extra, if not considered and integrated as a core goal of education.
- » Sharing responsibilities and expertise.
- » Enough time for planning and collaboration.
- » Sustainability issues need to be raised continuously within the school community.
- » Often social problems, security issues require so much attention and become prioritised that sustainability issues are not considered equally important and do not gain attention.
- » Thus the understanding how promoting students' agency also in ecological sustainability campaigns can improve students' general engagement and wellbeing, and thus social benefits and security, too.

Sustainability competences in place in the intervention



Engagement

- » Positive attitudes and motivation among teachers - without it, nothing will succeed was regarded as the main goal by headmasters at the beginning of the ECF4CLIM projects.
- » Making visible the efforts already made for sustainability.
- » Ongoing discussions are needed.
- » The management team should include someone interested and raising the issues of sustainability. Restricted time resources constrain teachers' possibilities of organising extra activities.
- » Listening and meeting inspiring visitors, learning from other schools' practices.
- » Working together, being a part of a bigger project and network of people acting for sustainability, empowers compared to acting alone.



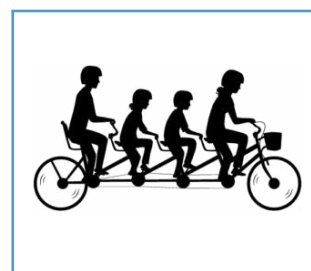
Connections

- » Municipal strategies for sustainability education and carbon neutrality, general attitudes to promote sustainability education matter.
- » Teachers need to find meaningful connections and possibilities to integrate sustainability education into their teaching.
- » During the last campaign days, sustainability issues have been raised more by the teachers and discussed in the lessons.
- » Understanding how acts for sustainability and fostering students' agency can improve social wellbeing and atmosphere can improve engagement (this was raised in the school visit and by the visiting teacher). This inspired the teachers very much!



Change

- » The aim was to promote collective will-formation towards sustainability education.
- » Interventions: Continuous and resilient talks enabled by leaders, active teachers and visitors about the importance and relevance of sustainability.
- » Talk about sustainable acts during the lessons.
- » Also, individuals' initiatives for collective action and individuals' acts matter.



Action

- » Active teachers' enthusiasm and engagement have been the key, finding meaningful roles for teachers to participate, having realistic goals to succeed, considering the rhythm of the school year, teachers' resources, and teachers' working loads.
- » Scheduling a yearly calendar.
- » Integrating sustainability education in basic work and schedule, not being an extra.
- » Receiving support from ECF4CLIM, being part of a bigger movement.

Analytical framework

Individual Competences

- » Headmaster: raising and prioritising, and allocating resources for sustainability education and teachers' sustainability teams.
- » Teachers' understanding of sustainability and sustainability education, considering students' interests, skills of an Inclusive and dialogical, participatory approach, effective organisation, positive and inclusive leading of teachers' and students' teams, communication, managing time and prioritisation of sustainability education.
- » Making initiatives and collaboration.

Collective Competences

- » Inclusive and dialogical, participatory approach, effective, positive and inclusive leading of teachers' and students' teams.
- » Allocation of resources.
- » Shared leadership in sustainability education.
- » Established team meetings for teachers and students.
- » Priorisation and emphasis on sustainability education in the municipality's strategies.
- » Positive attitude and awareness of how sustainability is integral in the school culture.

Technical-material Competences

- » The old school building will be renovated soon, no sense in improving, e.g. recycling system or other technical issues in the school.
- » Technical constraints: Not enough space, e.g. vegetarian food options in the school restaurant's "main tables" or ineffective communication screens at school.

