

Open Education 2030

Call for Vision Papers

School Education

Founding a New Alexandria

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Open School Education 2030 – A new school between relationships and tools

Thinking school anew means going back to the deepest and long lasting roots and, at the same time, exploiting the newest potentialities. In Alexandria in Egypt, a Library and a Museum were founded which were dedicated to research and study: the academics in all disciplines had the best library at their disposal and spaces where they could share their knowledge for the creation of a community of researchers. The school of the future should be founded on the same basis.

TOGETHER HERE NOW

Creating significant, interpersonal relationships among students and between students and teachers. In educational processes we cannot renounce a relational dimension based on real sharing and not only virtual communication. Team work is essential for facing complex problems, making use of different competences and the school should favor this method in order to avoid excessive competition or individual isolation. Our classrooms should help cooperation among different disciplines or, in the same subjects, among different teaching styles. The classrooms become group rooms where school community members focus their attention on certain questions or problems, they plan aims and tasks together, share or evaluate individual and group work. The advantages of a small space are exploited fully for about 50% of the whole time spent at school.

DIFFERENT BUT TOGETHER IN SPACE AND TIME

Interpersonal dimension expands towards a world level, so that the horizon is the largest possible as regards geography or history. Space and time must be the essential coordinates of the formative process. The “other” can be met connecting with people who live far away, welcoming people who come from far away, going to meet them, but also going back into the past: memory of the past is essential for the building of a mature democratic society.

Most of the school space is redefined as an open space, a cultural hub, where teachers and students make use of the available tools to create connections and research at various levels. A space that helps opening up to the world individually or in small/ large groups, that offers meeting or discussion points but also areas for individual work. A space where new technologies can put students and teachers in connection with distant realities but also local opportunities. 50 % of the school time should be spent here so that the advantages of an open but protected community can be fully exploited. Looking at others focused on their task enhances the feeling of belonging to an industrious large group and the willingness to be active in it. Carrying out individual, well defined tasks while necessarily respecting the efforts and the work of others, in a space that builds up occasions for cooperation and sharing, educates to values that are essential for future active citizenship.

OPEN EDUCATION 2030. JRC-IPTS CALL FOR VISION PAPERS. PART II: SCHOOL EDUCATION

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TO SEE WITH OUR AND WITH OTHERS' EYES

Large use of tools and devices can help to register evidences of present and past experiences. Use of paper and digital documents, texts and audio videos, old and new can help research and knowledge. Comparison of different methods, new or traditional, in order to achieve knowledge at a specific or multi subject level will give value and stimuli to one of the most important skills a student should develop at school: creativity.

Everybody agree that new technologies will play an essential role in the development of a new type of school. However, the respect for individual cognitive styles and the evidence of dramatic disparities in the access and skills to operate the constantly developing digital technologies suggests the necessity of a guided approach to them. The new school should offer structured spaces and meaningful opportunities for it.

In conclusion: many scholars have claimed that our way of thinking is rapidly changing with the use of technology, a net style process is replacing sequential processes. In the passage from oral communication to written communication memory lost its essential function but was substituted by new logic reasoning ability. The change which is now taking place should be valued and guided in order not to lose what we have received in terms of cultural heritage and scientific methodology from previous generations but, at the same time, exploiting the immense potentialities of technological innovations:

A NEW SCHOOL THAT DRIVES THE CHANGE