



Country Background Report Hungary

1. Background – everyday reality versus political framework?

In the Hungarian educational system the situation of school directors is quite difficult, partly because in practice they are unprepared to deal with management and educational-professional matters at the same time.

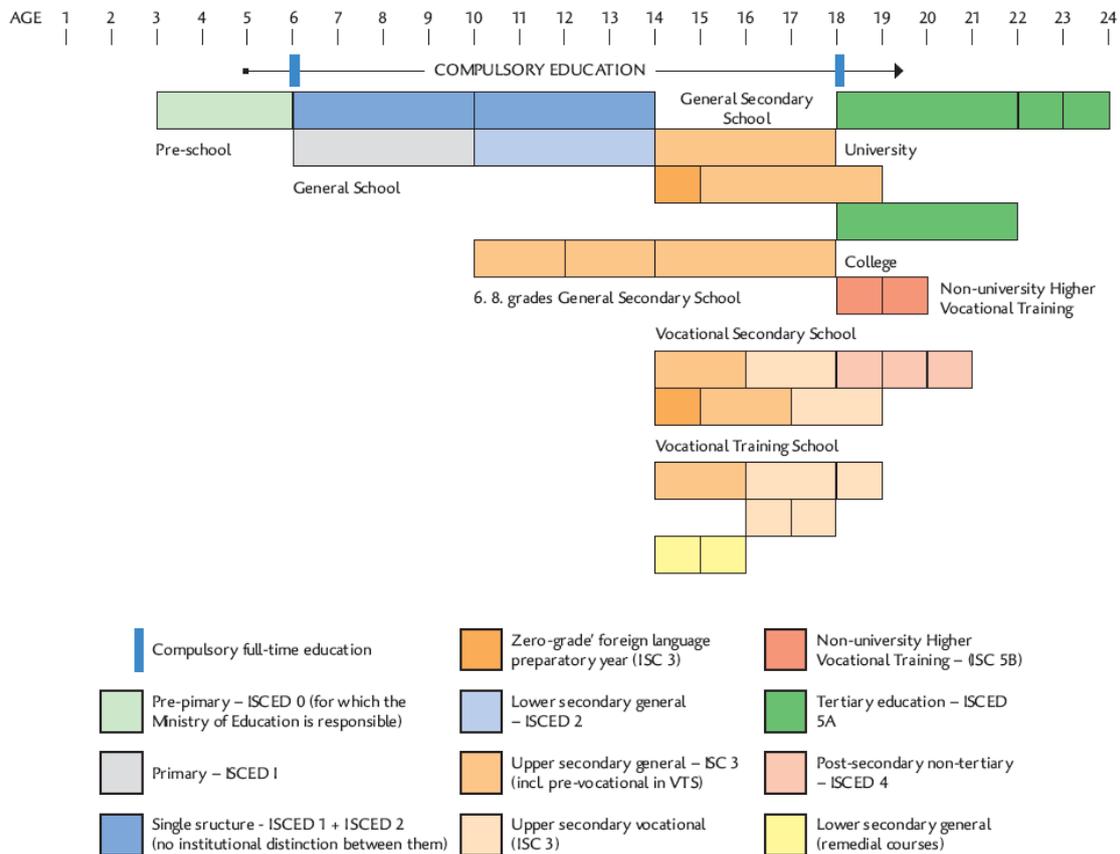
Another problem is that due to the decrease of the number of students in Hungary, quite a few schools have been subject to cessation or in other cases two or more schools have been merged. This made the situation of school leaders even

harder. Some of them lost their position, and others' burdens, due to the merging, were duplicated.

Naturally the merged schools have raised new and unexpected problems as well, while creating an exigency in which all parties lose some of their former autonomy and numerous conflicts surface. To handle these most of the school directors do not have sufficient experience or knowledge. (For example, experience of participative leadership and conflict management.)

2. Context

The Hungarian education system



National and local context

The normative grants are given by the state. The municipalities also render complementary grants to the schools, which help them to maintain themselves. Regional, county and local municipalities define the structure of education at their level, but do not interfere in the life of the institutions, except within local politics and in the person of the director.

The administration of Hungarian public education follows a decentralized model, integrated into the system of public administration. Consequently the anomalies of the administration of public education and those of public administration are basically identical. They both include a fragmented structure of self government at a local level. In public administration (and as aforesaid thus the administration of education as well) there are no intermediate levels. Thus a centralized level is facing the challenges of the new governance in the near future and in the absence of partnership. To meet these, both a reform of the public administration system as well as specific educational measures are needed. The most important tasks to be done by public education administration therefore are:

- the establishment of regional institutions,
- formal and informal strengthening of professional networking,
- the development of micro-regional associations,
- the elaboration of efficient and incentive professional tools with regional characteristics

Central administration

After the accession of Hungary to the European Union, the new measures in legislation and institutional development have played pivotal roles in the development of the central administration. At the beginning of the new parliamentary term, activities of administration on a national level were determined by three factors:

- implementation of measures affecting education formerly communicated in the government program for the first one hundred days
- to commence reforms which are intended to be introduced during the parliamentary term

(for instance, amending the regulations on content)

- launching national target programs in certain priority areas (IT development, foreign language training). The new secondary school final exam has also been introduced during this period. From the middle of the parliamentary term, more emphasis was laid on conscious, strategy-oriented work in administration.

Educational administration at regional level

Responsibilities at a regional level are quite narrow in the system of Hungarian public education administration. There are two regional levels (NUTS II: region and NUTS III: county) with administrative competences. The two levels perform different tasks, with different legal status and in fairly different administrative environments. Since there is no regional decentralization in Hungary, at regional level, there are only the decentralized offices of the National Public Education Evaluation and Examination Centre (OKÉV), a central office overseen by the minister for education, performing regulatory and professional administrative tasks. The scope of activities of OKÉV is strictly limited to the education sector, and it has no professional relationship with any other decentralized organizations, nor any experience in cross-sector cooperation. County governments are established through local elections, they form part of the existing system of public administration within the framework of the self-governance, and they deal with public education among or alongside other public services. County governments are required to perform medium-term planning related to public education so they are expected to fulfil some coordinative tasks.

The future perspective of the county governments' role in regional administration is the most uncertain from the aspect of the regional administrative reform of public administration. The National Regional Development Concept (OTK), approved in 2005, sets out two potential paths as regards the future roles of counties. One describes the concept of service provider counties, in which counties deliver institutional and public services, strictly avoiding overlaps with regional functions. The other potential function is that of the role of development policy integrator, which would give

counties the opportunity to manage the use of structural funds, and they could act as professional contributors in micro-regional and/or regional programs. The future shape of education administration depends on which role is going to come into being.

Micro-regional level (NUTS IV)

The need to reorganize the (NUTS IV) level, situated between the levels of villages/towns and counties, and to furnish it with public administration competences emerged as part of the reform initiatives on public administration at the turn of the millennium. A micro-region is an intentionally organized framework supported by law, established for the professional and effective delivery of public tasks covering the region concerned, and for the promotion of economic development.

Local level

In Hungary's system of public education administration, the majority of decisions concerning public education are made by the institution maintainer³ local governments. In the period under review, cost efficiency problems arising from steadily falling child numbers were a priority among key challenges facing the local level of administration. Based on national and international surveys, the problem of effectiveness was linked to that issue. Further challenges included the tasks stemming from the amendment of the Public Education Act, the utilization of development opportunities included in the first National Development Plan, and adaptation to the new bidding system of the EU structural funds.

Maintainer local governments (municipalities) are required to control their institutions in terms of management, legal compliance and educational effectiveness. They are required to evaluate the implementation of tasks defined in the school's educational program and the effectiveness of the educational work. However – probably due to

³ **Maintainer:** In the context of Hungarian education system the maintainer is the founder and/or the supporter of the school that decides on and grants financial, material support to the institution, and often practises the rights of the employer over the leaders of the school. Regarding alternative schools it can be a legal entity (mostly a Foundation) or a natural person. Regarding traditional schools the maintainer is always the state or the municipality.

insufficient material and human resources – only a few maintainer local governments built assessment-based local evaluation systems. Up to 2005, local governments could secure funding necessary for external maintainer evaluation and institutional self assessment by way of bidding. In 2003 and 2004, the government provided new, normative per-capita grants to maintainers, earmarked to fund educational and pedagogical counseling tasks, including pedagogical evaluation. The law allowed these grants to be used in financing internal self assessment and external evaluation by the maintainer. No information is available as to the specific services that each local government and institution purchased using this resource. What is available, however, are the utilization rates of these budgets at national level (the utilization level was 89.3% in 2003, and 90.5% in 2004). Although normative per-capita grants earmarked for this task remained in the budget act of 2005 and 2006, it was re-classed from the category of targeted per-capita grants to non-targeted per-capita grants, and consequently, the rules limiting utilization were terminated. The drop in commissions for institutional evaluation and educational assessment implies that local governments used this resource mainly for other purposes.

3. School Leadership concepts and practices

Conceptual Framework

The legal status of the school directors and the school staff is regulated by the Law on Public Education and the Law on Labor. The school directors apply for their position either as an outsider or one of the teachers, thus already being part of the school staff. The application itself is a concept which has to be defended. The school staff is entitled to give an opinion, but the final decision is made by the municipality.

The director is in charge of the management of economic matters. He is also entitled to lay down the pedagogical program of the school, which is elaborated and implemented together with the school staff.

The law precisely regulates the working hours, rights and obligations of the director and the

school staff. The regulation of the inner functioning of the schools is done on the basis of the local issues.

The director is personally responsible for all the professional and economic matters.

The maintainer of the school is also the employer of the director. Therefore it appoints him/her, defines his/her salary, etc. The maintainer might be a foundation or also private persons.

Schools which are not maintained by the state also carry out public service, therefore they are also entitled to the state/municipal support for each student.

The director of the school is obliged to report to the maintainer. The report has to contain pedagogical, financial and personal elements.

The director selects the deputy directors, normally from the school staff. Generally this task is divided into two parts. For instance in the case of having 2 deputy directors one of them manages and supervises the pedagogical matters, while the other is responsible for the accounting (of extra hours) and deals with institutional-organizational tasks. The economic director is part of the school staff. Under the supervision of one of the deputy directors and the director, he/she is in charge for the effective managing of economic matters, and also deals with financial matters.

The focus on teaching and learning

It is obligatory for all schools to write a pedagogical program. This is a document which contains all those pedagogical principles, specialties, services which are rendered by the school. Besides it contains an equality plan and a quality development program which guarantees quality.

Furthermore the schools have a local curriculum, which has to be in line with the requirements of the National Basic Curricula (Nemzeti Alaptanterv). It has to contain all those standards, which are in the content of the National Basic Curricula. However the frameworks of the subjects and with what sort of contents these subjects are filled is defined by the local accredited framework curricula. Thus beyond the traditional subjects, like mathematics, literature, music etc. there are

also subjects such as media reading, lifestyle history, human cognition.

Traditional schools

In the majority of the schools in Hungary teaching is conducted in 45 minutes long classes. The leader of the school is the director. Depending on the size of the institution normally there are 2 or 3 deputy directors. The division of labor among the deputy directors is various. At some schools they are responsible for pedagogy departments or classes, at others they divide tasks according to their nature. For example, one of them is responsible for the professional, the other for the organization tasks. The larger schools also have an economic director. State and municipal schools are accountable to an economic body which is maintained by the municipality.

In traditional schools the teachers of the same subjects form a team. Thus all the subjects and cultural activities have a professional team to look after them.

Depending on their age the students form classes and two or more classes constitute a school year. In one class there are about 20-40 students.

Non-traditional schools

Institutions different from the traditional schools and based on reform pedagogic are financed by foundations or by the private sphere. In the non-traditional schools the methods of teamwork, cooperative techniques and practical learning based on experience are the decisive elements of that particular education. The classes are 80 minutes long. Some institutions function in an epochal system, which means that most of the subjects are learned intensively and continuously for two weeks. Then there is a week off which is followed by the intensive teaching of another subject. The experiences of this system are very good, because in this way there is a better opportunity for more profound learning and contrary to the traditional schools the merely theoretical teaching is excluded. However, some of the subjects, such as physical education, foreigner languages and the mother language are taught in the traditional way. Physical education and foreigner languages are taught daily.

These schools not only differ from the traditional schools in their practice of teaching and learning,

but also regarding their hierarchy structure. They are normally led by a manager director, but the professional conception is directed (together with the school teachers) by a so-called vocational director, who is normally the founder of the school. An economic director is also in the leadership of the institution.

The inner structure of these schools is very diverse. Being personal is the main point. Thus the number of students per class is lower (except in the Waldorf-schools). And instead of classes with one class teacher there is a so-called mentor system where 10-12 students belong to one mentor.

Contrary to the professional teams formed by teachers of the same subjects in the traditional schools, in the non-traditional system the teachers who teach the same group of students form a team. This enables them to solve the students' individual/common problems together. (In the traditional system it is more complicated because the teachers normally do not teach the same students.)

For years there have been numerous programs in Hungary, which are intended to be implemented by the educational policy through the financing of the European Union. One of these is the so-called competence-based education. There have been six areas (text comprehension, mathematics, career building, foreigner languages, kindergarten pedagogic, lifestyle and social competencies) of which there have been program packages (curriculum, educational materials, and additional trainings) within the frameworks of the competence-based education.

The so-called Integration Programme, also belongs to the central programs. This program aims at the common education of the healthy, the disadvantaged and the multiply disadvantaged students.

The program which applies to the whole vocational education is the establishment of the so-called Regional Integration Centers (RIC) and the aforementioned modular education. The essence of the RIC is, in order to avoid the fragmentation of the resources and means, a central

educational workshop with high-tech. This workshop is used by all the institutions which belong to a certain center. Currently the RIC have many types. This institution is led by a strongly market-focused management. On professional matters they make decisions together with the member schools.

The centers have separate programs. For example in the less developed parts of the country there are centers which especially focus on the improvement of the abilities of children from a socially more disadvantaged environment.

To sum up, one can observe that in the construction of the school structure the leader/director plays an essential role. In the non-traditional schools the directors involve the teachers, the parents and the more immediate social environment as well into the design of the conception of the school.

It is also notable that in these schools democracy plays a particularly important role. Therefore the director enquires the opinion of the relevant school body in all questions concerning the institution. Most of these bodies are formed according to the type of decision. Thus some of them are in charge of admission matters, some of professional matters and others have the function as school courts and authority to take disciplinary action against the students.

The director of the schools also teaches and takes over tasks as a mentor as well. Contrary to that, in schools maintained by the municipality, the director, other than teaching in a few classes, does not deal with teaching and mentoring tasks in general.

The plenary meeting of the school staff is led by the director and takes place each week on the same day. In these meetings the events of the current term are evaluated and decisions that concern the whole school staff are being made. It is an attribute of the non-state schools, that the whole school staff gives consent to personnel decisions. The director only endorses these.

Restructuring and re-culturing school organizations

Nowadays the leadership still consists of the director and of the deputy director(s). In dealing with the problems of the institutions, it is unavoidable to alter the leadership of the school while there is an ongoing reformation of the organization structure as well. At this point there emerges the “manager” director, who directs the school with a view that takes the market into consideration as well, therefore turning the school into an institution of “service”. At the same time the professional leader directs the inner development of the school and builds a professional team, while the operative director directs the daily work. The pace of the commencing reforms is very slow, and primarily, begins at the non-state institutions.

Concerning schools that are maintained by the municipalities and schools that are not maintained by the state or by the municipality there are differences between the roles and the division of the tasks. This is certainly not entirely unified in the private sphere. The functioning of some schools is more similar to the state schools, but the so-called alternative, reform pedagogic institutions differ from the state/municipal institutions a great degree.

In both types of institution there are meetings for the whole school staff. These meetings in the municipal (state financed) schools are normally twice a year while smaller councils are weekly organized. In private schools meetings take place weekly. Apart from operative matters, current pedagogic matters are discussed in these meetings.

Whereas in state financed schools the working groups are formed by the teachers based on the subjects that they teach (professional working groups), in alternative schools teachers who teach the same students form a working group. Thus teachers teaching the same class, the same group (whatever the basic study unit is in the institution) form a working group. In the state financed schools the professional working groups mostly develop their own system of evaluation of the students and the common curricula together. Though in many institutions, their existence is merely formal. They rarely meet, usually once or twice every two months, or even less.

Institutions that follow a reform pedagogic mainstream discuss the development of the students and the issues that are to be dealt with weekly. These institutions reflect the individual centered approach even in the schedule and importance of their school meetings.

A few years ago the teachers in Hungarian schools were obliged to visit the families of the students. After the revolution, this obligation ceased to exist. Consequently teachers were hindered in getting to know the personal circumstances of their students. The parental meetings (for each class) led by the head of the class have remained. These take place once in every half year. Besides, the teachers of the subjects hold consulting hours in each month. Here the parents can question the teacher more personally. In special cases the meetings need to be personal. Parents who have no interest in being in touch with the school (normally also caring less for the education of their children) can mean difficulties in this regard. In private schools (excluding those that are especially rendering services to disabled children) to keep in touch with the parents is easier, because even the choice of the school has been a result of a consciously-made decision of the parents.

The directors and the deputy directors also have consulting hours, so if necessary they can also be contacted personally from time to time.

Establishing and negotiating the direction of the school development

Primarily legal expectations and the expectations of their maintainer are considered as the most important external demands of the schools. These expectations are generally conveyed as directives to the school staff. In some cases smaller ad hoc groups are entrusted to execute these.

There are less professional expectations of alternative schools. Here primarily the parents have certain demands, which are evaluated, then accepted or rejected by the school staff or by a group of teachers. Naturally these schools are also bound by most of the legal regulations that are explained by the director or by an official. The necessary changes are implemented after a common decision.

System leadership and cooperation in networks

Network building is only starting in the national education system.

Generally speaking the schools have been very closed towards their external environment until now. They are not keen to be in contact even with each other. Practically they do not have social relations. Perhaps the smaller local communities still expect the organization of some events from the school.

Unfortunately neither there are developing relationships among the institutions. Only a few, more open schools recognize the need of it at all.

Vocational schools however stand as positive exceptions to the general situation. In the regions and in the districts there are bodies that according to the situation on the labor market define for instance the professions that can be taught by the institutions of vocational trainings. The vocational schools have regular contact with them. Civil organizations also help to solve the problems of the schools, though most of them are poor and the number of them is less than it should be.

Nevertheless, it is perceivable that those institutions that join in the common work are more effective. In these schools the development is more dynamic and changes emerge sooner. This is primarily due to the European Union tenders.

An example of good practice Alternative Secondary School of Economics (AKG)

The AKG is originally not a professional, pedagogical institution, but an organization and modernization program. The school places the individual at the focus of its curricula and this defines its organization structure as well.

In a free school only free people live - Basic principles

An organization for pedagogic tasks can only be organized within its limits. Therefore the friendly, transparent and personal daily practice of the

micro-schools⁴ co-exists with the high standards of educational, personnel and organizational conditions of the school.

The criteria of efficiency of the school are the support of the optimal development of its students, and the contentment of the users of the school. All other criteria are inferior to this.

The AKG is the school of the teachers. Whereas decisions concerning a student can only be made together with the student and his/her family, individual and strategical decisions concerning the entire school or some parts of it are professional tasks.

The base of self-governance is the decision-making mechanism. Within the school staff, in order to carry out the different professional tasks, independent bodies are organized. Considering that right decisions can only be made by possessing the right information, all questions concerning the entire school are made available for all the school users and the employees. This is called "the principle of total publicity." The decision-making system of the AKG has no hierarchy. The employees that carry out the tasks are elected by the community concerned. Hierarchy is replaced by functional responsibility, which is based on "the principal of trust". The person/persons in charge of a certain task bear full responsibility even if he/she/they disagree with the decision. This is "the principle of common decision and personal responsibility."

Conferences

The professional, pedagogical, economic conciliatory, decision-making, informational, and coordination forum of the AKG is the teachers' conference. The conferences (excluding personnel matters) are open to the public.

Pedagogical workshops. The micro schools.

The micro schools are the most important organization units of the school. They are independent educational workshops, which ensure the personal, daily cooperation among teachers teaching the same students and their students.

⁴ **Micro-schools** are the basic organizational unit of the school, providing an opportunity to merge the interests of individual students with that of the larger, student-centered entity

Professional workshops

They are organization units that carry out certain tasks of training in different cultural fields.

Plenary conference of the patrons⁵

Professional coordination forum of pedagogical tasks beyond individuals.

Educational leader

Professional leader, who is elected each year by the school staff. He/She puts the educational program together and makes sure it is carried out.

Managing director

The managing director is a member of the Pedagogical Council and is the leader and coordinator of the operative matters of the school. He/she is elected each year by the school staff. He has the right of the employer over the economic director.

Corporate secretary

He or she is a member of the Pedagogical Council and bears responsibility for the functioning of the school staff and also for the legal work – professional and mental hygiene status of the teachers.

He/She also is responsible for the development of the working schedule, the pay structure and interests. He/She also deals with conflicts within the teaching staff.

The control of the users of the schools

The Advisory Board has the rights of the maintainer. It has to secure the professional and economic autonomy of the school. It also has to carry out the tasks of the maintainer and the School Court.

System of feedback and self-correction

The self-governed school staff considers transparent functioning particularly important. The AKG publishes its educational programs, curriculums, working schedules, events and

⁵ **Patron** is a professional teacher selected by a small group of students to assist and represent them throughout their time in the school. Fulfilling the role of "parent" in a school context, it is the responsibility of a patron to keep students informed and support them in their successes and failures. Similar role to the head of the class in traditional schools, but with a wider range of responsibility and tasks towards his/her students.

decisions of the school staff as an independent publication and also on its webpage. For the whole period of education it publishes all the demands of the subjects and every student receives the annual AKG program as a publication.

The AKG regularly orders a total auditing of the institution and publishes its results. In the last 17 years the school has been a subject of three total audits.

The School Court

The Advisory Board has the only veto on decisions of the School Court. In this case the final decision is made by an external person or legal entity elected on a common ground. The members of the School Court are: two students of the micro-schools, two parents elected by the parental conference of the micro-school, seven teachers of the school and those members of the Advisory Board who are not teachers, parents or students.

Tasks of the teachers

The educational program of the AKG expects significantly more from its teachers than is legally demanded. The basic demand of personal pedagogy is the regular, almost continuous coexistence of teachers and students, because personal interaction is one of the most important attributes of the AKG.

4. Recruiting and educating school leaders

Recruitment and retention of leaders

The preconditions of the appointment to school leader in Hungary are defined by the Law on Education. According to this, the following legal conditions must be fulfilled to be appointed to a school leader:

- qualification in higher education and a professional qualification in education as well as vocational pedagogic qualification
- in the event of a second or further appointment an institutional leadership qualification in the framework of pedagogic qualifications
- at least 5 years of practice
- employment at the institution for a period of time

Around the revolution in 1989 mostly middle-aged persons who were formerly school teachers became directors. Currently in Hungary in practice almost completely inexperienced but as teachers quite mature and older professionals are taking their place as school directors. The average age of school directors is the lowest among the leaders of grammar schools and it is the highest among the directors of the vocational schools.

Normally in the selection of the applicants, the maintainer or the group of teachers who give their opinion on the appointment considers a higher age as a positive sign. This applies to a situation where in the selection procedure there are more applicants (normally in Budapest or the bigger county towns). Where the number of applicants is rather low (small or disadvantaged towns), the maintainer gives priority to the abilities of the applicant.

Despite the profession being womanized among the school leaders there are more men than women. The reason is that in this profession only the leading position can guarantee the higher status and higher salary. Society in Hungary is still man-centered, besides this leading profession has additional burdens that are incompatible with the role of women in the family.

Attractiveness of school leadership

Considering the income of school leaders, directors of grammar and secondary schools have the lowest and the leaders of vocational schools receive the highest salary. Beyond the basic salary the main regular complementary income of school leaders is the extra payment. As a survey indicates, the 94.9% of those questioned receive some extra payment or some kind of leader allowance. However, it is surprising that not all of the leaders do because the appointed director is entitled to receive extra allowance, but in certain cases the maintainer, referring to scant financial circumstances, does not pay it out. Besides the payments for overtime working hours are also substantial in the case of school leaders.

In Hungary the status of a school leader is attractive, because basically it is the highest career position in an educational institution. Thus its prestige is high. However, only a few people venture to apply to be a school leader, because there are more burdens than advantages of this

position. This is due to the recognition that a successful school should be functioning according to the rules of the market, whereas most of the institutions are faced with pre-market circumstances. The frequent alterations of the legal demands and the financial problems often mean almost impossible expectations of the directors. Thus the school leaders have to fulfil many demands and need to be always ready to make compromises. Therefore they face mental pressure as well.

National structures of pre-service, induction and in-service education of school leaders

Training of school directors

In Hungary the training of school directors is traditionally well developed regarding both the institutional system as well as the participation in the training courses. The rate of participation in the training courses has grown especially since 2005, when the attainment of a post graduate degree of leadership in public education became a precondition of becoming a director or deputy director of a school.

The content of the training courses includes all the scopes that are needed for planning and decision making. The students attain knowledge of the legal environment that surrounds them and also of economic matters. Having subjects such as social and learning psychology, structure development, and conflict management they learn about leading more profoundly.

The participation of school leaders in the trainings is optional. The training courses take place in the frameworks of different events, assemblies, conferences organized by state organs or private firms.

Training of teachers

The school leader is responsible for the in-service training courses of the teachers, because he delegates his/her colleagues to the training courses which are in line with the program of the school.

According to the rules of the central in-service training courses system, 120 hours per 7 years in-service training are obligatory.

The in-service training courses primarily contain methodology, psychology, special education needs and informatics.

Coaching and other forms of support

In the grammar schools 1/3 and in the secondary schools only 1/5 of the teachers are involved in the elaboration of the division of the school subjects. At the same time the involvement of the leaders of work teams is more significant in the secondary schools. About 75% of the directors involve the whole school staff in the selection of the curricula. This rate is lower in the secondary schools (56%). The responsibility of the leaders of the work teams is more substantial in the secondary schools than in the grammar schools. The evaluation of the teachers is done by smaller bodies (director, deputy director, leader of work team). Here the involvement of the staff is 8-10 %. The leadership of the school bears the responsibility for the admission of new students. A substantial part of complaints of the parents and problems of students' attitude is subject to the authority of the head of the class. Beyond a certain point attitude problems most likely belong to state child protection matters, or to the teacher involved in the issue.

School leadership and school staff

In 1/3 of the schools there is no regular monthly assembly of the teachers. In more than half of them there is an assembly every month and 12 % of the schools hold some sort of meeting. Grammar schools have a meeting usually each month and 26% of the secondary schools summon their staff almost every week. In the vocational institutions meetings are rarer.

According to the opinions of the 75 % of the directors, if the parents are not satisfied with the teachers they will consider the problems at the staff meetings and at the same time will start to evaluate the work of the teachers regularly. However, the evaluations of the teachers based on a transparent reliable system occur only in a few schools. Moreover in the evaluations there are many subjective elements and casualties.

The sources on which the evaluations are based are similar in grammar and secondary schools. The directors normally give priority to their personal experience (mostly based on their class visits). The participation and the efficiency of the

teachers in performing common professional tasks and the results of students in competitions are also decisive elements. The extra aid for students with shortcomings, the satisfaction of the parents, the opinion of other colleagues and the results of different surveys are less significant than the evaluations. The students' opinion is considered more in secondary schools.

5. Challenges, areas of innovation and underlying evidence

Today in Hungary school leadership is "floating". Unfortunately there are only very few leaders with a certain concept who are also able to exploit the opportunities and to direct pedagogical work in an appropriate way while at the same time creating the financial circumstances and building the external relationship of his/her school. The so-called manager director types are in vocational education. It is not accidental, because the area of vocational education has the most direct connection with the market.

Since the revolution, the functions of school leadership have changed to a great degree. In Hungary the schools have gained considerable autonomy. This affects their program, the inner structure of the school, the methods of teaching, the evaluation system, quality assurance etc.. Furthermore foundation and private schools have emerged also and there are more and more schools based on reform pedagogy. The National Basic Curricula was also issued. Its requirements are obligatory for all institutions. Six and eight year long classes are also novelties of the last decade, and the whole of vocational education has been through essential changes. In the past five years the whole of public education was imbued with competency based program developing. This entailed the appearance of some new subjects (such as text comprehension, career making, and the areas of social work and lifestyle) and gave a new approach to the traditional ones (mathematics, foreign languages, literature, music etc.) as well. The means of education such as the curricula, the different school resources, teachers' guides and training courses have also changed.

The biggest change has happened in the school structure of vocational education. Regional

integral centers have been created, partly due to professional intentions, partly for the better allocation of resources. The register of the vocational qualifications acknowledged by the state has also been modified. Education has become modular.

Problems

The major problem is that still the traditional, information-centered methods of education dominate. Despite the intention of educational policy and of the growing number of more progressive school models the breakthrough is still to come. School management has a double function and thus often needs to satisfy confronting expectations. For instance, it is responsible for the implementation of professional innovations, which often at the same time

contradict the deficit of the budget and management based on marketing.

The directors do have some representative organizations, but the effectiveness of these are quite meager. The above mentioned facts result in the financial problems hindering the tendency for investments. Another problem is that the leadership training of the directors is not practical. There are very few trainers who have sufficient experience, thus their range to help the directors in their work effectively are quite limited.

To sum up, leadership and the profession of pedagogy must be professionalized. We are committed to this objective.

Appendix

Legal situation

Law on Public Education Act no. 79. 1993

Law on Labor Act no. 22. 1992

Regulation of the Educational Ministry no. 46/1999 (13. December) on The Corporation of In-service Trainings of Pedagogues

Regulation no.11/1999 (8. June) on the Functioning of Educational Institutions

Regulation of the government no.243/2003 on the Edition, Introduction and Application of the National Curricula

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