



Country Report Principality of Liechtenstein

The survey is based on a concept of leadership which is not limited to the school head, but concerns all levels of school, regards teaching in the centre of all efforts and generates changes in school (e.g. through establishing structures). The data refer to kindergarten and obligatory school (years 1 to 9, excluding grammar-school).

1. Background

Liechtenstein is a small principality (on a constitutional basis with government and parliament) situated between Switzerland and Austria, related to both countries' cultural background. It is part of the Swiss economic system using Swiss francs.

Liechtenstein's school system currently undergoes a period of transition partly combined with uncertainty of the future. This transition focused on two developments:

1. Restructuring the system's secondary level (including grammar school) which is divided by three achievement sectors (streaming). This effort failed politically like in all German speaking countries.
2. Improvement of the countrywide administration and the organisation of the individual school, strengthening school leadership and responsibility on school level (obligatory schools). Leadership with a professionalised school organisation means for Liechtenstein a redefinition of its traditional school culture comparable with the efforts of the Swiss schools' (organisational) development.
3. There are always complaints on the professional level about political discontinuity. However, the new focus on school leadership is still on the political administrative agenda and supports the ongoing organisational development which is related to the quest for school quality (competencies and educational standards).

2. Context

National context

There is a general assumption about the responsibility of the individual school ("autonomy") to meet the current challenges. Therefore Liechtenstein started to *decentralise* competencies and is going to reinforce the role of school leaders. Since 2008 the school authorities have discussed and presented the increase of school leader's competencies. This process is also backed by Liechtenstein's government and parliament (legislation, finance). In the frame of the national budget the government – and no longer the parliament – allows the employment plan (teachers and head teachers) and decides upon the overall financial resources of schools. In future the staff generally is to be allocated in relation to student numbers. This permits schools and head teachers to deal with the teaching and learning organisation in a flexible way.

Conceptual and planning work for the new development (e. g. for a new Education Act and other regulations) is done respectively prepared by the "School Authority" (Schulamts) in two sections (administration and inspectorate). At the same time this office is responsible for the head teacher's workplace and job description, preparing the employment of head teachers and visiting teaching and learning (inspects teachers). This is perceived to be supportive by the schools.

An overall review of the schools is done by the inspectorate (part of the office) every seven years. In the near future the school office will evaluate the educational performance of the obligatory school, especially the achievement of standards.

Schulbezeichnung	Anzahl Schulen	Anzahl Klassen	Anzahl Schüler			Schüler je Klasse
			m	w	gesamt	
Kindergärten im Oberland		30	238	198	436	14.53
Kindergärten im Unterland		19	135	156	291	15.32
Total Kindergärten		49.0	373	354	727	14.84
Primarschulen im Oberland (inkl. Einführungsklassen)	7	72.0	637	599	1236	17.17
Primarschulen im Unterland (inkl. Vorschule)	7	49.0	374	368	742	15.14
Total Primarschulen	14	121.0	1011	967	1978	16.35
Oberschule Triesen	1	11.0	68	66	134	12.18
Oberschule Vaduz	1	9.0	55	53	108	12.00
Oberschule Eschen	1	12.0	80	66	146	12.17
Total Oberschulen	3	32.0	203	185	388	12.13
Realschule Balzers	1	6.0	58	47	105	17.50
Realschule Triesen	1	8.0	64	82	146	18.25
Realschule Vaduz	1	8.0	59	65	124	15.50
Realschule Schaan	1	8.0	83	50	133	16.63
Realschule Eschen	1	13.0	136	104	240	18.46
Total Realschulen	5	43.0	400	348	748	17.40
Liecht. Gymnasium, 1.-4.Kl.		22.0	206	237	443	20.14
Liecht. Gymnasium, 5.-7.Kl.		18.0	112	165	277	15.39
Liechtensteinisches Gymnasium Total	1	40.0	318	402	720	18.00
Frw. 10. Schuljahr	1	5.0	30	43	73	14.60
Total Sekundarschulen	10	120.0	951	978	1929	16.08
Intensivkurs Deutsch als Zweitsprache		1.0	6	7	13	13.00
Gesamttotal	24	291.0	2341	2306	4647	15.97
Berufsmittelschule	1	6.0	89	48	137	22.83
Total Sekundarstufe I (OS, RS, US LG)	8	97.0	809	770	1579	16.28
Total öffentliche Pflichtschulen (PS, SS1, IK DaZ)		219.0	1826	1744	3570	16.30

Anzahl Lehrpersonen Schuljahr 2009/2010	
Schulstufe	Anzahl
Kindergarten	77
Primarschule	253
Oberschule	85
Realschule	104
10. Schuljahr	14
Gymnasium	88
Berufsmittelschule	14
Time-out Schule	3
Sprachassistenten	13
Praktikanten	4
Total	655

Number of teachers per school type in 2009/10

Schools

A school as such has no competencies. However, there is a policy to establish a leadership structure for each school where the head teacher is the highest in rank.

3. School Leadership Concepts and Practices

Conceptual framework

Summarising the leadership structure (leadership model, resp. governance model):

1. *Political leadership (national and local)* by parliament, government, school office and local schools council:
2. Legitimization, financing, general personnel matters (staffing, employment), inspection of teachers and head teachers, evaluation
3. *Administrative leadership* by head teacher and administration:
4. Personnel (staff planning etc.), organisation of school (timetable, composition of classes, etc.), participation in political decision making
5. *Educational leadership* by head teacher and teacher conference:
6. School development planning, teaching and learning matters

Liechtenstein's leadership concept on school level concentrates on the administrative function because educational leadership is divided and must fit into the political situation. The head

teacher's position could be viewed as one of an administrative director (maybe in the sense of a school manager).

The main leadership competence of the head teacher refers to the assessment of the teachers in respect to teamwork, project involvement and cooperation. The head teacher asks for assessment interviews with staff members in order to propose further in-service-training. However, the evaluation of teaching and learning remains to the inspectorate (School Office), including the teacher's flexible salary contingent. Consequences for in-service-training are decided upon by inspectorate and head teacher together.

The leadership concept for a school refers mainly to head teachers but recommends the head teachers to organise other leadership roles, which depends on the size of the school unit. A larger unit with a primary school and a kindergarten e.g. consists of a head teacher and a deputy head, each for the primary and kindergarten level.

Focus on teaching and learning

Looking from the perspective of an individual school, the focus on teaching and learning is divided between the teachers and the inspectorate. The teachers perform and the inspectors evaluate. The head teacher's competence for the teaching and learning programme is also limited because it is settled at the school conference (mainly the teaching staff).

To influence teaching and learning the following measures exist:

- Programme and planning of the school year, composition of the classes
- Guidance of the teachers by visits of the inspectorate and the following in-service-trainings. Further education has a frequently mentioned significance.
- School conference to stimulate a development of teaching and learning (e.g. establishing a project group)

Obstacles to prevent learning-centred leadership

Establishing school leadership is a work in progress. New roles have to be developed on all levels of the system. The division of labour between head teachers and inspectorate

concerning teaching and learning on the one hand and school organisation on the other, should be evaluated to know the effects of this structure. It could lower the importance of the head teacher's role as well as the effects of restructuring and reculturing if disconnected to teaching and learning.

Restructuring and re-culturing school organisation

The process of strengthening school leadership, especially the role of head teachers, is not yet finished. It started with guidelines and principles of leadership and developed organisation models for the individual school. This occurred in relation to the redistribution of competencies concerning the different governance levels as described above.

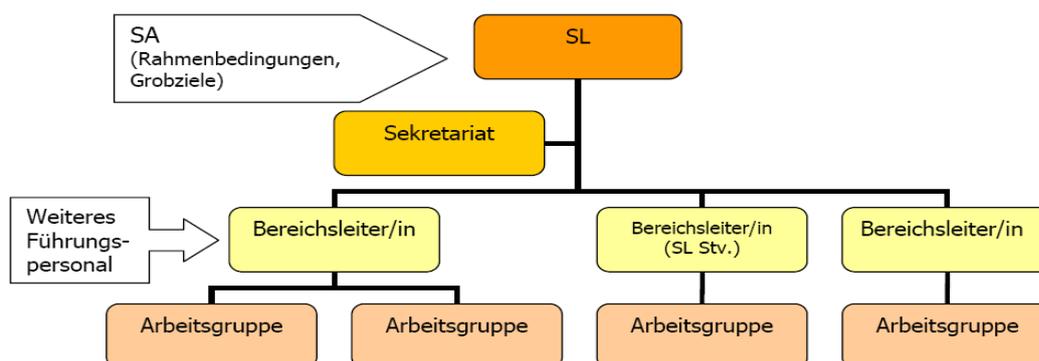
- The guidelines refer to social, personal, organisational, educational and developmental abilities. These guidelines partly led to areas of competencies like

education, administration/organisation, communication, quality development.

- The principles of guiding a school consider the new situation giving the school more responsibility for enhancing the quality of teaching and learning what requires on the other side accountability. The head teacher has to organise and support these processes and has the position to do so. The head teacher must show several characteristics of behaviour like motivating, convincing, encouraging the staff and taking action. Therefore leadership is considered as a corporate task to set and reach the goals of the school.
- School organisation models of Liechtenstein take into account the size and the situation of the school. The models proposed refer to schools' internal organisation and combined school units.

(1) *Internal Organisation*: class conference, teacher conference, working groups, special functions, secretariat, head teacher

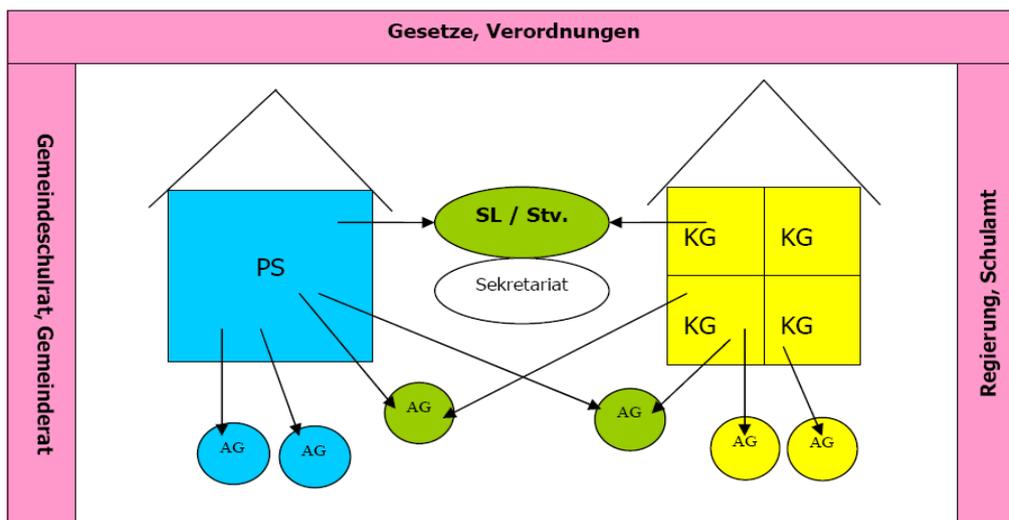
Example for middle-sized and large schools



(Graph, p. 12, Concept Paper Liechtenstein)

The (2) combined model becomes more and more important because of the foundation or basic

level when kindergarten and primary classes go together.



(Graph, p. 13 Concept Paper Liechtenstein)

Shared values can be developed and quality fostered by two input processes: To propose measures including working groups to tackle an educational topic and getting a commitment of the school conference. The performance of a decided upon programme can be assessed by the head teachers interview with teachers and by the visit of the inspectorate. A collaboration of head teachers and inspector is necessary. Additionally, in-service-training can be organised to support a programme or individual abilities. Also in respect to school development, working groups can be established, then the teacher’s involvement is due to the assessment by the head teacher. In both input cases the head teacher is part of the evaluation.

Establishing and negotiating the direction of school development

Actually the school development is a process with many players on three levels, national, local and school. The best instrument of the head teacher to be informed and to define/to negotiate for the direction of his/her school is the school head’s conference. This conference is constantly in contact with the School Office.

At all school sites a parents association was founded trying to influence school matters. These associations form a national organisation (www.dev.li)

System leadership

System leadership is organised by the government’s School Office and concerns the head teachers’ conference. The chair is taken by one member of the Office and the assembly takes place every three weeks during the school year. This conference allows a top down strategy by the authorities as well as a bottom up input into the national planning of school development.

Good practice / success stories

The combination of kindergarten and primary school (basic level), organised as a day care school, leads to a functional leadership structure, according to the above mentioned model 2.

4. Recruiting and educating school leaders

Recruiting and retention

In Liechtenstein teachers can become head teachers. The teacher team of a school proposes a candidate to apply for the head teacher position. The employment is formally done by the government but prepared and executed by the School Office.

Attractiveness

Traditionally the head teachers' function was a part time occupation, depending on the size of the school. For middle sized and larger schools the aim is full employment of the head teachers (100%). They get the salary of a teacher (basis), plus an extra pay for the leadership function.

(National) structures of education (pre- and in-service, induction)

Liechtenstein cooperates with Swiss Teacher Training Institutes for school head training on the job, if they offer education management courses. Out of 14 head teachers on primary school level, for example, only two have finished the training, the others are on their way.

Coaching and other forms of support

Support is available by a contract with the Teacher Training Institute of the Canton Zurich, Switzerland. In that respect coaching is used.

5. To sum up: Challenges, Areas of Innovations and Underlying Evidence

From the observers point of view two aspects seem to be crucial:

1. The division of work between the inspectorate and the head teachers with respect to teaching and learning. To influence the core competence of the teachers the head teacher needs external support of inspectors, reducing the school leader to a manager (at least to a certain extent). There is not yet any evidence whether this model is successful.
2. Although the head teacher is responsible for quality development it does not contain teaching and learning and it is not clear whether self-evaluation has any significance. A move towards self-evaluation which includes teaching and learning would strengthen the head teacher's competencies for quality development.

6. Appendix

Konzept „Schulleitung im Fürstentum Lichtenstein“, 14. November 2008 (SA/bog, 25.11.2008)

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