



Growing minds towards 21st Century Competencies *Webinar*

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Prof. Kirsti Lonka

Title: What kinds of skills shall our students need? And how to promote them? The case of phenomenon-based learning

The way to globalisation, digitalisation, and automation is paved with many challenges shared by countries around the globe. Finland is currently developing the school system to a new level and standard. This calls for intensive reforms, both in teacher education and at school. In addition to the broad-based competencies central to the new Finnish curriculum, Kirsti Lonka discusses the latest developments in education, phenomenon-based learning, technologies in education, and new learning environments. A new strategic project growingmind.fi is introduced that applies a rich set of research methods, combining surveys, contextual sampling methods, qualitative methods and neuroscience to look at the new generation of learners in Finnish schools. This also involves teacher learning and developing the whole school community.

Kirsti Lonka, PhD, is Professor of Educational Psychology at University of Helsinki, Finland and Extraordinary Professor, North-West University, South Africa. Kirsti is an expert in innovative learning methods and technologies in advanced learning and working environments. She has published more than 100 scientific articles, but also book chapters, textbooks and popular texts.



Prof. Hans Henrik Knoop

Title: Flourishing of learners and teachers

Today, psychology, and especially positive psychology informs us well as regards educational processes worth the name – that is: how to view the flourishing of pupils and teachers as a precondition for high academic achievement rather than a result of it. The intrinsic value of the educational experience, the sense of self-determination, the optimal experience of flow, the joy of employing willpower and truly meaningful self-discipline are moving steadily towards the center of educational thinking. This is not because there is agreement that school and education should be joyful, but because it is more effective, more sought after, more morally just, and more competitive in the long run. No culture or society is served well by disengaged citizens.

Hans Henrik Knoop is Associate Professor with distinction, Director of the Positive Psychology Research Unit at Aarhus University, Denmark, and Extraordinary Professor, North-West University, South Africa. His research in positive psychology has involved thousands of educators and leaders and currently half a million Danish pupils. He has authored and co-authored more than 180 publications including 9 books, has delivered more than thousand invited talks around the world.



Prof. Ben Mardell

Title: Pedagogy of play in South Africa

What does playful learning look and feel like in South African schools? Play is a core resource for learning, in early childhood and beyond, and thus should have an important role in school. Yet even educators committed to their students learning through play can have difficulty articulating what the phenomenon of playful learning involves. Based on in-depth observations and interviews in 11 classrooms, the Pedagogy of Play South Africa project has created a model of what playful learning involves. This presentation shares the model and outlines the methodology that led to its creation.

Ben Mardell is a principle investigator at Project Zero (PZ), the oldest research organisation at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. Ben has been associated with PZ since 1999, initially as a researcher on the Making Learning Visible (MLV) project and helped co-author Making Learning Visible: Children as Individual and Group Learners. When not at PZ, Ben enjoys playing with his family (hiking, swimming and playing games) and participating in triathlons.



Prof. Jonathan Jansen

Title: Presence as a competence

What is it about certain leaders that their mere presence fills a room? Is presence something that can be acquired through learning? How is presence a competence among leaders young and old? And what are the various dimensions of presence in the life of organisations?

Jonathan Jansen is Distinguished Professor of Education at the University of Stellenbosch. He was recently a Fellow at the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences at Stanford University. He is President of the Academy of Science of South Africa. He started his career as a Biology teacher in the Cape and holds a PhD from Stanford. He is the author of the award-winning book, *Knowledge in the Blood* and his forthcoming books include *Inequality in South African schools* (with Nic Spaul) and *the Politics of Decolonization*. His first grandchild is 6 months old and she prefers Tolstoy over Dr Seuss.



Prof. Mary Grosser

Title: Grooming students to become smarter in the art of thinking, living and working together

Academic excellence is important and necessary in the 21st century, but not sufficient. In addition to well-rounded academic knowledge, competencies to think and behave smarter are required to shape students who are passionate about what happens in the future to the world and the communities they live in. Quality education is more than just obtaining qualifications, but also grooms students in the art of living and working together. Against the background of High-Performance Learning Theory and the Round Square Philosophy, the presentation will advocate for the use of curricular and co-curricular learning opportunities and activities that promote a pedagogy that is humane, intellectually challenging and pluralistic in order to groom students to become smarter in the art of thinking, living and working together.

Mary Grosser, PhD, is an Extraordinary Professor at the North-West University, South Africa. Her research interest centres on teaching that optimizes cognitive development and critical thinking development among students at school. During 2017, she was the editor of a publication entitled, *Developing Critical Thinking: A Multi-Dimensional Approach in the Context of South Africa*.