



INCLUSIVE SCHOOL – Foundation of a Socially Just Society

CONCEPT

29 June – 5 July 2014

Hotel Board, Jahorina, Bosnia and Herzegovina

BACKGROUND

Network of Education Policy Centers (NEPC) believes Inclusive Education to be crucial for developing a socially just society. NEPC identified the Inclusive Education as programmatic priority in its current strategy.

Inclusive education applies to a set of principles, values, and practices based on ensuring equal rights to education for all children regardless of gender, ethnicity, or social and developmental issues. Inclusive education thus applies to and is a right for all children. It is driven by the principle of social justice and the need to remove all forms of inequity from our education systems. It stems from the realization that when the best interests of each child are promoted by the entire school community, education promotes social cohesion, belonging, and active participation in learning.

NEPC recognizes that the principles of inclusion must be realized within all education systems in order for all children to reach their full potential. This is a difficult process of replacing deeply embedded social and educational inequalities for a set of principles, values, and practices that, if put into action, can transform school cultures and entire communities. It involves changing school cultures deeply embedded with exclusionary beliefs and advocating for a system of values centered on the best interests of the student. That being stated it is crucial for understanding of both issues of inclusion and implementing practices that responsibility cannot be solely on schools or teachers.

Inclusive policies and practices are relatively new in the regions covered by NEPC and schools in many countries were neither prepared nor supported in the change required by new policies. Schools find

themselves at different levels of inclusion and understanding inclusion policies differently, while at the same time financial resources for such change are often lacking and schools are not able, even when the will is there, to be fully inclusive. Therefore NEPC's strategic approach is to support its member organizations as catalysts for bringing inclusive principles to national education systems while at the same time working on the empowerment of schools and teachers for inclusion.

In view of this NEPC has historically dealt with the issue of inclusiveness from the point of view of coexistence of different ethnic/cultural and religious groups, through numerous projects on those topics and is currently implementing a component of joint project of European Commission and Council of Europe to Support to Pilot Schools for implementing inclusive education policies and practices carried out in 7 countries of South East Europe. As a catalyst to this project and in order to widen the initiative to other countries in NEPC region the NEPC Summer School 2014 is devoted to the topic of Inclusive schools from the perspective of social justice.

In the current project we have defined Inclusive school as the one in which:

School staff, students, parents and community member's work together in order to help each child develop to his/her full potential, in an environment where all feel welcomed, respected and valued, and develop competencies that contribute to social cohesion and to the development of inclusive society. (The full definition of Inclusive school from the Policies, Practice and Culture perspectives is available [here](#))

SUMMER SCHOOL 2014

Possible barriers to inclusion:

- a) Ethnicity/religion/race/gender
- b) Learning or physical difficulties
- c) Economic disadvantage

Although NEPC understand inclusive education as one which strives to break all of the above barriers in order to focus and have a deeper impact it is devoting its 2014 Summer School to two topics:

- o *Living together, Learning together*: policies and practices that enhance social cohesion in multi – ethnic/cultural and religious societies
- o *Empathy is not enough*: existing policies for economically disadvantaged pupils and exploring the issues of economic disadvantage and poverty on inclusive practices in schools.

OBJECTIVES

1) *Offer various theoretical perspectives of inclusive education at the school level*

In order to exercise various methods and techniques on inclusive education, a theoretical discussion on the issue is crucial. Even though there is a consensus on inclusive education as a desired goal, there have been differences on the mere concept of inclusiveness depending on the cultural and social context. NEPC Summer School seeks to illuminate those differences on the ontological level and put them into a context of the real-life experience.

2) *Describe different inclusive policies, both at the political and at school level*

A discrepancy between desired policy goals and the implementation of them is often a problem when talking about educational issues. Inclusive education is no different. Throughout the program, Summer School participants will be familiarized with different approaches of various national inclusive policies and their implications in the classroom. The idea is to assess usefulness, adequacy and effectiveness of different policies on the national/political level and link them with the school level.

3) *Provide specific examples of possibilities for inclusive teaching*

All over NEPC region there are excellent examples of how to use specific features of various subjects to teach inclusiveness. Those good practice examples will be presented to summer school participants and critically evaluated. At the same time NEPC will offer examples of innovative ways to teach for diversity.

4) *Explore those barriers to inclusiveness which are not covered by policies or practice*

In social science and teaching practice, there are always popular concepts that emerge from time to time. Those concepts link various policies, however not all arrays of reality are covered. In other words, there are some issues unexplored enough without concrete recommendations necessary for teaching practice. NEPC considers the nature of poverty and its relation to educational achievements to be one of those topics. At the summer school, a special attention will be put into various teaching methods on poverty awareness. The goal is to build an enabling environment in a classroom where poverty will not be a crucial stratification factor. By combining multiple didactic approaches with various international experiences, participants will be offered a unique eclectic point of view on the pro-poor policy.

Summer school structure: Pedagogical Strategy

There will be two pillars of 2014 NEPC Summer School – lectures, and workshops

The lectures will cover, theoretical concepts and policy goals of the specific issue and would be complimented by concrete examples of national policies from example countries.

The workshops will aim to offer practical tools for implementation of given topic in classrooms, define policy or uncover the gaps in policy and practice.

Each topic will employ pedagogies specificities to that topic and be planned by the faculty well ahead of time. It will include lectures, small group discussions, problems and case studies.

Readings will be divided into required and recommended. Participants will be expected to have read the required readings prior to the beginning of the summer school. This should help reduce the variance in comprehension and participation in the discussion.

Evaluation and assessment of impact

Participants of the Summer School will be asked to write short essays on one of the topics presented at the Summer School. The Learning committee of NEPC will evaluate the essays and send feedback to participants. The assessments will remain anonymous, but will be a part of the permanent record of the seminar.

Evaluation questionnaires and interviews will be conducted at the end of the seminar and, resources permitting, three months following the seminar. These will be summarized in a brief report and sent to the NEPC Board for discussion. The questionnaires will be quite specific as to what was learned and what should be learned next time.

Follow-up activities

Each participant will be invited to use the faculty and the other participants as informal colleagues to answer questions and provide information on the education policy challenges which emerge. Participants will be encouraged to publish policy relevant analyses; seminar faculty would be available to advise them on how to do this. Excellent participants at the summer school of 2014 will be eligible to help plan the summer school of 2015. This opportunity will be used as an informal incentive to maximize participation in the follow-up activities.

PARTICIPANTS

A maximum of 30 participants will be invited to join the summer school. A maximum of five participants of the 30 may come from outside of the region. Regional participants will be selected by a committee of the faculty and the director of the NEPC network. Participants will be chosen on the quality of their application showing their understanding of the purposes of education policy and their potential for utilizing what they learn. Weight will be given to their seniority, policy-relevant experience, and experience with policy analyses. Participants must be English-speaking.

The NEPC 2014 Summer School is open to Policy Makers, Teachers, Researchers, Graduate Students, and Education Specialists.

All news and detailed program of Summer school will be published on www.edupolicy.net

For all additional information do not hesitate to contact NEPC at nepc@edupolicy.net

<i>FEES</i>	FEES cover all costs of the Summer School except for travel to and from the Venue of the Summer school.			
	NEPC members		Non NEPC members	
	single room	double room	single room	double room
	450 EURO	400 EURO	550 EURO	500 EURO
All FEES ARE DUE BY JUNE 15 2014.				
<i>DATES</i>	Arrivals: 29 June 2014 Departures: 5 July 2014			
<i>VENUE</i>	 <p>Hotel Board Jahorina is placed on the main road between “Rajska Dolina” and “Bistrica” hotel (1.550 height above sea level). Hotel Board Jahorina offers a modern ambiance and great food, a club “Board”, for social gatherings. Sauna and pool is at guests’ disposal for relaxing moments. http://www.hotelboard-jahorina.com/</p>			
<i>REGISTRATION</i>	Registration open from: 16 April 2014 Registration closed: 30 May 2014 @ www.edupolicy.net CV & Motivation letter required			

[Click here for opening registration form](#)