



Project Number: 557089 EPP1-2014-IT-SPO-SCP

SPORT AS A MEAN OF SOCIAL INCLUSION

A Toolkit for School Director

Index

Introduction

1. [Promote the professional development of teachers](#)
2. [Contact the Municipality and the associations working with students at risk of early school leaving to identify to whom the device should be offered.](#)
3. [Maximize students' skills through flexible practices](#)
4. [Imagine ideas to attract students back into school.](#)
5. [Promote sports opportunities](#)
6. [Take an inventory of the available resources in the school](#)
7. [Time management](#)
8. [Plan interdisciplinary classes](#)
9. [Enhance students' wellbeing at school](#)



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Introduction

The concept of inclusive education focuses on social participation of everyone. The practical shift from the “traditional” model to an inclusive one can only be achieved through the commitment of all the people involved in education so teachers and school directors are key-people in school contexts.

Sport as a mean of social inclusion is a powerful tool when it is used across the curriculum and not only by the P.E. teacher – as so often is the case. Sport as a mean of social inclusion needs to come out of the gym and enter the classroom, it has to involve everyone and become a shared value of the school.

School Directors play the key-role in creating the conditions that can bring change to a school in order to reach this goal. They can also be the mediator between students and parents.

Our work has been carried out through a mixed method based on observation and interviews: observation of what is happening in the most Italian and French schools in recent years and interviews with experienced teachers to listen to their points of view and suggestions. Our observation goes beyond Europe because we tried to understand what was also happening in the United States, for example, as sport has always been and still is very important in the school curriculum.

After that, we have collected the main ideas in the steps described below.

Aims:

- Examine good practices
- Make suggestions for improvement in adopting inclusive practices.



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Promote the professional development of teachers

A school director can promote the professional development of his/her teachers by building awareness of the importance of sport for social inclusion and altering practices and beliefs. This can be done by

- Providing the teaching staff with the opportunity to learn, train and exchange information by organizing meetings and conferences with professionals such as psychologists, doctors, coaches, athletes, etc.
- Boosting communication among teachers and professionals to make problem-solving easier, improve the effectiveness of the organization and create a climate of openness by setting a simple form available in the school site that each of them can use, if necessary, to ask for information.

Learning Objective

The described activities will

- Enable teachers to apply changes made to curricula or other aspects of teaching practice
- Enable schools to develop and apply new strategies concerning the different aspects of teaching practice
- Exchange information

Online resources

- [Teacher education for inclusion – International Literature Review](#)
The review considers the policy framework needed to facilitate the changes required in teacher education to support the move towards a more inclusive education system.
- [An Educational Practices Framework: The Potential for Empowerment of the Teaching Profession](#)
This paper outlines new educational policy initiatives that have been recently introduced to Australian schooling contexts and describes the challenges of providing rich and empowering professional development opportunities for classroom teachers .
- [Developing Inclusive Practice: A Role for teachers and teacher Education?](#)
This article is about recent developments in inclusive education and the role of teachers.



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Contact the Municipality and the associations working with students at risk of early school leaving to identify to whom the device should be offered.

Subgroups can be formed according to the different profiles.

Organize a meeting between the young people's supervisors (such as street educators) and the school team.

Learning Objective

Use the skillful people to identify students at risk of early school leaving.

Boost the communication between the professionals.

Online resources

- [Towards A Differentiated, Holistic and Systemic Approach to Parental Involvement in Europe for Early School Leaving](#), by DR. Paul Downes.
This paper analyses the role of parents in early school leaving but also the "ideal position (of the municipalities) as a mediating space for dialogue between schools, parents and students."
- [Why Tackling Early School Leaving in Cities Matters](#)
This paper shows the importance of cooperation and communication between schools and municipalities.
- [Monitoring and supporting platforms to disengagement youth \(in french\)](#)
This guide, written by the French Education, offers a list of the different actors concerned by early school leaving, and the idea is to show the importance to work hand in hand to spot the students at risk, to pool ideas and find solutions. The guide emphasizes the introduction of common devices by the French Education, local authorities (regional councils, departmental boards...) and associations concerned about early school leaving and sport.
- [Strategic framework – Education & Training 2020](#)
This paper shows the importance of working with local structures to promote social inclusion ("sport is not a solution to the migrant problem but could make a huge importance in the medium term for young disadvantaged children.") The idea is to establish partnerships with public and local authorities, schools, sport federations and companies.



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Maximize students' skills through flexible practices

The main goal we are concerned with is “social inclusion” which is a right for everybody, but also a duty for everybody. As we all know disadvantaged students' needs are very complex and are connected with different spheres of life. Disadvantaged students must become integrated with the others so they need specific help. Sport can play a very important role in the inclusion process, but schools must be organized in such a way that students can develop and express their potential: flexibility could be one of the answers. For this reason school directors should promote a flexible attitude. “Flexibility” should be carried out in schools by

- Being responsive and attentive to the needs of individual students
- Adjusting the planned teaching activities according to the students' commitments to sport
- Adapting the time allotted for learning, task completion or testing .

Learning Objective

The aim of this step is that School Directors deal effectively with the processes of change in order to improve the school results of all the students and allow students to combine study and training.

Online resources

- [Learning Standards and Flexible Learning Environments](#)
This article contains some tips concerning the development of flexible learning environments.
- [About Values Education School Cluster Projects](#)
This site describes the realization of three projects concerning “Values Education School”, It also contains a good number of good practice examples and lesson plans.
- [Skill flexibility and school change](#)
The study investigates skill flexibility among teachers in the context of school change in nine countries
- [School Flexibility Options](#)
This site offers examples of “School Flexibility Options” carried out in order to improve students' outcomes.



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Imagine ideas to attract students back into school.

1. Offer fun sport activities to young people and their educators.
2. Make the most of their visit and take a tour of the school.
3. Offer role-playing games to make them understand the rules of community life.
4. Offer other playful activities by the general fields teachers/educators.
5. Offer then other practical activities in connection with different professional fields.
6. Organize a meeting between the young people and professionals who will show them the jobs they need by offering them firstly internships, and then alternance training.

Learning Objective

The aim is therefore to slowly :

- Bring them back into school
- Make them understand the rules of community life through playful activities.
- Show them that schooling can be very different from what they have known so far and that made them fail.
- Make them discover what they like and what they can do through different activities.
- Organize meetings with professionals to help them enter the entrepreneurial world.

Online resources

- [Monitoring and supporting platforms to disengagement youth](#) *(only in French)*
This guide offers many pieces of advice concerning early school leaving, and how it is important to have a good first contact with the young people at risk. It also proposes solutions and ideas to attract students back into school.
- [Discover EU's Role](#)
This site describes the strategic framework of education. It emphasizes the importance of sport to reduce early school leaving and also the role of education and training by promoting entrepreneurship among students.
- [Strategic framework – Education & Training 2020](#)
This part of the website shows the importance of social inclusion and states the objectives of the European Union concerning this issue, that are: promoting social cohesion and active citizenship.
- [Colleges Attract Students With Unique Campus Tours](#)
This idea here is to attract students with recreational school tours to give them the desire to come back to school. It works for colleges, it may work for schools. The schools should invest in these tours to bring back early school leaving students. Show them that school goes beyond a simple classroom. Imagine new attractive activities, create groups, promote sport and emphasize on the rules of community life.



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Promote sports opportunities

It is generally accepted that sport plays an important role in the inclusion process, so each school has the big responsibility to make appeal to sport. In order to fulfill its responsibility each school should promote sports opportunities and try to tackle sports abandonment: sometimes, it could be very hard for students to cope with school and training, it could happen that students don't achieve the expected results. School directors should promote and support all the sports opportunities that allow students to get the help they need to remain successful.

These activities could be:

- Tutoring services
- Extra credits assignment

Learning Objective

The activities described in step 5 aim at increasing students' results and motivation for learning

Online resources

- [Physical education & Sport policy for schools](#)
The aim of this publication is to guide schools to know the goals and objectives of physical education and sports. It contains some recommendation about the policy to be adopted.
- [New Guidance will enhance sports opportunities for students with disabilities](#)
This site contains some guidelines thought and planned in order to enhance sports opportunities for students with disabilities
- [Increase Physical Activity Opportunities](#)
The site contains some tips on how cities and towns can help young people get physical activity they need in many ways.
- [Promoting sport and enhancing health in European Union](#)
This is a "policy content analysis to support action"



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Take an inventory of the available resources in the school.

- Make a report of all sport facilities owned by the school or that can be available in the school
- Make a list of the sport teachers and teachers from the general and professional fields ready to work together to develop the project.

Learning Objective

Identify the available activities to propose something that can physically be done within the school. Use every material available to attract more students.

Have a better cohesion between teachers from the different fields.

Online resources

● [Monitoring and supporting platforms to disengagement youth](#) (*only in French*)

According to this paper, the schools should take into account the student's file in order to follow his/her progress, really know him/her to offer the solution that suits him/her.

It also emphasizes the importance of teachers in this fight against early school leaving. How they should take part in it, etc.

● [Young offenders pilot program: Early school leavers project](#)

This paper underlines the importance of the inclusion of family members, but also of significant adults (that sometimes can be teachers) to support the young person and calls for the establishment of advisory groups.



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Time management

When students practice sport, they have daily practices, regular travels for games and tournaments and many demands on their time. Time management is a key element in successful study and training and it is one of the aims of education and students should be guided to carefully plan their known time schedule, school time as well as training time. Through an effective policy students should be taught to

- Schedule fixed commitments first
- Identify the best time of the day for an activity and make it work,
- Use waiting time and/or working travel time effectively.

Learning Objective

Students will learn to

- Determine goals for a given period of time
- Use time management techniques

Online resources

- [Study Guides and Strategies](#)
One goal is to help students become aware of how they use their time
- [Time management](#)
This link contains a short video on time management.
- [Time management](#)
This guide contains some tips for more effective personal time management.
- [Support with time management](#)
This link contains some useful tips to make time management easier.



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Plan interdisciplinary classes

School teachers from different content areas usually team together to develop interdisciplinary teaching units, as through sport students learn much more than just physical skills, more interdisciplinary teaching units involving P.E. should be planned.

This activity should be promoted and carried out at the beginning of the school year when teachers usually plan their work.

Learning Objective

Introducing students to subject matter from a variety of perspectives that challenge their existing notions students will

- Overcome a tendency to maintain preconceived notions
- Develop the ability to integrate concepts

Online resources

- [Integrating the disciplines: successful interdisciplinary subjects](#)
This article states that Interdisciplinary education must complete disciplinary teaching and learning so students can learn how to respond to challenges that transcend disciplines.
- [Concept to classroom](#)
This video shows how interdisciplinary learning is practiced at the classroom level by individual teachers and a number of schools.
- [Lesson plans and activities: Early Adolescence](#)
This site is about value education and contains some resources and some suggestions to plan interdisciplinary classes.
- [LEARN NC](#)
This portal offers examples of interdisciplinary lesson plans.



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Enhance students' wellbeing at school

At its core, sport is fun. When students stop having fun, maybe it's time to re-evaluate the organization of students' time and activities. Through communication and the right help from all the parties involved students can achieve a good balance between the different activities and benefit from playing sport. The school director should be the promoter of such an attitude by organizing, monitoring and implementing all the necessary activities so that students can achieve balance in the different aspects of their lives to obtain wellbeing for themselves and others. For the purpose could be made available, on the school site, a page in which students and parents can quickly get in touch with school directors and teachers and, once a year, students could be asked to answer a questionnaire.

Learning Objective

As wellbeing plays a vital role in determining the quality of the educational experience, all the activities carried out aim at promoting students' social and emotional development.

Online resources

[Educators:](#)

Scientific studies document that fitness enhances learning, attention, and behaviour. This article contains guidelines for educators who must help students balance study and sports.

["Sport in Society"](#)

This article echoes sociologist Jay. J. Coakley's book: Coakley says that students "who play varsity sports (...) generally have better grade point average, more positive attitudes towards school, more interest in continuing their education..."

The article also offers key steps to be organized and find balance between study and sports.

[The wellness impact](#)

This report is about the importance of the role which school play in increasing physical activity and in creating an environment that enriches students' readiness to learn.

[Help to Create a Wellness Program for your Local Schools](#)

This is a step-by-step guide for implementing a new government mandate to improve the diets and exercise habits of students.



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