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Repositioning learning at the core of the transformation in education:

Towards a 21st century curriculum



13 July 2021

17:00 – 18:30 Paris time (UTC +2)

International Webinar

This event is co-hosted by UNESCO International Bureau of Education (UNESCO-IBE) and the Organization of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

Context and justification

The OECD has initiated a series of six reports on curriculum - essentially on the *why* and *what* to education - with the aim of positioning, among other fundamental issues, student well-being and holistic development at the center of curriculum design and redesign processes (Schleicher, 2020). One of the reports - *What Students Learn Matters. Towards a 21st century curriculum* - provides a sharp, constructive and evidence-based look at fundamental issues that could be taken into account when devising educational and curricular transformations in the post-pandemic era.

The report argues for the repositioning of the curriculum as a key and unavoidable factor in preparing students for a world of challenges and opportunities. It is important to revalue the curriculum as a main driver of fair, inclusive and sustainable imaginaries of societies that effectively connect the *why*, *what*, *where*, *when* and *where* of education, learning and assessment. To a large extent, the curriculum is a powerful instrument of educational policy that

contributes to making effective the ideals of society forged through inclusive dialogues, agreements and collective constructions engaging diversity of stakeholders.

In particular, the OECD report mentions some key aspects for rethinking the curriculum:

- (i) Visualizing students as (co)agents equipped with the determination and capabilities to positively impact their own lives and their surroundings;
- (ii) Educating students in *transformational competencies* - i.e., the ability to shape their future by creating value, reconciling tensions and dilemmas, and taking responsibility;
- (iii) Emphasizing that cognitive and socioemotional competencies go hand in hand, are equally relevant and form an indivisible whole.

The common denominator of these aspects lies in positioning the student as an active learner who can appropriate, produce, discuss and share knowledge in support of his or her individual and collective well-being and development.

Likewise, IBE has noticed that, both at the national and international level, countries are beginning to transform their ways of educating, learning and assessing in response to at least two mayor challenges. On one hand, an increased awareness that the future of new generations is largely linked to critically educating the youth to be protagonists of forging a sustainable, fair and inclusive future. On the other, recognizing the need to rethink levels, provisions and learning environments in light of ensuring integration and complementarity between in-person and distance education – generally called hybrid modes of education.

A broadened systemic understanding of curriculum can be visualized as playing a key role in contributing to rethink education in light of forging the 'new normality'. It entails revisiting the social imaginaries and ideals underpinning curriculum aims, contents and strategies. Likewise, the curriculum should be accommodated to ensure education and learning happen anywhere at any time aimed at enhancing, democratizing and improving learning opportunities, processes, participation and outcomes for all learners.

Therefore, the revision of the curriculum constitutes a window of opportunities to strengthen its relevance and readiness capacity for educating the new generations. Crucially, this implies revisiting the purposes, contents and progression of education across levels, settings and provisions as well as to restructuring and enhancing modes of educating, learning and assessing sustained on the integration and complementarity between in-person and distance education.

Objective of the Webinar

The objective of the webinar is to contribute to a constructive and inclusive dialogue on the findings of the OECD report "*What Students Learn Matters. Towards a 21st Century Curriculum*" and its implications for addressing curriculum transformations in the post pandemic era. The focus will be on the context of developing countries and in particularly with regard to the development of learners' competencies relating to autonomous thinking, creativity, solidarity and collaboration. It will include reflections and discussions from OECD Education Director - Mr. Andreas Schleicher - and IBE-UNESCO Director - Mr. Yao Ydo - as well as teaches' and learners' voices and experiences on these new curriculum demands.

Webinar program

The webinar will provide a platform for the sharing of reflections and experiences across regions. In particular, it will focus on three questions:

- What are the main findings of the OECD report "*What Students Learn Matters. Towards a 21st Century Curriculum*"?
- Which are the main implications of these findings for addressing curriculum transformation in a post-COVID era in developing countries?
- What are the views, experiences, challenges and opportunities faced by teachers and students on these new 21st century curriculum demands?

Target audiences

The target audiences for this webinar are teachers, teacher educators, policymakers, curriculum developers and pedagogical advisers, as well as other key stakeholders. This includes senior officials and managers of Ministries of Education directly responsible for implementing and managing education programmes, as well as non-governmental organizations, bilateral partners, foundations and others supporting this work.

However, it is anticipated that the webinar will have a broader reach, as participants spread key messages to educators, parents, families and learners encouraging them on the conversation around rethinking learning and curriculum to forge more sustainable, just and inclusive societies.

Format and Language

The webinar will be held on the Zoom platform.

Contributions and questions for speakers will be made in writing, via the Zoom platform in the area dedicated to the Q&A section.

Simultaneous interpretation in English, French and Spanish will be available.

Registration

Those interested in participating in the webinar should register [here](#).

Provisional agenda

Tuesday 13 July 2021	
17:00 – 18:30 Paris Time (UTC +2)	
17:00 -17:30	Welcome and introductions Presentation of the main messages of the report (Mr. Andreas Schleicher) Comments on the report's implications focusing on learner's competences (Mr. Yao Ydo)
17:30 – 18:00	Moderated discussion with teachers and learners from developing countries and the OECD 2030 Initiative
18:00 – 18:20	Q&A Session Contributions and questions for participants; reactions and answers from panelists
18:20 – 18:30	Closing remarks Reminder of the main points previously mentioned in the webinar Vote of thanks

Contact

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