ARC ThoughtMeet

A Focus on Identity
Online, November 8, 2023

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Reflections on the ARC Summit 2023 in Oslo

Topics and experiences

- Democracy and student voice - through a visit to a school in Oslo with empowered youth
- Equity and inclusion with Thought leader Mel Ainscow
- Leading from the Middle with Andy Hargreaves
- AI challenges with Yngve Lindvig
- System to system consultancy on pressing, identified issues

Delegate interaction in LearnLab

What was the main learning for you from the Oslo Summit? What challenged you, what did you understand more clearly, what did you decide to do more work on as a result of the summit?

- System to system collaboration
- Schools as democratic organizations
- AI and how it could help teachers
- The importance of student agency and student voice

Example of system to system collaboration

After the ARC Summit 2023, delegates from Wales, Ireland and Scotland gathered to discuss the general strategic and pedagogical context of AI and decided to work collaboratively on:

- GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) and what can be done about its territorial interpretations
- Accessibility and the production of accessible content
- Intellectual property
- Teacher professional identity and orientation
- Training models to be territorially distinct and human

There is a balance of risk and opportunity. Three countries working together are greater than individual initiatives.

Delegate interaction in Learnlab

Which groups are most marginalized in your own education system?

- Immigrants
- Students from ethnic minority groups
- Students with special needs / neuro-divergent students
- Students with mental and/or health issues
- Trans students
- Indigenous students
- Poor students

In what ways does your own identity help and hinder your capacity to understand and engage with marginalized identities in your system in relation to equity and well-being?

- Being from a privileged background limits my capacity to understand the challenges that marginalized people go through, and may promote stereotypes and unconscious bias. It also poses the challenge of setting aside my privileges to listen, to learn and to engage with marginalized identities.
- Being older means I have more experience with the nature of change. Being older means having to accept that my viewpoints may be outdated.
- As educators, we have the responsibility to be aware of our own identities and positionality in order to work with less privileged groups.
- Setting aside privilege to listen, learn and engage is critical.

ARC Talk: Andy Hargreaves

Title: The age of identity

"Be a buffalo. Be a herd of buffalo."

- Identity storms have exploded in many countries: Identity is becoming an issue of indignation, creating intense controversies that are dividing people.
- Well-being and identity are seen as being connected to each other, and they should be part of the identity agenda.
- What do you do when people's identities conflict? People may see you as only one thing but we need to see people in their fullness.
- Sympathy is the basic emotion of democracy: Trying to understand what it is like to be somebody else.
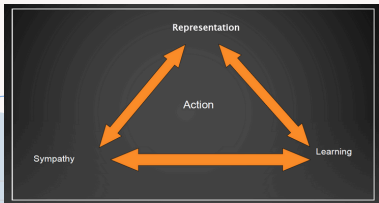
"Nobody should have a divided self."

- The importance of intersectionality (a term by Kimberlé Crenshaw): We all have multiple identities. Hence, multiple identities need to be brought as a whole into school.
- Identity is not just about age but about brain development: They are not wrong, they are different. So what should we do?
- We need a new narrative. What's essential for some is good for all.

"Learning and education are driven by the capacity to understand each other."

- What do Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) initiatives look like? How effective are they? The 12 principles help us figure out HOW we are going to talk about pressing identity topics in schools, before we start talking about them.

Delegate Interaction in LearnLab

What is it like to try to apply these principles and how are you trying to overcome the barriers to practicing these principles within your own education system?

- Establishing an education/school culture rooted in the 12 principles
- Encouraging reflection on privileges while amplifying underrepresented perspectives and narratives
- Creating spaces for marginalized groups to set their own agenda based on their needs and concerns
- Facilitating discussions to exchange experiences which, in turn, generate confidence
- Being open to learn from mistakes
- Extending trust to others to apply these principles

What is the biggest issue that your system is working on or needs to address? (Use only one word)

Next ARC ThoughtMeet date: February 27th 2024
Focus on: Review of Progress and Looking to the Future

Save the date:
ARC Summit 2024
Edinburgh, Scotland, September 26th-29th 2024
Focus on: Attendance, Belonging and Excellence in Teaching and Learning