

Online Conference for eTwinning Schools

Shared leadership: towards an eTwinning School approach

Dates: 12 – 14 November 2020

Venue: Online – MS TEAMS

Concept note

Total number of participants: 230

Target group:

Leaders of current eTwinning Schools. By Leaders it is referred to staff member who hold a formal leadership role (e.g school principal, deputy school principal, head of department etc.) and an active eTwinning teacher who is a leader in his/her school and serves as a point of reference for eTwinning activities.

Composition of delegations: ideally, 2 participants from the same school: 1 from the management team and one eTwinning leader. 20% of the ones awarded in 2020 and 80% of those awarded in 2019.

Conference objectives:

The overall goal of the Conference is to identify, highlight, feature, recognise and promote the elements which characterise the eTwinning Schools, as presented in the eTwinning Schools Mission. Participating schools will deepen their knowledge of the various fields of the Mission, while examining in depth the concept and practice of the Shared Leadership approach as a factor of change, enabling schools to engage in innovative practices. Examples of good practice, together with theoretical and conceptual framing, will allow participating schools to fully capitalise on the results achieved and further develop as models, promoters and multipliers for others.

More specifically, the conference will:

- Feature and further reflect on the pedagogical, organisational, communication and promotional elements of the eTwinning School (eTwinning School Mission)
- Provide participants deeper knowledge of the concept and practices of the Shared Leadership approach and why it plays a key role in school innovation
- Provide participants tools and methods to implement more inclusive and engaging form of leadership that will bring forth the talents and capacities of all school players: teachers, students and parents.
- Provide schools with ideas and practical activities that will help them improve the different elements of the eTwinning School Mission: collaboration, students agency, inclusion etc.
- Guide the schools to draft an action plan to identify their goals and recognise in which areas they need more support.

Shared Leadership in context

Leadership is defined as a social process of influence, mobilising others' efforts to reach specific objectives serving a vision. It is about learning together, constructing meaning and knowledge collectively and collaboratively. In this sense, a coherent and well-constructed school leadership will enable teachers, school administration staff, directors and head of departments to generate ideas together, reflect and make sense of their work in light of the shared beliefs they have. This in turn, will help them define concrete actions and goals that grow from their common understanding. In this sense, Leadership is not confined within the formal school leadership roles, but it is shared. The decision-making process and goal setting is inclusive, fully collaborative and not imposed from above.

Examining the role of leadership in bringing forth innovative practices and collaboration among teachers, especially in this digital age, school leaders (whether formal or non formal) become the drivers of change to transform learning and teaching. According to Diana Laurillard¹, school leaders need to view **teachers as the drivers of change**: by engaging teachers in collaborative action, by trusting them to build on each other's expertise and experience, by developing a community of knowledge and allow interactive experimentation to adapt the changes needed in the school and become a leading school.

Schools who wish to keep their leading role, and even more eTwinning Schools, must guarantee a strong participation of all teachers, **community, parents and pupils**. Successful, engaging and empowering school leadership, which motivates and includes formal and non-formal leaders, is key to bring the changes we wish see in these schools. Evidence from research shows that if leadership is based on a vision that can be shared by all staff, parents and stakeholders, it also plays a **crucial role for school development and innovation**.

Based on these assumptions, the eTwinning School Conference will focus on Shared Leadership strategies- what it is and how it can assist schools in improving their school practices in: collaboration, student agency, innovative learning, inclusion and networking (as represented in the eTwinning Schools Mission). **Shared Leadership is used as a tool to formulate and achieve goals set by each school according to their context and needs.**

Looking through the lens of Shared Leadership as a school strategy, participants will be asked the following question: "how can I engage teachers, parents and students in designing and achieving our school goals as an eTwinning School?" Having this question in the background participants will be encouraged to reflect upon their own school strategies and practices with the aim to draft an **initial action plan** for their schools. The plan will identify their goals and the areas of the mission they need more support and ideally should be further discussed developed by their colleagues back home.

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PROGRAMME

Thursday 12th November:

15:00 – 17:00 Plenary sessions

- Opening speeches by EC, CSS
- Keynote 1 - Overview of the school mission – Ongoing learning process: CSS
- Keynote 2 - Keynote on shared leadership with Q&A moment **external expert**

17: 00 - 18:00 Networking Activity (CZ NSS)

Friday 13th November:

15.00 – 16:30 Workshops session I: **building blocks of shared leadership practice**

WS1	WS2	WS3	WS4	WS5
Evidence gathering	School vision and mission	Empowering teachers and sharing leadership	Engagement of student, parents and community in school leadership	Collaboration and interdependency between teachers
Enrique Martin EUN and Rute Baptista CSS	Martina Baseggio, Pavla Šabatková, Ivana Brabcová	Efi Saltidou EUN and Alexandra Licht	Irene Pateraki, CSS	Alena Jandlová, Elena Tomanová, Eva Münchová

16:30 - 17.00 Coffee break

17.00-18:30 Workshop Session II: **building blocks of shared leadership practice**

WS1	WS2	WS3	WS4	WS5
Evidence gathering	School vision and mission	Empowering teachers and sharing leadership	Engagement of student, parents and community in school leadership	Collaboration and interdependency between teachers
Enrique Martin EUN and Rute Baptista CSS	Martina Baseggio, Pavla Šabatková, Ivana Brabcová	Efi Saltidou EUN and Alexandra Licht	Irene Pateraki, CSS	Alena Jandlová, Elena Tomanová, Eva Münchová

Saturday 14th November:

10.00 – 12.00 Plenary sessions:

- Erasmus opportunities and synergies with eTwinning (Schools), by EC TBC
- Action Plan context and theory, Alexandra Licht, CSS
- Panel discussion: From theory to practice: 6 eTwinning Schools Monitoring activity, moderated by Santi Scimeca, CSS

12:00 Closing – Final remarks

Description of sessions and workshops:

Plenary sessions 12th November

Opening speeches by EC, CSS

Keynote1 - Overview of the school mission – Ongoing learning process: CSS interactive: During this session CSS will describe the eTwinning School Mission by providing an interactive example/activity for each statement of the mission by involving the participants in the plenary. Also, CSS will describe the objectives of the conference and what is the purpose of each session.

Keynote 2 - Keynote on shared leadership with Q&A moment **external expert TBC**

Session I and session II: parallel workshops: building blocks of shared leadership approach 13th November

Introduction:

The parallel sessions represent the common elements shown in research to be central to introducing change in schools while implementing a shared leadership approach. Generating ideas together through structured conversations and exchanges, a common vision and clear understanding of the school situation using evidence are key for successful implementation of change in schools. These actions are not restricted to the formal leadership staff in the schools. The opposite is the case, only with the engagement of teachers a real change can take place.

We propose to run several repeated workshops (in session I and II) on the five topics so participants gain wide understand these components as a whole, while having an opportunity to go in depth on specific areas of interest.

Workshop description

1. **Evidence gathering** - In order to be able to define a clear plan with concrete goals in a school we need to gather knowledge and understanding of the existing practices. In this workshop participants will learn why evidence informed decision making is key and how it contributes to a shared leadership approach. Participants will learn about various tools and methods for self and school assessment.
2. **School vision and mission** - as an integrated unit, the school operates through a common vision with defined mission statement is to connect all school staff around a central purpose and engage everyone to achieve it through interdependent relationship. In this workshop participants will learn about the difference between a mission and a vision. They will explore how to engage staff and students in shaping the school vision and how to translate such vision to actions.

Animator/Moderator: Martina Baseggio, Pavla Šabatková, Ivana Brabcová

3. **Empowering teachers and sharing leadership** - the process of change is not in the hands of the formal leaders of the school, but it is led by teacher leaders: teachers that lead within and beyond the classroom. They identify with and contribute to a community of teacher learners and leaders and influence others towards improved the school practice. In this workshop we will focus on empowerment of teacher leaders and how eTwinning can contribute to engage teachers in taking up responsibility and lead change in school.

Animator/Moderator: Efi Saltidou EUN and Alexandra Licht

4. **Engagement of student, parents and community in school leadership** - students, parents and the wider community play a crucial role in improving school practices as they are in the center of the school activity. In this workshop participants will learn why and how to engage students, parents and other stakeholders in school leadership process.

Animator/Moderator: Irene Pateraki, CSS

5. **Collaboration and interdependency between teachers** - we find a positive relationship between forms of teacher leadership, teacher collaboration and capacity building for school improvement. Structures for collaboration include dedicated time, space and framework to allow the engagement of teachers and non-formal leaders in taking up leadership roles and participating in the decision-making process in the school. In this workshop, participants will learn how to increase collaboration between teachers and what structures can help to engage them collaborative teaching and decision making.

Animator/Moderator: Alena Jandlová, Elena Tomanová, Eva Münchová

Plenary sessions 14th November: Panel – Inspirational examples - conclusions

Erasmus opportunities and synergies with eTwinning (Schools). Presentation of what an action plan is. Reflections on Monitoring report recommendations. The teachers who participated in the monitoring and development activity share their experience and offer tips, examples, challenges, ideas during their participation in this eTwinning activity.