

Teachers as a Professional Learning Community

Warsaw, 22 October 2013



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Projects promoting the new system of support to the work of schools

- **System project of the Ministry of National Education:**
„Strengthening the school support system, with particular emphasis on in-service teacher training and methodology counselling”
- **System project implemented by ORE [Centre for Education Development]:**
„ In-service teacher training system based on integrated support for schools ”
- **Projects implemented by poviats [counties] within Measure 3.5:**
„Comprehensive support to the development of schools”



In-service teacher training system should...

- be located close to schools
- work to meet the needs of schools
- use the potential of various institutions
- support schools in the field of problem solving
- motivate teachers for further training at the workplace [either individually or in a group]



In-service teacher training system should...

„Shift from occasional, single, mutually unrelated forms of assistance, to comprehensive service provision to individual teachers and the whole school”

(dr Danuta Elsner, Krzysztof Bedanarek)



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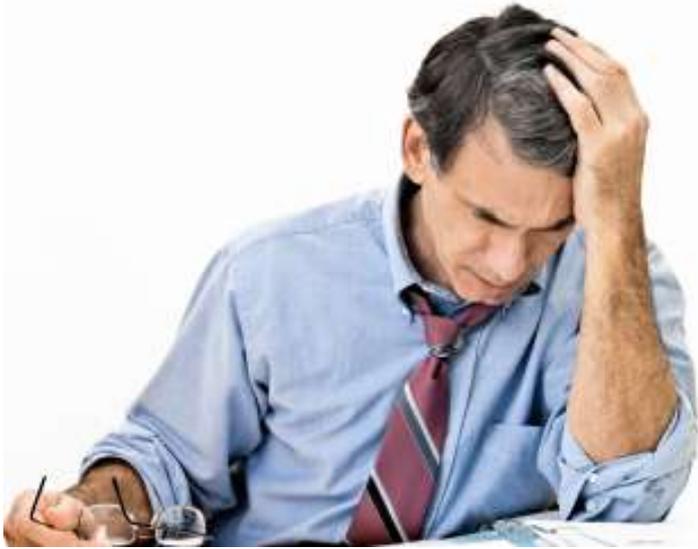


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Professional development of the teacher vs comprehensive development of the school

TEACHER'S PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



Janek does not know how to conduct form tutor periods. He is aware that the students in his class experience recurring problems, but does not know how to talk about them and what to do about them. He would like to attend a training course on conducting form tutor classes. He requests the school principal to cover the cost of the course, he selects an appropriate course and attends it. Then, he uses the newly acquired skills in his daily work. He recommends the course to his colleagues



Professional development of the teacher vs comprehensive development of the school

COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SCHOOL

Janina does not know how to conduct form tutor periods. She is aware that the students in her class experience recurring problems, but does not know how to talk about them and what to do about them. During a workshop on diagnosis and development, the teachers identify the challenges for them as form tutors. An expert is invited for a meeting with the school's teaching staff in order to explain the problems and present the directions of work. The tasks are divided between the teachers who develop scenarios and educational materials for conducting form tutor periods. During the next meetings, they learn how to conduct form tutor periods according to the scenarios. The materials are recorded on a commonly accessible disk and can be used by all teachers from the school. Janina, as her school's representative, is a member of a co-operation and self-development network. She shares her own experience and can use the experience and support of teachers from other schools.



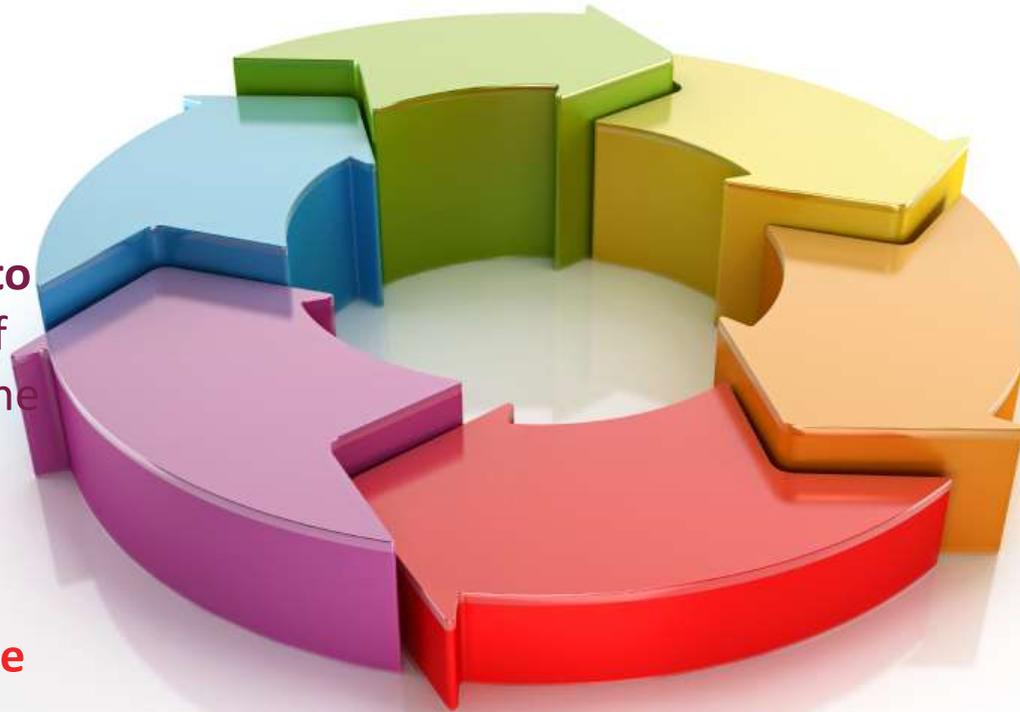
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Comprehensive development of the school - benefits



- introduction of **permanent qualitative change**

- **effects available to the whole group** of participants (also the future ones!)

- in terms of economicality, **more profitable** than individual training

- all members of the group or the whole school **are engaged**

- requires **management** – spontaneous initiatives fail without a leader!

- requires **new way of thinking** on the side of the leader!



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Changes to education-related legislation

Amendment to the regulations of the Minister of National Education:

- on in-service teacher training institutions
- on specific principles of work of pedagogy libraries
- on specific principles of work of public psychology and pedagogy counselling centres, including public specialist care centres



New tasks for in-service training institutions

To organise and conduct training according to:

- national education policy directions and changes introduced into the education system,
- requirements of schools, as posed by the regulations on educational supervision
- results and conclusions of educational supervision
- test and examination results
- implementation of core curricula, including syllabus development
- pupil/student needs and individualisation of teaching and upbringing processes



New forms of task implementation by in-service teacher training institutions

- organisation and provision, to schools and other educational institutions, of support within the scope indicated by the school/institution
- organisation and conducting of cooperation and self-development networks for in-service teachers and school/institution principals
- dissemination of good practices



Organisation and provision of support

- assistance to schools in diagnosing their needs and problems
- determining methods of work required to meet the school's needs/ to solve the existing problems
- planning and provision of support in a form adequate to the school's diagnosed needs and possibilities
- common evaluation of results and drawing conclusions on the implementation of the support forms



Organisation and provision of cooperation and self-development networks

- cooperation networks may be:
theme-focused or problem-focused
- meetings with external experts (e.g. lectures, workshops, group consultations),
- other forms of work (e.g. organisation of demonstration lessons, presentation of good practices, commonly seeking optimum solutions to existing problems with education and behaviour).



System project of ORE [Centre for Education Development]:

In-service teacher training system based on integrated support for schools



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Process support to school development



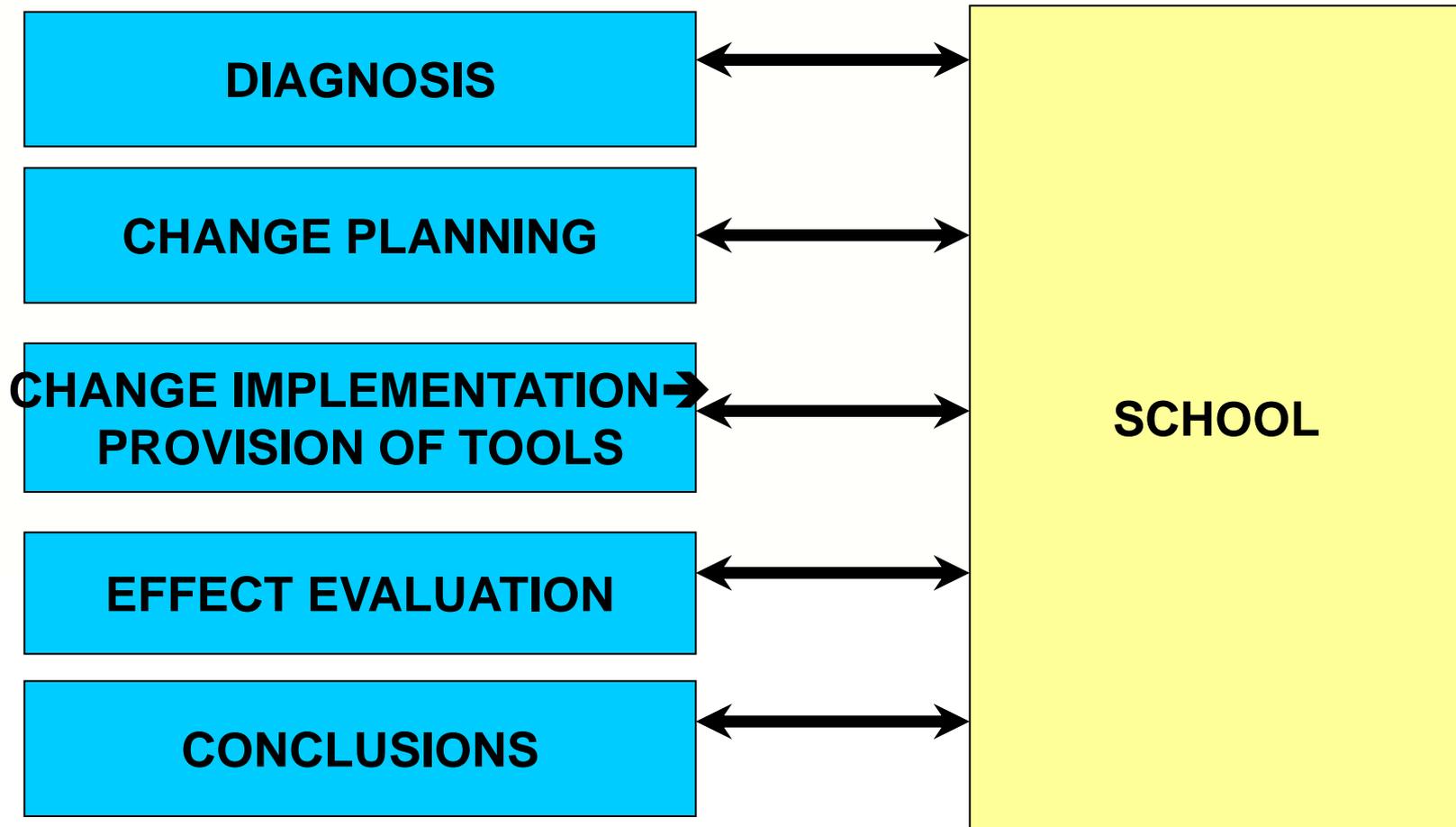
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Process support to school development



School representative for education development

- **Common diagnosis of needs**
- **Action and task planning**
- **Training organisation**
- **Getting other teachers and the principal involved**
- **Ensuring access to necessary materials and tools**
- **Supporting teachers in the implementation of new solutions**
- **Integration of the process effects' evaluation with the school's internal evaluation**
- **Common development of recommendations**



Annual Support Plan – tasks of external consultant

- Finding out about the needs of a given school (cooperation with the school representative for education development)
- Conducting workshops and/or other forms of training (consultations, lectures, etc.), adjusted to the needs of the particular school and planned for the teachers in the Annual Support Plan



Annual Support Plan

- the beginning and end of the Plan's implementation,
- description of need diagnosis,
- Annual Support Plan's objective,
- Implementation indicators,
- Roles of persons implementing the Plan and using the support
- Tasks of persons implementing the Plan and persons using the support,
- The Plan's implementation schedule.



Cooperation and self-development networks



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What is a network?

A network is a system which makes it possible to establish contacts, exchange opinions, get access to information , cooperate and work jointly in order to more easily achieve the desired results, in a way which is:

- long term
- systematic
- based on trust
- based on mutuality
- constituting a process
- not hierarchical

Cooperation and self-development networks

A **cooperation and self-development network** is a team of about 20 teachers or principals from different schools or pre-schools, who cooperate with each other in an organised way.

Goals:

- Sharing knowledge and skills,
- Acquiring new skills and knowledge,
- Joint implementation of tasks,
- Commonly seeking ways of coping with problems,
- Establishing contacts and starting cooperation.



Organisation of the network's work

- The networks are established on the **poviat** (county) **level**, according to the needs of schools and pre-schools
- There are least **four** networks **per poviat**
- Network participants meet 3-5 times per school year
- Network participants work also via the IT platform made available by ORE (the Centre for Education Development)
- The work of each network is managed by the **network coordinator**



Work with the IT platform

- Community building
- Information collection, filtering, and easy access possibilities
- Mutual learning and support
- Assistance in managing the school support process and the activities within the cooperation network



Role of Network Coordinator

- Proposing initiatives, meeting themes and methods of work,
- Supporting the participants' active participation and knowledge sharing,
- Ensuring safe working atmosphere ,
- Motivating the participants to work within the network,
- Monitoring the network's work progress,
- Supporting openness,
- Organisation of the network's work.



Activities under the project implemented by ORE

- development of assumptions – eg. development activity offers, network work plans
- on-going and ex-post evaluation
- trainings for School Representatives for Education Development – 14 days
- support to School Representatives for Education Development – regional meetings and e-learning courses
- training for school and pre-school principals – 2 days
- training for cooperation network coordinators – content-related and technical aspects
- Internet Platform
- development of materials and tools available on-line
- information meetings



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**Comprehensive support
to the development of schools
(the new system's pilot
implementation – projects in
poviats, Measure 3.5)**



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Key objectives of the poviat projects:

- Pilot implementation of the new system of in-service teacher training and external support to schools,
- Assistance to school and pre-school principals in their preparations for the implementation of the state's new education policy

Information on submitted applications

Competition 3.5

- 97 applications submitted in round I
- 79 applications submitted in round II
- 14 applications submitted in round III
(by the application closing date) – currently, formal evaluation is ongoing
- 101 applications to undergo content-related evaluation
- Value of applications to undergo content-related evaluation: 153 million PLN



Characteristics of powiat projects – based on conclusions from round I

- Application's average value – approx. 1 570 000 PLN
- Average number of schools participating in the project – 39
- Average number of preschools participating in the project - 6
- Average number of teachers participating in the project– 681

Characteristics of powiat projects – based on conclusions from round I

- Each project's implementation period includes two support cycles from 2012 (October – December) to 2014 (July - October); 8 projects will start in 2013
- over 50% poviats expect the minimum number (four) of cooperation and self-development networks ; the other poviats expect to have between 5 and 12 networks



Characteristics of powiat projects – based on conclusions from round I

Topics identified during introductory diagnoses:

- Working with students with special educational needs,
- Provision of psychological and pedagogical counselling at school
- Motivating students to work
- IT in the classroom
- Syllabus development
- Teachers teamwork
- Cooperation with parents



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Characteristics of powiat projects – based on conclusions from round I

Network themes prepared by the Centre for Education Development:

- Working with gifted students during extra-curricular activities
- Experiments during Natural Science classes
- How to develop students' creative thinking

Network themes prepared by the poviats:

- Mathematics is interesting
- Contextual teaching of humanities and social science



Characteristics of powiat projects – based on conclusions from round I

Activities:

- Development of powiat-level school support programmes
- Process support implementation in schools
- Establishment and running of cooperation and self-development networks
- Sharing good practices

Forms of work: meetings, conferences, workshops, lectures, consultations, thematic presentations, publications, bulletins, study visits, demonstration lesson video production



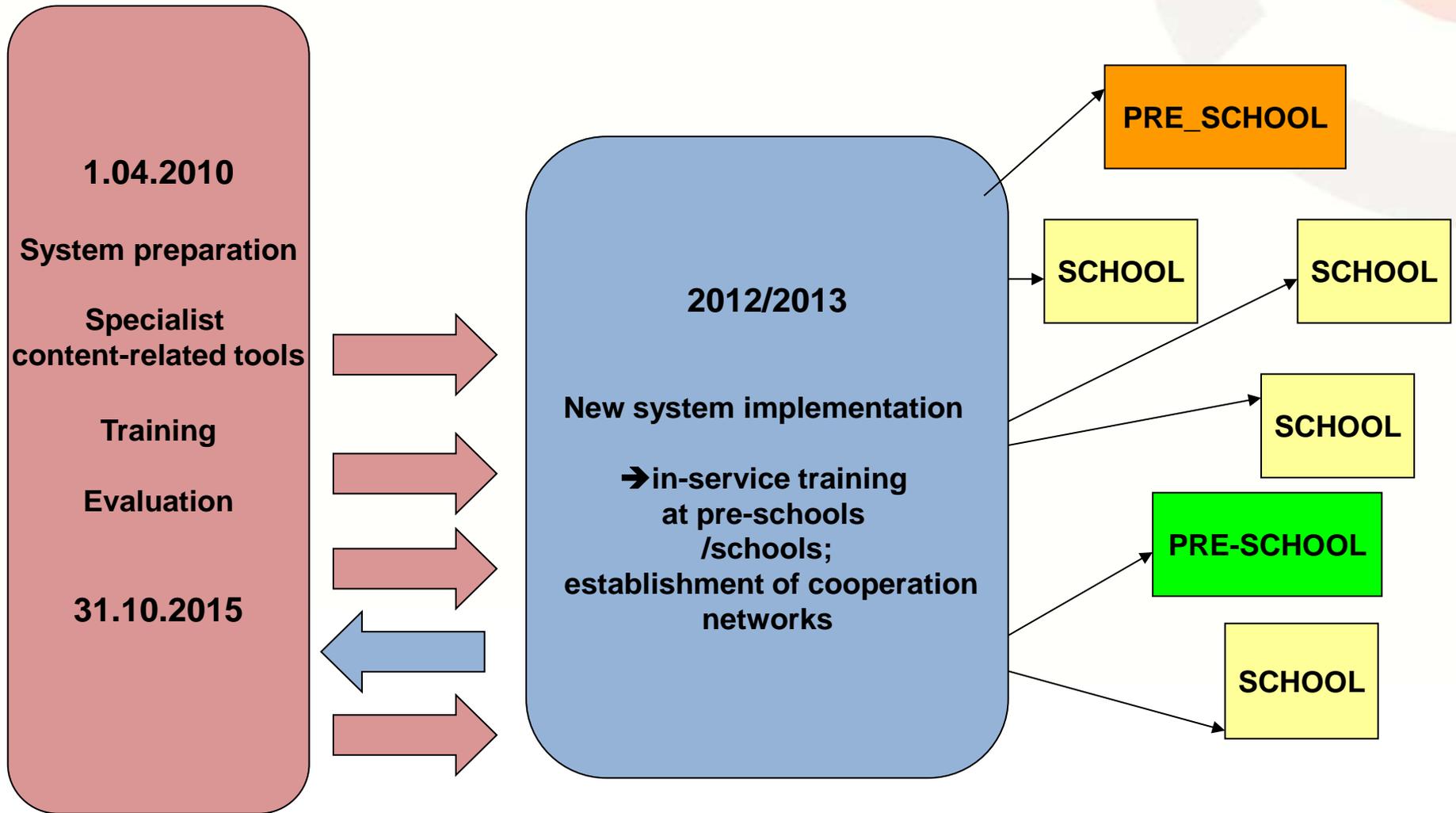
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Interrelation between the two projects



More information available at
Centre for Education Development's
website
ore.edu.pl/wspieranie.



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Thank you for your attention

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