



Specialist Schools
and Academies Trust
EXCELLENCE AND DIVERSITY

Communiqué from the international workshop for school principals



iNet in partnership with the National Academy of Education Administration (NAEA) and with the support of HSBC organised the first international workshop for school principals in Beijing in October 2006.

iNet and NAEA assembled a group of 100 outstanding principals from 14 countries to discuss transformation of their education systems and develop an agenda for future schooling.

Key issues and recommendations were synthesised and a unanimously endorsed communiqué produced.

The communiqué shapes the agenda and programme for the 4th iNet international conference being held in Beijing in September 2007.

An agenda for future schooling

We, a group of 100 principals from 14 countries met at the National Academy of Education Administration (NAEA) in Beijing, China, 16–19 October 2006 to discuss the transformation of and innovation in the world's education systems.

The workshop was organised by iNet, the international arm of the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust (SSAT) and the NAEA with the support of HSBC. Our mandate is based on three points:

First, the schools we are privileged to lead are regarded by others as outstanding

Second, collectively we represent the voice of many school systems around the world

Third, we believe that there should be a global sense of moral purpose in education

We hold the following truths to be self-evident:

1. Vast inequality exists within schools, between schools, and between school systems in the world. Such inequality is morally unacceptable and practically detrimental to the common good of all human beings. While social, economical and political factors are the primary causes, effective school leadership and classroom practices can significantly ameliorate their negative effects on student achievement
2. Global economic integration and the advancement of information, communication, and transportation technologies have shrunk the world into an interdependent and interconnected village. Harmony in this village is vital to the continuation and further prosperity of the human race
3. Children are differently talented and schools should strive to cultivate different talents and help all children realise their potentials. Our privileged task as educators is to help them expand their horizons of what it is possible for them to achieve
4. School leaders are at the forefront of educational innovation and transformation. They can have a powerful impact on the quality of education their schools provide for their students. Working together they can transform their systems
5. Education systems and schools in different cultures have developed effective practices and policies. These practices and policies may be unique to their own contexts but are invaluable sources of inspiration for others. There is an emerging global agenda for educational reform based on the personalisation of learning, the professionalisation of teaching, networking and collaboration and the intelligent and ethical use of data. Leadership has the ability to mould these drivers for transformation to the context of their schools and school systems

Hence, we suggest the following to all our fellow principals worldwide:

1. All schools must provide high quality education to all students. The quality of schools and school systems should be judged by their ability to both raise the achievement and reduce the negative impact of social economical and other background factors on the learner
2. All schools must take the responsibility to prepare learners through curriculum provision as global citizens who are capable of negotiating cultural and linguistic differences, respectful of others and aware of their interdependence
3. All school leaders must embrace the personalisation of learning as a means of enabling every student to reach their potential, to learn how to learn, and to share responsibility for their own education



4. All schools must expand their definition of success to include more than student performance in academic subjects. Current measures of educational outcomes are limited in what they measure, but we still affirm the importance of basic skills in laying the foundations for a successful education
5. All school leaders must recognise their moral obligation and powerful influence with their students and staff and thus act responsibly and energetically to develop a school culture that is outward looking in engaging with the wider community, as well as developing the school as a professional learning community
6. All school leaders must become active members of global networks of educational transformation. Through these networks, they contribute to and benefit from an international repertoire of knowledge and expertise because their responsibilities are not only limited to the well-being of students in their own schools, but children in other schools and other nations

We would also like to support policy makers and the business community in the discharge of their responsibilities in the process of transformation and urge them to:

1. Recognise there is urgency at a global level that, in order to address the needs of 21st century learners, there must be an immediate and intentional paradigm shift of school education, and from a negative

competitive approach that prevails in many settings to one which fosters collaboration and cooperation as well as supports global harmony

2. Help us to take best practice at the school level and use it to create healthy models of systemic change at a global level so that all students regardless of geographic location have equity and access to an excellent education
3. Ensure that historic institutions do not inhibit the ability of teachers and school leaders to focus on professional solutions to learning challenges
4. Ensure that able and passionate people are attracted to and prepared for teaching and school leadership and are provided with conditions of work that support continuing professional development, that ensure their long-term commitment and capacity to achieve success for all students
5. Provide schools with authority and responsibility to use all of the resources available to them in a way that will best meet the unique mix of needs that may be found in each local setting, this reflecting the principle that decisions should be made as close to the student as possible

6. Ensure that moral purpose is at the fore of all educational debates with our parents, our students, our teachers, our partners, our policy makers and our wider community



We define moral purpose as a compelling drive to do right for and by students, serving them through professional behaviours that ‘raise the bar and narrow the gap’ and through so doing demonstrate an intent, to learn with and from each other as we live together in this world

Next steps

iNet is developing an inclusive international network of educators and students that recognise the opportunities provided by collaborating internationally and thinking globally.

Equipped with the vision, the knowledge, and the networks, iNet serves as a powerful tool to help schools meet the challenge of preparing global citizens by supporting schools to learn from each other, to exchange and share best practices, to participate in the global discourse of education innovation and transformation, and to engage students in rich and meaningful dialogues with each other. iNet educators recognise that globalisation and the digital revolution have already transformed the lives of billions of people, it has begun to redefine what skills are valuable for living and learning in a global and digital world.

iNet recognises the critical role that school leaders will play in this transformational process. iNet seeks to cultivate and support leadership, through the design of international qualifications in educational leadership, specific workshops, conferences, and most importantly networking of like-minded leaders and visionary thinkers. It is through these processes that iNet seeks to develop courageous and innovative leaders who think globally but act locally leading transformation in their schools.

The second international workshop for school principals will be held in 2009. If you wish to participate please email grace.hardy@ssatrust.org.uk. Please note places will be limited to ten participants per country.

About iNet

iNet's mission is to create powerful and innovative networks of schools that have achieved or have committed themselves to achieving systematic, significant and sustained change that ensures outstanding outcomes for all students in all settings.

It focuses on school transformation and aims to facilitate innovation by sharing knowledge and offering a vision of how education can move forward based on the practice of schools in all settings.

iNet has grown rapidly into a rich, diverse network across many cultures. It has brought together a wide variety of education networks into a single unifying force working towards transforming education around the world.

iNet already links over 4000 schools in over 30 countries. These include networks in England, Australia, Chile, Georgia USA, Wales and Western Cape South Africa, China, Holland, Mauritius, New Zealand and Sweden.

iNet is open to primary, secondary and special schools across the world. Schools in England affiliated to the SSAT receive automatic membership to iNet.

Schools outside England can quickly join iNet online through the iNet website at www.ssat-inet.net

