

A new direction together

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1. DESCRIPTION OF SOS NETWORK

- S:O.S. Network was born in 2003 from strong interactions between schools, public administrations and local communities, in the field of environmental education and active citizenship.
- Today: 60 schools in the province of Bergamo and 10 in the province of Milan.
- More than 70.000 students aged from 3 to 19 years old attending different orders of schools: infant, primary, scuola media and high school
- Representative: one Teachers and School Managers for each school form the Assembly of the network
- S:O.S. cooperates with numerous public and private institutions included the university of Bergamo

2. "OUR VISION AND MISSION"

What we have in common and characterises us:

- Pedagogical-didactic approach:
- Student protagonist of their learning-training process
- Learning/teaching: cooperative and co-evolutionary processes
- Educational success measured with the development of adequate, significant and socially shared life competences in order to promote responsible and active citizenship
- Close relationship between learning and education.
- Open and active school in the living area/town

3. "ANALYSIS OF THE REALITY"

The Italian school is asked to make a radical change in order to respond to new educational needs and the challenges our society dictates.

It is therefore essential to change the way of teaching, communicating and living nowadays, according to the new challenges launched by the web informal learning

Our network of schools has been dealing with skills teaching and teachers training since the beginning.

However, we are still wondering why **good teaching procedures and methodology**, some of them really innovative and original, **are unable to quit the avantgarde dimensions and cannot concretely contribute to a real change in the school structure.**

We are all aware that the causes could be traced in

- A **school system** where time and space are strictly organised: many subjects, a certain amount of hours a week for each discipline, 30/32 hours a week in the curricula;
- A "pass down" way of teaching, still focused on analytical, sequential didactics.

- The lacking of an organic kick-off and ongoing **teachers training programme**, aimed at developing a new professional profile however not well-defined yet.

Behind this backwardness and resistance to change is the real problem of our school. Our school still has a wide rank of early school leaving students, too many. And this way of acting contributes to highlight differences.

Important reforms have changed systems and school rules in the last few years. We, still, have question:

What kind of renewal could these reforms grant in terms of skills teaching if prevalent didactic models are frontal lessons, retroactive evaluations and strict timetables?

Is digital didactic really innovative if methodology doesn't really change?

What we are facing now is a real revolution, a radical change of model?

A new way of looking at our own role as teachers and educators and a new ethic attitude in pedagogical relationship is needed.

4 . Landmarks of our research

Our projects are fundamental for:

- **methodological innovation: Lab teaching, learning/teaching process based on real tasks, project based learning**
- **analysis, monitoring, documentary research on actions**

SOME OF OUR PROJECTS:

- **At school on the rivers**
- **CPL (Centro di Promozione della Legalità - legacy promotion center)**
- **Management of an asset confiscated from Mafia**
- **Sociallecito: a facebook page autonomously administred by students**
- **Projects of apprenticeship for Secondary Education Students**

It's important to strengthen a cooperative learning process using innovative and different methodological pathways able to activate all students' motivation, interest and active participation:

- Methodology based on real life skills
- Workshops
- Cooperative learning
- Project based learning
- Service learning
- Learning peer to peer

5. "TEACHERS' TRAINING"

In the last few years teachers' training has become compulsory after having been discretionary for a long time.

For this reason the Ministry of Education is devoting many resources to training even though the results are still unsatisfactory. The reason might be

the lacking of an organic kick-off and ongoing teachers training programme aiming to define a new professional profile for teachers, still undefined. There is a lot to do, starting from university courses to become teachers, to recruitment systems that hardly help in choosing the best teachers and eventually training programmes, both kick-off and ongoing ones. As far as our experience is concerned, we are deeply convinced that the most effective training is the one based on practical experimentation. Every teacher, thanks to colleagues and specific knowledge has got the possibility to experience directly on fieldworks

TRAINING COURSES for teachers on:

- didactics and skills evaluation and assessment
- innovative methodology (also digital)
- self-assessment and improvement plans
- disciplinary didactics based on skills and competences
- factors facilitating learning processes: empathy, motivation, self-confidence
- theatre courses for teachers

NEXT SEMINARS AND CONFERENCES (2017/18):

- at Barbiana: for a democratic school and a community which educates (28/29 Oct. 2017)
- Conference on Learning with Social Service (1 Dec. 2017)
- "When it doesn't add up", conference on innovative maths methodology (Feb. 2018)

6. Democracy and solidarity in our network is based on:

- Indipendence and freedom
- How we work: choose activities, project groups, exchange and dissemination of best practices
- Autonomy and empowerment of students: work in the activities, exchange experiences, provincial Meetings on Citizenship and Participation
- Peer to peer and tutoring among students of different orders of schools

7. A NEW PROFESSIONAL PROFILE FOR TEACHERS"

Educational needs are getting more and more demanding and are imposing a radical change in the way teachers educate. A new professional profile for teachers is necessary on national bases. Teachers should not only impart knowledge but should become

- Teachers-coaches and students-tutors
- expert in educational and learning processes;
- manage positive relationships and meet the different educational needs
- work in team, to develop multi and interdisciplinary approaches
- evaluate, assess and self-assess

Which evaluation?

Evaluation is another important factor which may influence in a negative way the pedagogical relationship. In our schools an evaluating system focused on retroactive students' performances is still predominant.

In this way we might run the risk to classify, demotivate, exclude the students who don't reach a positive evaluation making them feel inadequate. It's an evaluating system promoting, in gifted students, extrinsic motivation to learning process and characterizing in a positive way the relationship between the student and the teacher.

A competence evaluation requires a change of model to have a leading educational function, in order to guide learning process and to encourage a continuous improvement.

We are dealing with an authentic evaluation, which verifies not only what a student knows, but also what he is able to do using what he already knows and this involves a self-evaluating and assessment process for both the students and the teachers.

OUR ROUTE

- transform our schools into places of wellbeing, into a knowledge place, in an open active learning community for students, teachers and stakeholders
- The schools of S:O.S. network WALK together on this street to change from down-up, WORK actively in and with the local stakeholders. ENGAGED in sharing synergies with other Italian and European networks.

OUR LINKS

- Download the slides and full text of this paper at: www.lecito.org
- VISIT OUR WEBSITE AND SEE THE PROJECTS REALIZED AND OUR ORGANIZATION: www.lecito.org
- FACEBOOK PAGE: SOCIALLECITO https://www.facebook.com/Social-Lecito-847877432023737/?hc_ref=ART9jrkVSr5jP0AJrhtoEQgZKAJnoja-fOsaWiMayNZmk8G8CU5Dx-gR_clQ9jGhKjA&fref=nf
- At school on the rivers: www.lecito.org/fiumi/index.php/chi-siamo