

MOVING LEARNING FORWARD: From policy-driven reforms to school-led change

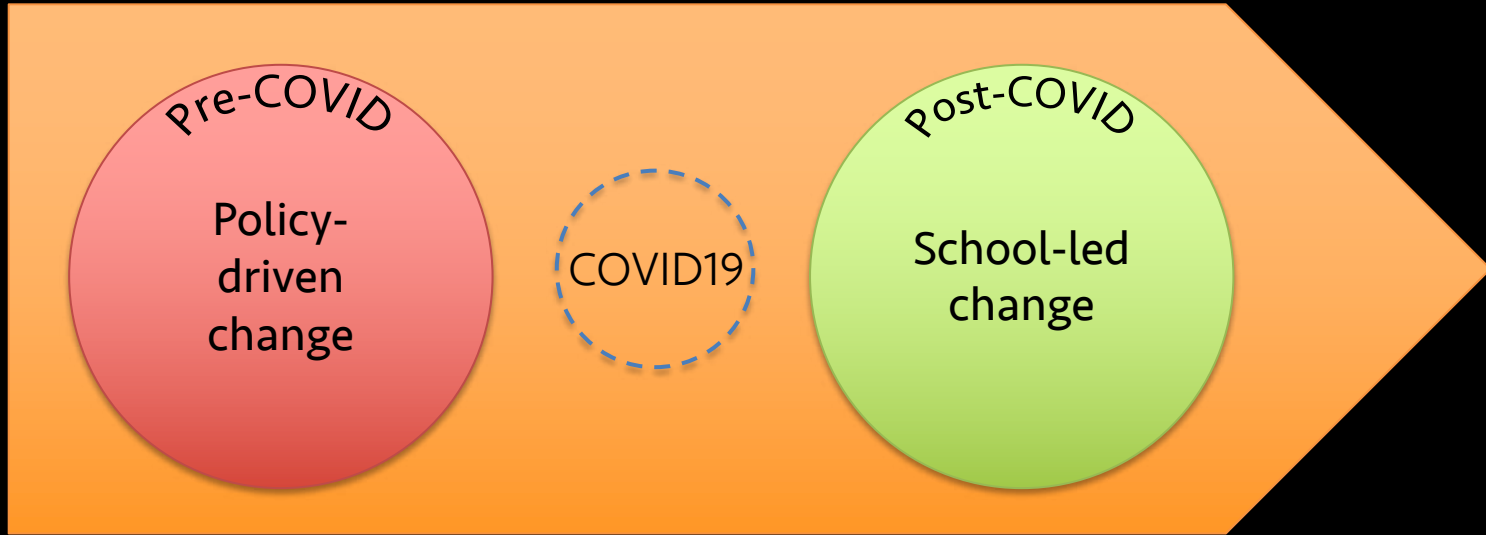
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UNSW  Gonski Institute

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Climate of Educational Change



Pre-COVID



There is a global learning crisis that amplifies educational inequalities that severely hobbles the disadvantaged youth who most need the boost that a good education can offer. – World Bank Human Development Report 2018

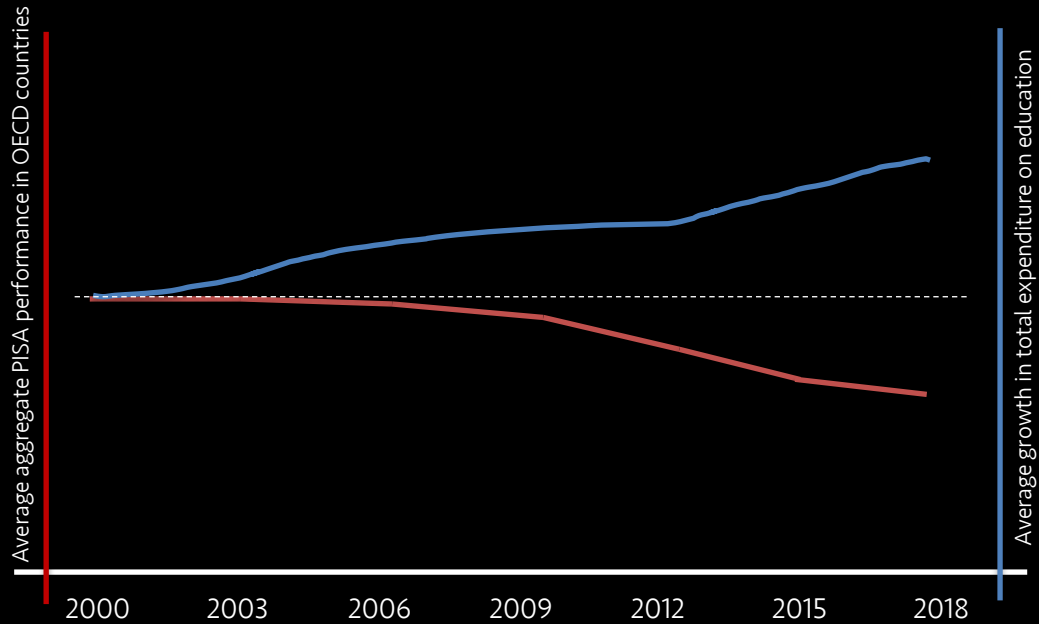


The performance difference across the OECD countries between the most socio-economically advantaged and disadvantaged student in reading literacy is equivalent to over three years of schooling. – PISA 2018



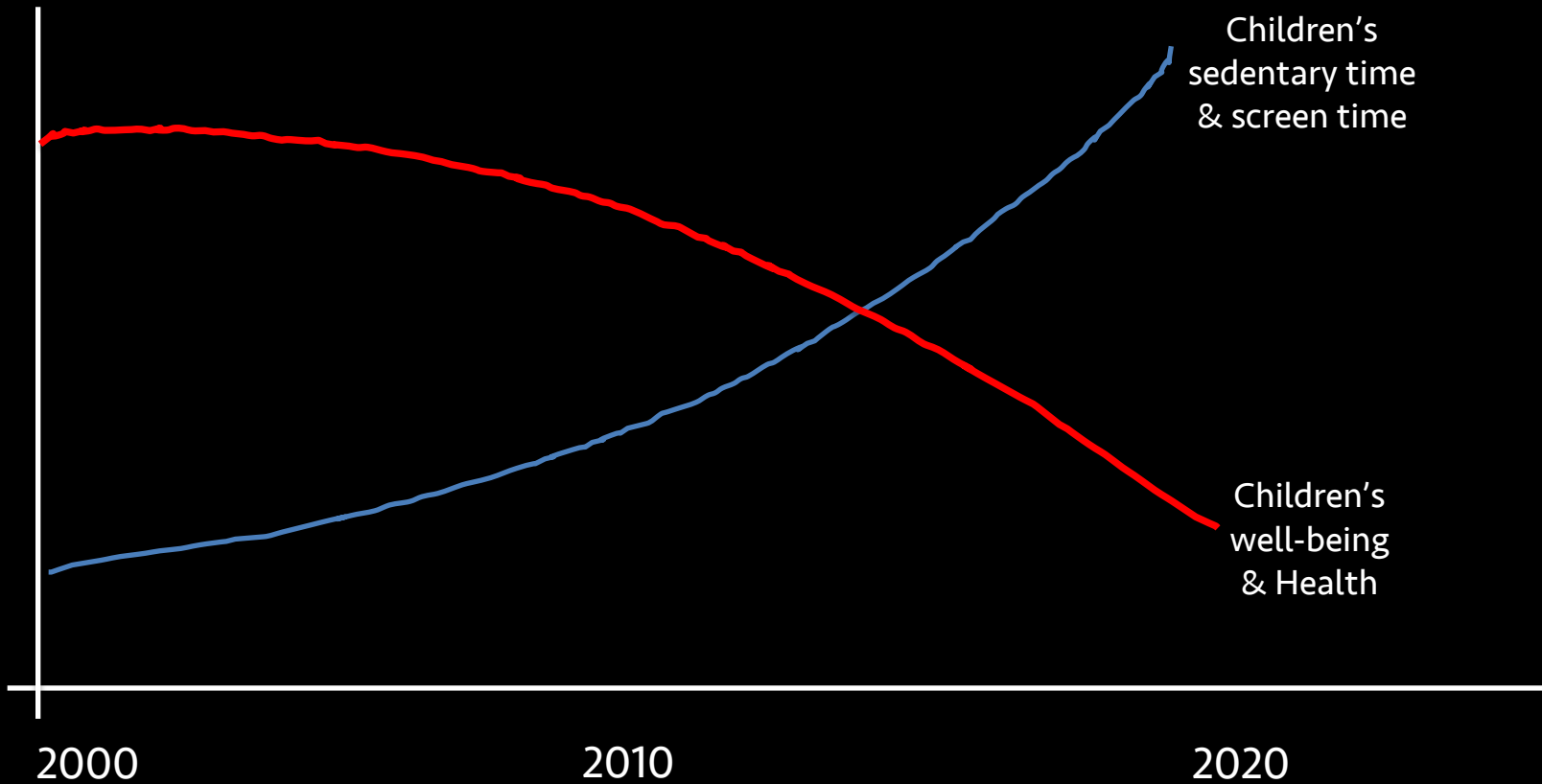
About 260 million children, adolescents and youth are not at school and just half of them achieve the basic level of proficiency required. – GEM Report 2020

Pre-COVID trend 1: Student learning vs. education spending

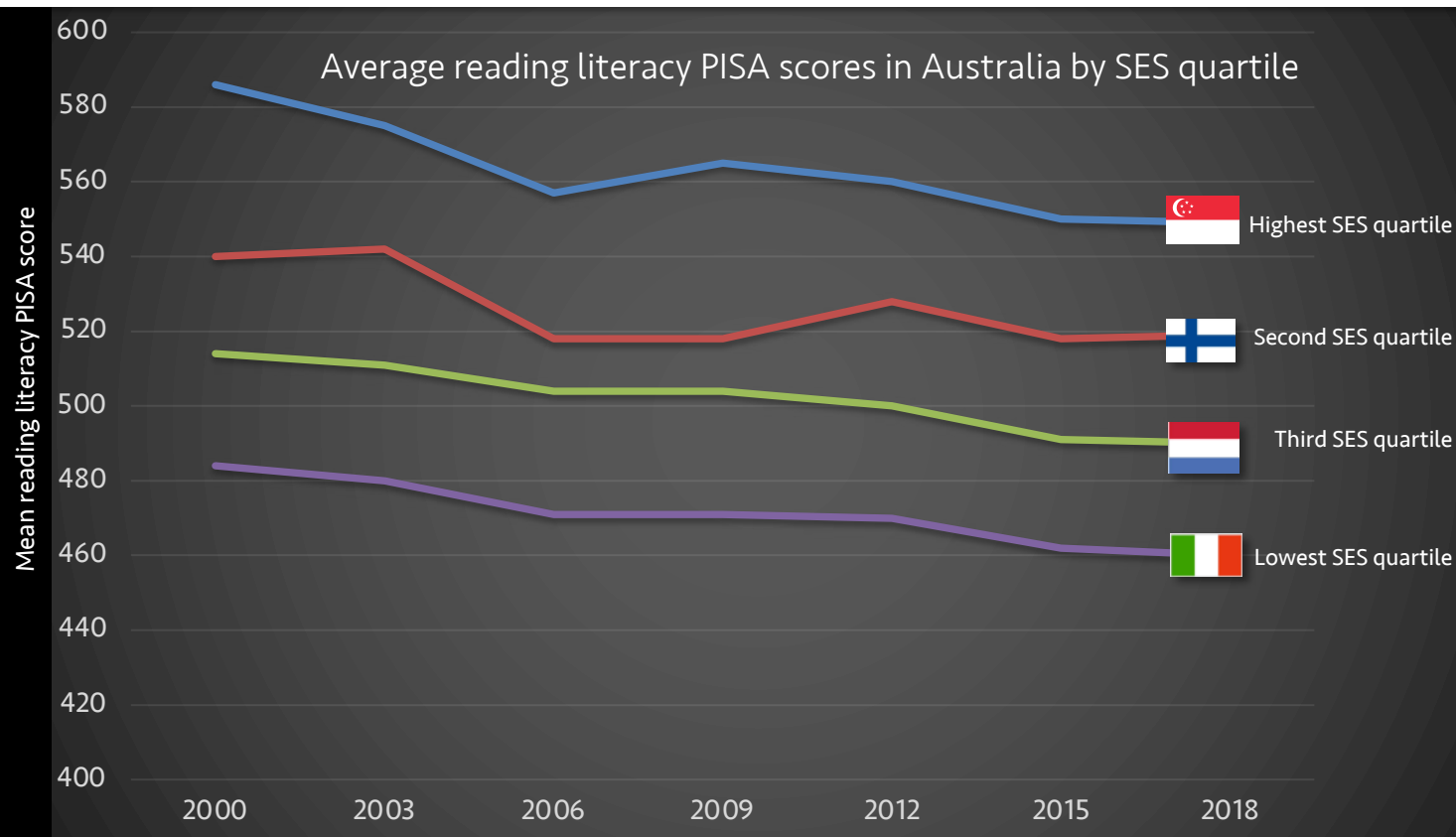


Source: OECD database (2020)

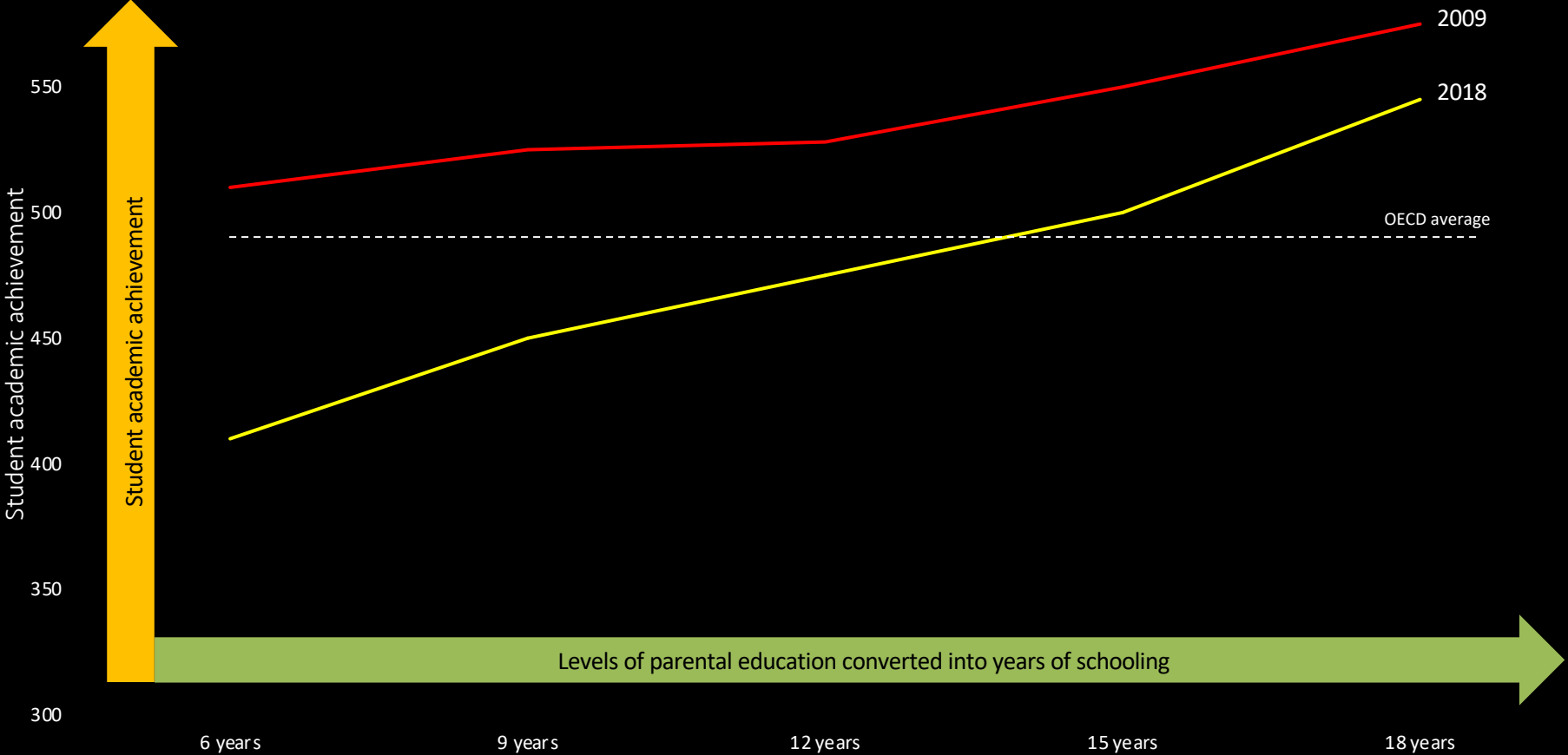
Pre-COVID trend 2: Student wellbeing vs. sedentary time



Pre-COVID trend 3: Growing inequalities



Aggregate National Average PISA Score and Levels of Parental Education in Finland in 2009 and 2018

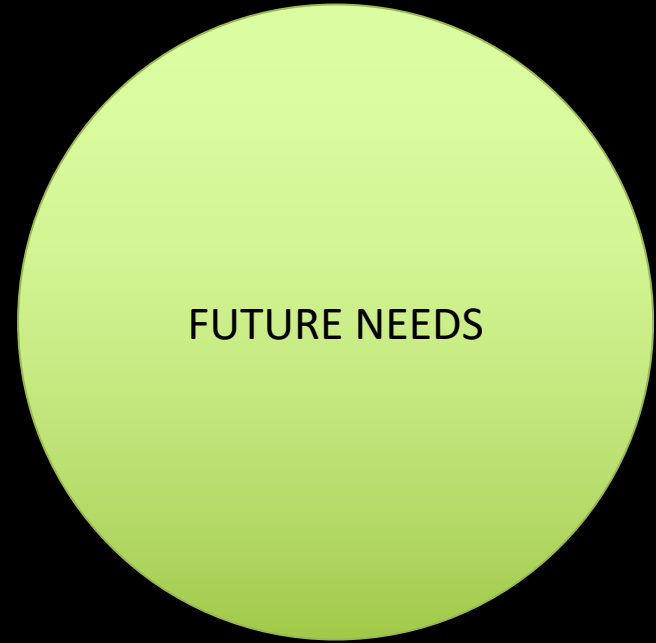


Source: Finnish Lessons 3.0 (2021)

Will the COVID move learning forward?



We are here



Schooling disrupted, learning reimagined

Yong Zhao: The New Grammar of Schooling



Linda Darling-Hammond: The New Deal of Education



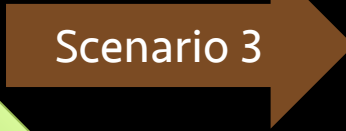
Gene Glass & David Berliner: Why Bother Testing in 2021?



Disruption



Adaptation
Shrinking budgets, downsizing services, new standardization, and more online delivery through policy-driven change.



Status quo:
Survival, fixing the damage, catching up



Transformation
Investing in public education, diversifying schools, more flexibility, and teacher professionalism through school-led change.

Will the change come?

Maybe, but we need a new mindset:

ONE SIZE FOR ALL TEACHING



TAILORED LEARNING AT SCHOOL

ACADEMIC INTELLIGENCE



WHOLE CHILD DEVELOPMENT

LEARN TO KNOW



LEARN WHAT TO DO WITH WHAT YOU KNOW

TEACH FOR THE ECONOMY



GROW INTO HUMANITY

Will the change really come?

Yes, but under these conditions:

Condition #1: We fix current educational inequalities

Condition #2: We trust teachers and schools more in leading the way

Condition #3: We talk more about *'how'* than *'what'* to change

Condition #4: We rely less on policy-driven reforms and more on change through schools and thought-leadership

FinnishED Leadership
FOUR BIG, INEXPENSIVE IDEAS
TO TRANSFORM EDUCATION



PASI SAHLBERG

CORWIN IMPACT LEADERSHIP SERIES

The current issue and full text archive of this journal is available on Emerald Insight at:
<https://www.emerald.com/insight/0950-9584.htm>

Will the pandemic change schools?

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Will the
pandemic
change
schools

Abstract

Purpose – This essay offers a perspective for practitioners and decision makers to look beyond short-term recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and consider longer-term consequences that it may have on schools.
Design/methodology/approach – In this essay, I discuss some general observations about education during the pandemic and then provide a perspective to some issues related to educational inequality and learning from home during the pandemic. The essay is informed by recent media articles and reports of national and international institutions.

Findings – This essay makes four claims. Despite high hopes, there is only a little chance schools will change as a consequence of the pandemic without bold and brave shifts in order to lose that change happens. The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the effects of pre-existing social and educational inequalities facing those who would be an important consequence of the pandemic. During school closures, learning from home has been mostly based on the old ways of conveying information and knowledge rather than creating or conceiving new ideas and solutions to real-life problems.

Research limitations/implications – This is an essay that offers evidence-informed perspectives to current development in education, and it should not be treated as a research-based article.

Originality/value – This essay will contribute to the ongoing public conversation and professional debate on the future of school education. It will be part of the series of essays that will support those who are seeking to not just adapt to meet the pandemic but to step back and consider the medium to longer-term implications.

Keywords School closure, Professionals, COVID-19

Paper type Viewpoint

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Revised 10 May 2020
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I wrote this essay at the moment of time when most schools in North America were closed because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Students were forced to stay home and learn remotely using online education arrangements or other available means. At the same time, in many other parts of the world, children started to return to schools after several weeks of learning from home. This is noteworthy because neither I nor anybody else knew at the moment how school closures affect children's health and emotional wellbeing. We don't know whether they learning what they are expected to learn when they cannot go to school, or what schools should do when children are returning to school, to secure everyone's health and at the same time focus on student learning. Therefore, it is important to share perspectives from around the world on how teachers, school principals and thought leaders are responding to this crisis. My aim is to offer perspectives for practitioners and decision-makers to look beyond short-term recovery from this crisis and consider its longer-term consequences to teaching and learning in schools.

This essay and the long list of writings coming out from scholars and others will turn the volume upon what we have known for a very long time about what is wrong with our schools. Yet, the education policies and institutions simply do not change. There are those whose an opportunity in the COVID-19 crisis to reimagine education, but I don't see any indication that education systems would be able to renew themselves from within. What I want to argue in this essay is that there is only a little chance school education will change without bold and brave shifts in mindset on how that change happens. This includes, for example, a shift from one-size-fits-all prescriptions for teaching and learning in flexible, diverse and self-directed ideas to diverse communities and a collective move from educating toward fluid, predictable outcomes to new, surprising ideas (knowledge or skills) as a result of creative and divergent learning. The role of policy in ensuring education this way is probably much less than many of us think. This crisis is a good reminder that in transforming schools we should learn to rely



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PERSPECTIVES



Does the pandemic help us make education more equitable?

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Abstract

Everybody agrees that the COVID-19 pandemic is a big disruption in education. It questions many traditional rules and structures that have organized the work of schools in the past. But not everyone agrees that the pandemic will eventually change schools. In this article, I narrow the scope of that question and ask whether the pandemic helps us fix some of the pre-existing inequalities that we were unable, and often unwilling, to improve. I argue that as we think about how education should be reimagined, it is paramount to continue efforts to make education more inclusive, fairer and equitable for all. I take some early examples from two distinct education systems, Australia and Finland, to highlight how disrupted teaching caused by school closures has had different impacts on schools and teachers. The conclusion is that the pandemic may help make education more equitable if current socio-economic inequalities are addressed early on; teachers and principals are trusted more in leading schools forward in the post-pandemic world; and schools and children are supported to become more self-directed in leading and learning.

Keywords COVID-19 · Equity · Inequality · Australia · Finland

1 The unexpected disruption

Many education systems were in trouble already before the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) became a global pandemic on 11 March 2020. In its first ever Human Development Report in 2018 that was devoted entirely to education, the World Bank (2018) announced a global learning crisis that, among many other things, amplified educational inequalities because “it severely hobbles the disadvantaged youth who most need the boost that a good education can offer” (World Bank 2018, p. 6). The OECD’s Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2018 found out that the performance difference on average across the OECD countries between the 10% most socio-economically advantaged and the 10% most disadvantaged students in reading literacy test was 141 points, that is equivalent to more than three years of schooling (OECD 2019). OECD concluded that “there has also been no real overall improvement in the learning outcomes of students in OECD countries, even though expenditure on schooling rose by more than 15% over the past decade alone” (OECD

THANK YOU!

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