



# RECIPE PROJECT

## State of Art

2014

Albertslund

Denmark



State of Art – Danish partner

## **National level**

Denmark has a good public school, the 'Folkeskole', but it needs improvement to become even better. Our public school is among the best when it comes to developing students to become active citizens with fine social competences. Together with the parents, the public school shall further the students' many-sided development and education by giving them knowledge and skills to prepare them for further and higher education and to encourage their desire to keep learning.

The public school enhances students' ability to understand and take part in the democratic processes. The students are well prepared for their future lives as citizens of Denmark. The Danish students in their first years of school do well in Danish and Maths. Besides, they have fine interpersonal skills and the debate culture; the social climate in school and in the classroom is generally good.

Education in Denmark is free and compulsory at the primary and lower secondary levels, with at least 82% continuing to higher levels, which are also government subsidized. Danish private schools are also government-subsidized via a voucher system; at least 13% of all students attend these private schools at the lower levels

The lower secondary school that consists of form level 7 - 9 in the public school is crucial for the students' chances to complete an upper secondary education later. But the lower secondary school does not manage to sufficiently develop the students' competences in order for them to be able to choose and complete an upper secondary education. Approximately 92 per cent of the students who finished the public school in 2011 are expected to complete an upper secondary education. Even so, a relatively large group still finds it difficult to choose and complete an upper secondary education.

The academic standards in the public school need improvement. On the one hand building on the present strength of the public school, and on the other hand by taking up the challenges confronting the public school will achieve this.

### **A new agreement regarding the Danish School system /Elementary School**

Therefore THE GOVERNMENT will maintain and develop the public school's strengths and academic standards by working with the following three main goals:

- 1) The public school must challenge all students to reach their full potential.
- 2) The public school must lower the significance of social background on academic results.
- 3) Trust in the school and student well being must be enhanced through respect for professional knowledge and practice in the public school.

These goals shall contribute to setting a clear direction and a high mutual level of ambition for the development of the public school, and furthermore, to ensure a clear framework for a systematic and continuous evaluation

In order to fulfil these three goals, the reform of the public school, based on three main areas of improvements, mutually supportive of one another, and which might contribute to the improvement of the students' academic standards:

- A longer and varied school day with more and improves teaching and learning.

- An enhanced professional development of teachers, pedagogical staff and school principals
- Few and clear objectives and simplification of rules and regulations

A lot of specific activities will be taken to develop the compulsory school. A complete description of the new law will be available on the RECIPE website or through this link:

[http://eng.uvm.dk/~media/UVM/Filer/English/PDF/131007%20folkeskolereformaftale\\_ENG\\_RED.ashx](http://eng.uvm.dk/~media/UVM/Filer/English/PDF/131007%20folkeskolereformaftale_ENG_RED.ashx)

Below are listed in headlines some of the new activities.

- A longer and more varied school day
- More sports and movement activities
- Better teaching
- Strengthening foreign languages
- The open school
- Fewer goals but clearer
- A better teaching environment and quiet in the classroom
- Parental cooperation and student involvement
- Supportive teaching
- Homework assistance
- More lessons in Danish and Maths
- New subjects: wood and metal work and design + food knowledge
- Improved final years of compulsory schooling and transition to post compulsory education
- Competence development for teachers, pedagogues and principals
- A public school resource centre with consultants will be established
- Few clear targets and simplification of rules

The following statements from the new act have a specific relation to the objectives of the RECIPE project:

### **Focus on improvement of teaching and learning**

The academic standards for all children need improvement. In connection with the introduction of more lessons in school, a focused effort will be carried out in order to improve the quality of teaching and to ensure measurable improvements.

#### *Clarification and simplification of the Common Objectives*

The clarification and simplification of the Common Objectives support the continuous improvement of the students' academic standards, and ensure that students achieve higher academic levels than previously before leaving the public school.

The Common Objectives will be clarified and simplified with the intention of ensuring the learning objectives, while focusing on the students' learning outcome. Altogether this shall support the public school's work with **action-oriented** teaching.

Clear objectives for students' learning will contribute to an increase of academic standards for the academically gifted students as well as for the academically weak.

Among other things, the clarification of the Common Objectives must succeed in supporting the principals' work with action-oriented teaching and the teachers' daily work with planning, execution and evaluation of the teaching. The size and number of the Common Objectives will be reduced and simplified considerably. The clarification will help the principals, the parents, among them the parental representatives of the school board, and the students to better understand the objectives in order for them to become active partners in relation to the students' learning.

The Common Objectives must to a higher degree support the methods of working in the public school of tomorrow, among these; varied teaching and the use of alternative learning environments, practice- and action-oriented teaching and in-creased implementation of ICT based teaching. The objectives will be digitized and supported by guidelines and tools, i.e. by specific examples of how to organise the teaching and how to ensure coherence with the day care pedagogical teaching programs and the academic objectives for upper secondary education

### ***Increased focus on preparing the students for further education***

The ambition is that at least 95 per cent of a youth cohort must complete at least one post-compulsory education. Therefore, it is crucial for the public school to be able to provide students with exact guidelines and the right competences for them to choose and later complete the post-compulsory education, which suits them best.

In order to ensure that the final years of compulsory schooling have an increased focus on preparing the students for further education, the student plan and the education plan will be integrated into one document, covering the time from form level 0 to level 9. Simultaneously, the follow-up part of the student plan may al-ready from form level 7 to a higher degree form the basis of organizing a coherent program for the final years of compulsory schooling with increased focus on challenging and clarifying the students' choice of education and on preparing them to *complete* a post-compulsory education.

As part of the effort to strengthen the students' educational readiness and their knowledge of the labour market, it is furthermore the plan to use the longer and varied school day in the final years of compulsory schooling to work more systematically with the students' educational readiness, e.g. by the compulsory subject (UEA - (educational, vocational and labour market guidance).

In the UEA class the students' educational choices will be challenged and they must acquire a general knowledge of society and an understanding of the labour market. Furthermore, UEA must ensure that students have some knowledge of the post-compulsory education system and what the various types of education may lead to.

In connection with the general clarification of the Common Objectives the aim of UEA will be tightened. Within "The Resource Centre for the Public School" examples of practice-oriented educational programs for UEA will be developed.

This material will be placed at the public schools' disposal by the corps of learning consultants and the new joint portal of knowledge (previously EMU) and other resources

### ***Parental cooperation and student involvement***

To create a better foundation for parental involvement, the cooperation with parents and their involvement in the public school will be strengthened. The corps of learning consultants will initiate this. The parents are a resource and must contribute to the school's work. Consequently, it will be specified in the Public School Act that the school board's principles for collaboration between the school and the student's home shall also include principles on the parents' responsibility for the collaboration. These principles will describe the school's expectations in regards to the parents' participation in parent-teacher meetings, parent-teacher-student meetings<sup>2</sup> as well as academic and social activities taking place at school. In this way, the parents may contribute to the approach to and the handling of the collaboration in which

the parents play a crucial role. Moreover, this will ensure ownership of the principles in the parent group and as a result, make it possible to clearly define the school's expectations to parents.

At the same time, an effort within competence development for the members of the school boards will be initiated in collaboration with the National Association of School Parents<sup>3</sup>. The objective is to prepare the members for the actual work within the school board.

To ensure local democracy at schools with a divisional structure, it is suggested that parents from all divisions are secured representation on the school board. In addition to this, parents are free to establish parent councils for separate divisions.

Student involvement and student democracy are important factors in the development of a future school. Therefore, a project is being conducted in collaboration with Danish Public School Students' Association about the involvement of students, which will create further knowledge about the effects of involving students in the planning and evaluation of the teaching. To strengthen the students' engagement and participation in the public school, an effort under the auspices of the corps of learning consultants, targeted towards more student involvement, is launched. Furthermore, a number of steps are taken to increase the number of student-to-student activities.

### **Inclusion**

Unfortunately, in the past years the public school has separated too many students from the ordinary classroom teaching. The number of students referred to special education has increased drastically. In addition, the expense to special education has increased too and now constitutes approximately 30 per cent of the public school's total expenditure. At the same time however, there is no documentation to substantiate that students enrolled at special schools and attending special classes perform better academically compared to the expected performance in the public school with ordinary classroom teaching.

To meet this challenge, more students need to be included in the public school. Consequently, the government has agreed on a range of initiatives together with the member association of Danish municipalities Local Government Denmark (KL) that will support the local municipalities in the coming changes. Among other things, these initiatives include a new legislation on inclusive education in the public school, continuous monitoring of the change moving towards greater inclusion, establishment of the National Inclusion Counselling Unit, which is an outgoing consulting unit, aiming to support improved inclusion in preschool, school and leisure time facilities by collaboration with municipalities on meeting local needs, establishment of the Centre for Inclusive Education and Special Needs Education, information campaigns as well as the establishment of the Expert Monitoring Group for Inclusive Education. These initiatives shall ensure support and dialogue among the central stakeholders of the objective on increased inclusion in the public school.

These initiatives shall also contribute to the improvement of every child's skills through inclusion by strengthening general teaching at the same time as the individual receives support together with his or her classmates. Also, the longer and more varied school day will create the conditions that ensure room for every child in the public school.

To support the efforts made in regards to inclusive education, it will be possible to provide some dispensations in order for some schools to offer classes with shorter school days. Yet, such dispensation will only be granted when the shorter school days are being compensated for with lessons including two staff members rather than only one in the subject-divided teaching, e.g. in Danish and Maths.

The longer and varied school day will also encompass the segregated special education offers. However, in the legislative realization of the longer and varied school day, the need for flexibility will be taken into account in order to create a good and safe environment for students with special needs.

### ***Improved final years of compulsory schooling and transition to post compulsory education - Elective subjects***

In order to meet the various interests and conditions of the students in lower secondary education in the public school and to further their motivation, the elective subjects – in this case two weekly lessons - are moved from form level 8 to level 7. Simultaneously, the elective subjects become compulsory. In this way the students at form level 7 get the opportunity to choose the same elective subjects as the students at form level 8 today. This will also improve the municipalities' options to work with alternatives to traditional lower secondary schooling, e.g. themed or focused programs.

The municipal councils will be authorized to approve teaching of subjects outside those found in the Common Objectives – subjects not necessarily practical- or artistic-oriented. Thus, the students can choose i.e. elective subjects such as astronomy; metal/technology workshop and homepage design or choose elective objects from so-called subject parcels within the area of i.e. innovation or natural sciences.

As part of the work with clarification and simplification of the Common Objectives, a draft paper for the establishment of new elective subjects in the municipalities will be prepared. This will be in the form of standards for the description of aims and contents of the subjects, which must be followed by the municipalities when introducing the new elective subjects. This way, the municipalities get to ex-amine various considerations when they establish new elective subjects, among them, aim, academic progression and practical implementation, etc. The municipal council must approve the new electives.

## **Local/regional level**

### **Student drop out and post-compulsory education in Albertslund and the Western Region of Copenhagen**

According to the Ministry of Education's own figures, the dropout rate in vocational rounded to 46%.

There are young people for whom the transfer between public schools safe environment and vocational schools are too much. It suggests that the transition between primary and vocational education should be made easier, so that young people regularly diverted and prepared for vocational training.

There are young people who after primary school choose to get an unskilled job. Some of these young people want to educate themselves, but are not motivated to have in the classroom. They could be motivated to start training if the training can be at work, or if their work can be transferred into the program. Also, there may be companies that have unskilled jobs that could easily include training aspects. There is a possibility that some young people can be caught up and start training, and that there are companies that - with the right incentives - sees the advantage in developing training prospects at work rather than continue unskilled jobs.

Finally, there is a potential in supporting young people in vocational schools to complete their education. Some young people need support - and perhaps alternatives - in this period. For example, after the basic program, there is a waiting period of two months, where the young people are left to find an internship by themselves. But there is a group of young people, who already before the waiting period is known not to find an internship on their own.

Whichever way the young people choose, education is an important foundation to develop his life and an important qualification for a better life. Young people who complete upper secondary education is less unemployed and receive higher pay. They come less on cash benefits and early retirement, and they

commit less crime. At the same time an education helps to support the personal development and give young people more opportunities to develop his skills. Education is therefore the surest path to a stable and stimulating adult and working life.

## Local status

**"Youth Strategy Implementation Plan 2012-14 "** brings together the different initiatives that exist in Albertslund or which Albertslund is financing to achieve the overall objective of enabling more young people in Albertslund to complete a youth education.

In this way, it is an umbrella for efforts in Albertslund , to encourage more young people to complete upper secondary education. It should provide a comprehensive overview of the efforts in Albertslund that affect young people to complete a youth education and help to ensure that the various actions in Albertslund are coordinated. At the same time it brings together the implementation plan vs. the previous Youth Strategy implementation plan 2011, and concretize the next year's efforts.

The Implementation Plan is an extension of the Youth Strategy as municipal council adopted in March 2010 and "Suburban On the Leading Edge". "Suburb On the edges" goal is 85% complete further education in 2015.

The reason for making a multiannual implementation plan is to ensure the continuity of the efforts that have been launched or is to be launched. The Implementation plan is however dynamic and will therefore be reviewed administratively every six months or as needed. At the same time there will be a status on the current initiatives to the extent needed. This ensures the Implementation plan, is updated and current. This will continuously be possible to assess whether it is the right interventions that have been implemented to support that young people complete a youth education. The Implementation plan will expire in 2014 this is an expiration date local council has decided for the Youth Strategy.

Following the Youth Strategy is the group of 16-24 years target for Youth Strategy Implementation plan 2012-2014. For the initiatives within the job centre, is the target, however, extended to the group of 18-30 years. The main focus is on the two sub-groups mentioned in the Youth Strategy, respectively, A) the group of young people who never begin a youth education, and B) the group of young people who drop out of the training/education.

Ministry of Education profile analysis showed that 74% of youth in Albertslund, who completed 9<sup>th</sup> grade in 2007 would attend a youth education over the next 25 years, when education and training behaviour during the whole period is assumed to be as in 2007. This figure rose to 81% of the youth in Albertslund, who completed 9<sup>th</sup> grade in 2010. This is, since Young strategy was adopted in 2010, an increase of 7 percentage points in the proportion of young people in Albertslund, which is expected to complete a youth education.

There are a number of initiatives that are all included in the project:



## Young Skills

Young Skills – “Dressed for vocational training to encourage more young people to start a business”. The project is collaboration between Capital Region, a number of municipalities in the metropolitan area (including Albertslund) and a number of UU centres in the metropolitan area (including UU Copenhagen West) and the three vocational schools Copenhagen Technical College, CPH West and TEC. From Albertslund participates Egelundskolen, Herstedlund School, Herstedøster School and the Youth Centre in the project. The project is divided into four sub-projects (themes). Albertslund participate initially in two of these sub-projects, respectively theme 1: "Strengthening of youth clarification about educational choices" and theme 4 "Retention of young people at risk of dropping out"

One element of Young Skills is the establishment of a "Warranty School". The purpose of the Warranty school is to maintain the young people dropping out of the youth education system.

About 56.5 percent of 15-19 year olds drop out of the youth education system. Young people without education today have a significant risk of marginalization in the labour market and society as a whole. The problem with the expected future shortage of professional skilled labour amplified and public budgets, including municipalities, is loaded. Therefore, the focus is on ensuring young people receive an education.

## Target groups

The project embraces all young people who are starting 8<sup>th</sup> grade and up to and including 20 years as it is both the objective to strengthen guidance in primary school and to get young unskilled to begin vocational training. Nevertheless, the project has a special focus on young people who are at risk for failure to start or complete a youth education. This means that the target for action is made up of public school students in 7-10<sup>th</sup> grade and young people who have completed primary school, who have not completed upper secondary education, youth vocational courses that are at risk of dropping out and young people in unskilled jobs.

## UU Copenhagen West

UU Copenhagen West guidance on education in primary schools, and for young people age 18-24 without education. Youth Guidance especially focuses on those students who need additional support and guidance in order to choose a youth education and later complete this.

## Primary school

There are four primary schools in Albertslund teaching 0 – 9<sup>th</sup> grade and SFO'er, these are Egelundskolen, Herstedlund School, Herstedvester School and Herstedøster School. In addition, also a special school Brøndager School, and a 10<sup>th</sup> grade Centre.

Public schools should cooperate with parents provide students with knowledge and skills:

- Prepare them for further education and make them want to learn more
- Makes them familiar with Danish culture and history
- Gives them an understanding of other countries and cultures
- Contribute to their understanding of human interaction with nature
- Promotes the individual all-round development

In addition, the school must develop working methods and create opportunities for experience, absorption and so that students develop awareness, imagination and confidence in their own abilities and background to decide and act. Finally, schools must prepare students for participation, joint responsibility, rights and duties in a society based on freedom and democracy. Schools shall therefore be characterized by intellectual freedom, equality and democracy.

Some of the special efforts in elementary school targeted at secondary schools is the hour solve UEA education (Educational, vocational and occupational training).

In 2012, the municipality decided the school strategy "School for All". The description of the efforts of the local schools is described on the basis of "School for All". In general the School Strategy emphasizes the developing of young people's academic, social and personal skills. These three skills are all important for young people completing a youth education, which is essential for the young to be declared "prepared for education". At the same time the school strategy is to help increase teachers, educators and leaders in schools, focusing on the importance of young people completing a youth education after they have finished primary school.

One of the goals is that all young people are to have a qualifying education. At least 85 per cent of all young people are to complete a youth education by 2017 and a minimum of 90% by 2015.

### **Albertslund Youth Centre**

The 1st of August 2013 The 10. Element and "Ungdomsskolen" was merged into one Youth Centre. This gathers the municipality 10<sup>th</sup> grade offerings and Youth School current full-time and leisure-time education organization.

By bringing together the 10<sup>th</sup> Element and Youth School students and offers a place is achieved the following advantages:

- To make it easier to organize courses to suit individual pupils, including the desire free of choice subjects, elective courses and bridging courses.
- A comprehensive plan provides better opportunities for an effective use of resources, that is, building framework, teachers and materials.
- That will allow for a more diverse selection and free of choice subjects.
- To create opportunities for professional and educational inspiration and development across all activities of the centre.
- That can create a diverse learning environment that is similar to what the students meet at the following schools

Beyond this, the young environment could be developed in cooperation with other offers for the age group. It could be the club facilities; music school offers art school offers.

The 10. Element is Albertslunds 10<sup>th</sup>-grade school. The school offers students to go to the 9 - or 10<sup>th</sup> grade – final tests in the subjects Danish, mathematics, English, German and physics / chemistry. The 10. Element has each year, between 130-175 students - especially from Albertslund, but also from other municipalities.

In 2012/13 The 10. Element offered the following lines:

- Art and musical
- Media
- Business: Here, students work two days in 10 weeks at the business school CPH WEST
- Physical Education

- International
- Science
- Social and health
- Tek10: Here, students get two days a week for 10 weeks teaching at Copenhagen Technical School.
- Team10
- Education Ready Courses: The course has continuous intake of individual courses designed to prepare young people to take an upper secondary education (This class is part of the "Partnership" the target age for up to 22 years)

Furthermore, The 10. Element receives funds from Social Security and the Ministry of Integration to work intensively with home-school collaboration and parental impact on the young taking a realistic choice of education

### **The Production School (Produktionsskolen)**

The Production School is a practical training based on practical work and teaching workshops. Here, students can try working in different disciplines.

The production schools are very different. Each school has great freedom to organize teaching and production according to their own wishes and local needs. There are approx. 80 production schools in Denmark. Most young people from Albertslund who attend the production school attend Glostrup Production School and the Production School of Greve and Taastrup municipalities.

Youngsters can attend the production schools, including former residence, for 1 year. Unless the young has received an exemption for this. The young must be referred to the offer through UU Copenhagen West or the municipality.

#### *Target groups*

Young people under the age of 25 who are not immediately able to start or complete a youth education or who have dropped out of training.

#### *Main objective*

The goal of the production school is to prepare the young to complete a youth education

### **Coordination and cooperation**

The Implementation plan, it is an umbrella for efforts in Albertslund, to encourage more young people to complete upper secondary education. It should provide a comprehensive overview of the efforts in Albertslund that affect young people to complete a youth education and help to ensure that the various actions in Albertslund are coordinated. At the same time it brings together the implementation plan vs. the previous Youth Strategy implementation plan 2011, and concretize the next year's efforts.

We have established a wide range of co-operative partners both within the municipality and externally between local external actors, with the aim that more young people completes a youth education. To ensure a coordinated effort internally between administrations and between external partners and thereby increase the opportunities for young people completing a youth education

## The Case Studies

In the RECIPE project we will focus on two case studies:

1. Youth Strategy & Young Skills
2. Action Learning & Visible Learning - Albertslund Youth Centre 10<sup>th</sup> grade school & Herstedlund School

1.

### Youth Strategy

The new Youth Strategy is following up on the 2012 – 2014 strategy

It is a general strategy for all municipal institutions and employees that are in contact with children/young people: Schools, kindergartens, job centre, social services department and other stake holder

All young people are supposed to take an education

Closer cooperation about children/young people and more focus on the importance of young people getting an education

The foundation:

A flexible coordination group with the head of the schools, the social services department , the educational youth guidance centre and the job centre. Can be supplemented by the head of daycare/kindergarten, the head of the cultural institutions and other relevant stakeholders (instead of a 4 year plan).

“Young Skills” is an important element in the local Youth Strategy. It is a Regional development project that aim to help more young people reduce drop out and to complete a vocational education.

Partners in the project are Region of Copenhagen and North Zealand, and a series of municipalities in the capitol area of Copenhagen – among them Albertslund.

- The project has four main objectives and Alberslund has chosen to work with two of them:
- Strengthen the student’s determination about their choice of education.  
Reduce the number of “drop outs”

2.

### Educational Method - Action Learning

Albertslund municipality and the 10<sup>th</sup> grade department have chosen “action learning” as an educational tool to upgrade the teaching of Danish, Mathematics and English.

Action learning is based on each teacher describing one or more focus areas in his teaching. A colleague discusses the framework agreements and observes the teaching with a focus on the selected areas.

Subsequently, it is a dialogue about the teaching succeeded and which areas can be upgraded.

At the following dialog the individual teacher must reflect on the used / selected methods and objectives of teaching. After this first lesson a new lesson is planned, based on the already tested methods.

It is the students' visible learning, which must be the focus, it is not about the teachers experience of a successful process or not, but each student achieving visible learning.

In a chosen public school, Herstedlund School, a team of teachers is followed in their daily work focusing on the preparation, practice and reflection on how to give pupils extra attention regarding their possible wish of drop out tendencies. We will use a theory and practice call Action Learning.