



esa magazine

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Global
education



European School
Heads Association

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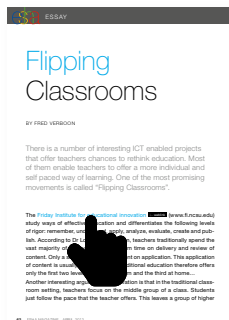
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Some articles in this issue contain direct links to websites. **Simply click on the coloured text and you 'll be automatically linked to a specific website or videopresentation.** Try it yourself and enjoy.



The Entreprenasium Program

When asked who wanted to give an interview, Sven Langbroek (14 years old) eagerly said yes. We meet in a classroom that serves as the basis for Entrepreneurial students. Students use it as their base camp to develop their ideas and plan their education.

Entreprenasium students plan their own learning activities. They ask the teacher what the core objectives are, link them to their own learning goals and propose learning activities. They have to pass all regular exams and tests. Only if they pass all exams, they are allowed to continue the Entreprenasium program.



BY FRED VERBOON

Soon after the interview, a presentation starts that Sven has organized with his Entreprenasium students: the municipality of Emmen has nominated Entreprenasium for the “National Young Rural Award” and this afternoon, the jury will listen to Sven and his classmates and judge his Entreprenasium class. Sven takes care of the agenda, meeting facility, food and drinks. Other Entreprenasium students will give this afternoon’s presentation, Sven will, at the request of the dean, write an article and take pictures. He really likes photographing, which he learned from his grandfather.



The Entreprenasium Program is an innovative education program for secondary schools. The program offers students the opportunity to manage their own curriculum, as long as they meet the school's learning goals and pass regular tests. Entreprenasium students are encouraged to take control of their curriculum and negotiate changes with their teachers. Almost all Entreprenasium students are committed to finish their education. Most of them with above average results. These results are easily explained: students are offered an education that meets their needs. A recent study of the Entreprenasium Foundation shows that 25% of higher secondary school students have entrepreneurial skills. Most of the Entreprenasium students start a company during secondary education.

BEHAVIOUR

The Hondsrug College hopes that entrepreneurial young people like Sven will find a learning environment that suits their needs. Dean Kees Versteeg refers to a well-known Dutch entrepreneur: Ben Woldring (Ben.com) Ben started his company when he was fifteen

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years old. He founded his company despite attending classes. He did not find his school very supportive to his needs and interests. He dropped out of school and became a successful entrepreneur. The Entreprenasium offers a personalized learning path, encourages creative and independent thinking and aims at realizing the potential of individual students. According to Kees Versteeg, not all Entreprenasium students have to become entrepreneurs

PASSION

The school started entrepreneurial teaching with a project named “You are the boss”. In this project, secondary school students were offered opportunities to develop and demonstrate their entrepreneurial skills while raising money for charity. At that time, only very few schools encouraged entrepreneurship among students and only a limited number of projects were available, no real curriculum. The results of this project were very positive. Students showed great commitment. The school decided that it needed to offer real courses and started developing them. This was the beginning of the Entreprenasium program in 2009.

DYNN

According to secondary school students Lynn and Dorien, the Entreprenasium approach really motivates students, Lynn’s eyes shine as she tells about DYNN, the shop that she and Dorien established. The shop sells make up articles like nail polish. “A friend of ours purchases the goods, we then sell the goods via the internet. We learn to deal with money, to invest before you can earn. We learn to work together, to set goals and to become more independent”. The project boosted their moral and self-confidence.

STUDENT CENTRIC LEARNING

Entreprenasium students define their own learning objectives and

interests. The teaching staff help the students to commit to their individual learning paths while meeting the learning objectives of the secondary school. Teachers are regarded as learning coaches instead of lecturers.

REWARD

Like any change, implementing the Entreprenasium program took a lot of persistence. Dean Versteeg took a bottom up approach and asked the teachers how they wanted to implement an entrepreneurial program. The teachers took the lead and wrote a proposition which led to commitment from the teaching staff. During the first year, not all teachers responded positively to the Entreprenasium program. A few expressed their concerns that the program could lead to an increased work load. Instead, the program resulted in highly motivated students, which most teachers regarded as highly rewarding. Looking back at the first few years, Kees Versteeg can only conclude that the program was very successful. “It is not just a good program for all my students and all my teachers, but this group of students and teachers really love it.

PARENTS

Outside of the school, the program raised questions about the learning methods. Do Entreprenasium students miss out on regular curriculum? Do they learn their basics? Recently, the Entreprenasium staff is able to prove that their approach works. On average, Entreprenasium students score significantly better on tests. This is a very good message to parents. During a recent PTA meeting most parents expressed their approval for the program. Their children enjoy going to school. The best example was given by a mother who told that her son had said, “Mom, when I wake up in the morning, I think, Yes, I can go back to school”. ■

THE ENTREPRENASIUM PROGRAM

The Entreprenasium Program started is in 2009, when all students of the Hondsrug College participated in the project: “You are the boss”, a project in which students had to be very creative and think about new ways of fund raising for charity. This first approach resulted in the regional “Education Award Drenthe 2010”

The school further committed to entrepreneurship and wrote several courses. The school shared their courses and the first few schools established the Entreprenasium foundation. The foundation helps the school with the implementation of the Entreprenasium program and a specialized agency organizes training for teachers.

Meanwhile the program becomes increasingly successful. At this moment, 16 secondary school offer the Entreprenasium program.

More information can be found at www.entreprenasium.nl and through info@entreprenasium.nl



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