



DESC National Action Plan

Recommendations to Implement Democratic Education in the Bulgarian Public Educational System

Objective

This action plan aims to guide state schools in Bulgaria on how to concretely implement democratic education's methodologies and practices into their everyday life.

The recommendations within this document are designed to help schools transform their practices and embrace insights gained from democratic education's successful practices and values.

This action plan aims to provide a structured framework for public schools in Bulgaria for effectively implementing successful practices from democratic education:

1. Raise understanding and awareness about importance of presence of democratic values in education system

1.1. Organize gatherings, meetings and discussions between teachers, students and other school members for discussing the current situation and how schools can be more democratic places

1.2. Include the existing books and materials on the topic in teacher's trainings and/or organize trainings for teachers and parents on the topic. A good and free resource is the training platform, created by the DESC project.

1.3. Initiate meetings between policy-makers, organizations and different institutions about discussions for structural changes in nowadays schools' organization

1.4. Participate in open discussions with government on policy making



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2. Adopt democratic values as a main theoretical and practical foundation and framework in the educational system.

2.1. Include democratic values in the vision of public schools - initiate processes of creating a vision that reflects democratic values and children's rights as freedom of choice, student participation in decision-making processes, freedom of speech.

2.2. Organize trainings on practical implementation - what does it mean to live and organize the school with democratic values in mind

3. Create and foster a democratic governance structure that reflects democratic values and relies on active engagement and participation of all school members

3.1. Set up a governance structure that includes representatives from every member of the school community (students, teachers) and have equal voice and rights in decision-making processes.

3.2. Create necessary conditions for establishment and sustainability of Student Councils and ensure their real voice and power in decision-making process on all school issues such as rules, events, and curriculum input.

3.3. Encourage and support the creation of school's structures that include active participation of students - like different committees

3.4. Include students in structures that deal with conflict engagement and violation of the school's rules

4. Promote self-directed learning and freedom of choice

4.1. Include values like acceptance of difference and diversity in the Vision of the school

4.2. Provide training for teachers to have more understanding about the diversity of individuals, the uniqueness of everyone, the different learning styles, speed, interests and talents every student has and to acknowledge and consider that.



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4.3. Provide enough opportunities for self-directed learning and self choice of activities in the school

4.4. Provide enough diversity in learning options and enough opportunities to learn in different ways

4.5. Create structures that support self-directed learning - like personal mentoring for every student

5. Mentoring - individual support for each student's development

5.1. Create structures in the school that provide individual support for every student

5.2. Provide trainings for teachers about coaching and mentoring skills like active listening, empathy in order to provide constant support to students

6. Provide flexible opportunities to evaluate progress and validate knowledge and skills

6.1. Create structures within the school that support every student to learn with their own speed and way and to present there knowledge and skills in different ways and times

7. Provide constant professional development and support for teachers

7.1 Organize Training Workshops - Offer workshops focused on democratic education, self-directed learning, active citizenship.

7.2 Foster Peer Learning and sharing best practices with each other - create opportunities for teachers to observe and learn from each other's practices related to democratic education

7.3. Create s system of support for teachers

8. Create and implement a sustainable system of feedback between all the members and structures within the school community in order to have the opportunity for adjustments and improvements that fit the community the best.



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