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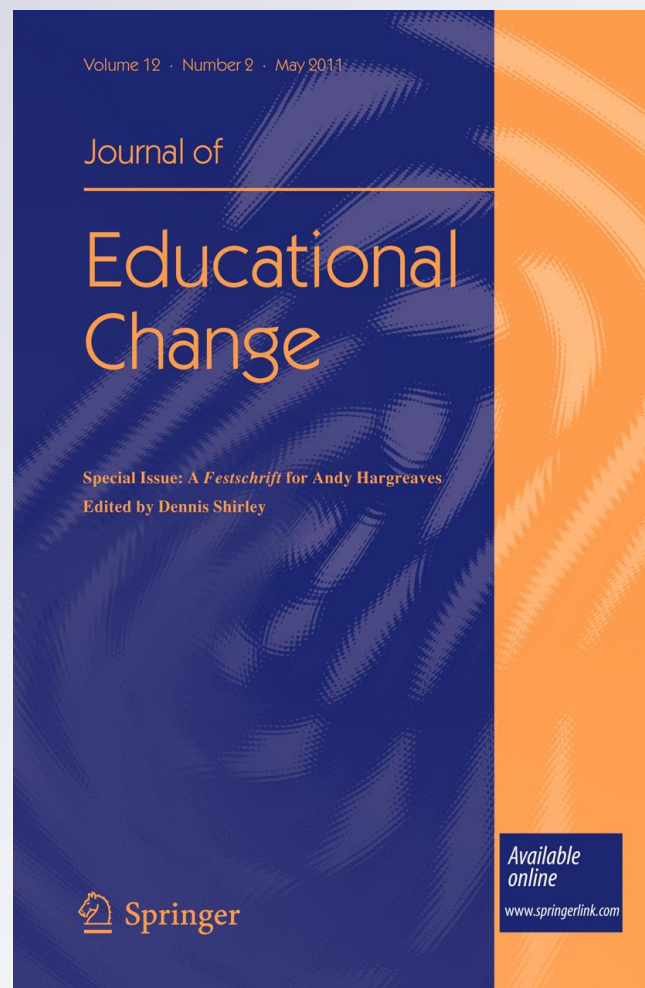
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The Fourth Way of Finland

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Abstract Globalization has increased mobility of people, resources, and ideas. It is also affecting how governments think about education and what schools teach to their students. Attributes related to education for a knowledge society, sustainable development, or 21st century skills are parts of current national educational policies and reforms. A powerful pretext for global educational reform thinking is current international student assessments. As a consequence, particular educational reform orthodoxy has emerged that relies on a set of basic assumptions in order to improve the quality of education and fix other educational deficiencies. This article describes the beginning of the present global educational reform movement discussing some of its key characteristics and implications in practice. Although overlooked by many policy analysts, Finland represents a striking and highly successful alternative to this global educational reform movement. The scholarly work of Andy Hargreaves is seen as essential in understanding the requirements and resources that are needed in securing good public education for all in the future.

Keywords Educational change · Educational reform · Educational policy · Globalization

The beginning

In the 1980s, the global landscape of education looked very different than it is today. Although international tests comparing what students knew had existed for a long time by then, there was not a commonly accepted index to compare the educational performance of nations and jurisdictions as there is today. Many countries knew they had world-class schools, and some thought their education

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system was better than anybody else's. At that time, the quality of educational systems was often determined by students' performance in international competitions such as academic Olympiads for high school students (in mathematics, physics, chemistry, and computer science), national enrollment and graduation statistics, or simply by the good reputation that country had in other fields like research, industry, commerce, or innovation. For these same reasons, there were countries, like Finland for instance, that knew they belonged to the group of mediocre education nations. The situation remained like that until December 2001 when the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) published the first results of the *Programme for International Student Assessment* (PISA).

The seeds of large-scale educational reform ideologies were planted in the 1980s when many developed industrial nations realized that their education systems were not able to lead the way in economic and social transformations that were knocking at the door. The motivation to reform education did not come from unsatisfactory educational performance internationally but rather from national studies and research. One of the hallmarks of large-scale educational reforms is the Education Reform Act (ERA) 1988 in England. It was so important—not only for that country but also internationally—that Levin and Fullan (2008) call it a watershed event in the educational reform movement. The public sector policies of Margaret Thatcher constituted a particular approach to educational change that built on competition, information, and choice as the key principles of raising performance of the education system. Although ERA 1988 in England was not the first attempt to transform an education system through principles of competition and choice, it became the most famous and internationally researched of its kind. Several other large-scale education reforms in North America, Europe, and Asia-Pacific were inspired by it, both politically and educationally.

The reason for the issuance of ERA and its survival under the Labour government after the conservative party era was over in England was the common sense logic of its initial design. Levin and Fullan (2008) describe it through the following four operational principles:

- Competition among schools would lead to better outcomes for students.
- Autonomy for schools is necessary in order for schools to properly compete.
- Choice for parents to decide the schools their children attend.
- Information for the public based on comparable measures of student achievement and on a single national curriculum. (p. 289)

These ideas of educational reform soon became the driving ideas of education policies in many other countries. International development organizations, consultants, and philanthropies engaged in education development adopted reform thinking with its origins in ERA 1988 in England. Education reforms in many states in the United States, Canadian provinces, and Australia adopted variations of this reform logic.

The spirit of educational reform thinking described above resonates closely to the Second Way of educational change that is illustrated by Hargreaves and Shirley (2009) in their book, *The Fourth Way*. It is a way of market competition and

educational standardization in which professional autonomy is replaced by the ideals of efficiency, productivity, and rapid service delivery. New terms such as “standards” and “accountability” appeared in education policy discourse and occupied much of the technical attention of the education development community. Market-like education service promised diversity and quality, but they were soon trumped by uniformity and standardization. Hargreaves and Shirley (2009) write that

In the United States, statewide high-stakes tests were increasingly administered to all students—even those who were newly arrived from abroad without the barest rudiments of English. Standards were easy to write, inexpensive to fund and they spread like wildfire. They were revered in administrative and policy circles but by-passed or resisted in classrooms. However, as scripted and paced literacy programs were then imposed in many districts and on their schools, the bureaucratic screw tightened with increased ferocity. (p. 9)

The spread of market-driven education reforms was boosted by the prevalence of the Internet and electronic global communication in the 1990s. English had become the international language in education development, and the early lessons from the Anglo-Saxon education reforms were openly available to all. The collapse of the communist Eastern European block opened education export at the same time from the more developed West to the hungry East. In these countries, education policies quickly became based on parental choice, open competition, and student performance data, and the western-like educational standards easily found their way to education policies and official reform programs and were implemented as externally funded projects often without proper knowledge or skills on either side. In the absence of universally comparable data about the performance of education systems, most reform efforts in these countries and beyond that relied on Second Way reform thinking were not judged but rather remained a matter of opinion. When the popularity of reforms became the only criterion of success, the way for the global educational reform movement was open.

Not all countries followed the trend lines of this reform movement. Finland has persistently outperformed other nations, yet its achievements have been downplayed in numerous accounts of recommended policy. In a recent report by McKinsey and Company (Mourshed et al. 2010), for example, Finland is not even listed as a high-achieving jurisdiction, with the consequence that policymakers in many contexts will not consider Finnish strategies as they develop their repertoire of school improvement practices. Why has Finland been marginalized, and what might we learn from its example? To answer these questions, we first have to understand the strength and influence of recent reforms.

The Global Educational Reform Movement (GERM)

Although improvement of education systems is a global phenomenon, there is no reliable, recent comparative analysis about how education reforms in different countries have been designed and implemented. However, the professional literature

indicates that the focus on educational development has shifted from structural reforms to improving the quality and relevance of education (Hargreaves et al. 2010). As a result, curriculum development, student assessment, teacher development, technology-assisted teaching and learning, and proficiency in basic competencies (i.e., reading, mathematical, and scientific literacy) have become common priorities in education reforms around the world. I call this the *Global Educational Reform Movement*, or simply, GERM.

The initial idea for GERM is from the work of Andy Hargreaves and his colleagues. In *“Learning to Change: Teaching Beyond Subjects and Standards”* (Hargreaves et al. 2001), the authors present evidence-based criticism of the standards-based reform movement of the 1990s. The research reported on the need for emotional and intellectual aspects of change that have to be done for the reform efforts to succeed. At the same time, however, there were new change forces emerging. The authors claim that

A new, official orthodoxy of educational reform is rapidly being established in many parts of the world. This is occurring primarily in predominantly Anglo-Saxon countries but through international funding organizations such as the World Bank and the global distribution of policy strategies, elements of this orthodoxy are increasingly being exported in many parts of the less-developed world as well. (Hargreaves et al. 2001, p. 1)

As I read the history of educational change, GERM can be traced back to Second Way education reform thinking of the 1980s. It has increasingly become adopted as an “evidence-based policy agenda” within many education reforms throughout the world including those in the United States, England, many provinces of Canada, Germany, and in the transition countries and developing world. GERM is also embedded into the Third Way of change (Hargreaves and Shirley 2009). It is therefore promoted through education strategies and interests of international development agencies and consultant firms as well as by some bilateral donors through their interventions in national education development. Venture philanthropy (see Ravitch 2010) that injects billions of dollars into public education systems in the US and to a lesser extent in some other countries often borrows concepts and principles from corporate management and, by doing so, promotes the viral spread of GERM globally

The inspiration for the emergence of GERM comes from three primary sources. The first is the new paradigm of learning that became dominant since the 1980s. The breakthrough of cognitive and constructivist approaches to learning gradually shifted the focus of education reforms from teaching to learning. According to this paradigm, intended outcomes of schooling emphasize greater conceptual understanding, problem solving, emotional and multiple intelligences, and interpersonal skills rather than the memorization of facts or the mastery of irrelevant skills. At the same time, however, the need for proficiency in literacy and numeracy has also become a prime target of education reforms.

The second inspiration is the public demand for guaranteed, effective learning for all pupils. Inclusive education arrangements and the introduction of common learning standards for all have been offered as means to promote the ideal of

education for all. Centrally set standards combined with aligned national assessments were the main attempts to raise the quality of education in many countries during the 1990s. This work was restricted, in many cases, to the core subjects in national curricula: reading, mathematics, and sometimes science but rarely anything else.

The third inspiration is the accountability movement in education that has accompanied the global wave of decentralization of public services. Making schools and teachers accountable for their students' learning outcomes has led to the introduction of education standards, indicators and benchmarks for teaching and learning, aligned assessments, and testing and prescribed curricula. As Popham (2007) has noted, various forms of test-based accountability have emerged where school performance and raising the quality of education are closely tied to processes of accreditation, promotion, sanctions, and financing.

There are several manifestations of GERM. Some of them have led to positive influences in education reforms. A focus on deeper learning, higher expectations for all students, and a better connection between learning and assessment are welcomed improvements in many education systems. For countries focused solely on shallow test preparation with low standards and tenuous connections between what students learn and how they are assessed, GERM remains an important step forward.

But GERM also has unexpected effects, and these problems, and the Finnish alternative to them, are the focus of this article. Since the 1990s, at least six global features of education reform principles have been employed to try to improve the quality of education especially in terms of raising student and teacher performances. I will briefly describe these in the following paragraphs.

The first is *standardization* of and in education. Outcomes-based education reform became popular in the 1980s followed by standards-based education policies in the 1990s, initially within Anglo-Saxon countries. These reforms, quite correctly, shifted the focus of attention to educational outcomes (i.e., student learning and school performance). Consequently, a widely accepted—and generally unquestioned—belief among policymakers and education reformers is that setting clear and sufficiently high performance standards for schools, teachers, and students will necessarily improve the quality of desired outcomes. Enforcement of external testing and evaluation systems to assess how well these standards have been attained emerged originally from standards-oriented education policies. Since the late 1980s, centrally prescribed curricula, with detailed and often ambitious performance targets, frequent testing of students and teachers, and high-stakes accountability have led to a homogenization of education policies worldwide promising standardized solutions at increasingly lower costs for those desiring to improve school quality and effectiveness.

A second common feature of the global education reform movement is an *increased focus on literacy and numeracy* that is often seen as the core subjects in the curriculum. Basic student knowledge and skills in reading, mathematics, and natural sciences are elevated as prime targets and indices of education reforms. Due to the acceptance of international student assessment surveys such as the *Programme for International Student Assessment* (PISA) and *Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study* (TIMSS) as criteria of good educational performance, reading, mathematical, and scientific literacy have now become the

main determinants of perceived success or failure of pupils, teachers, schools, and entire education systems. Literacy and numeracy strategies that increased instructional time for so-called core subjects in England and Ontario are concrete programmatic examples of the global educational reform movement. A study by the Center on Education Policy (2006) in the United States on the *No Child Left Behind* legislation documented that most school districts shifted teaching time from other subjects, especially from social studies, art, and music to be better prepared for state tests that measure student performance in reading and mathematics.

The third characteristic that is identifiable in global education reforms is to *teach for predetermined results*, in other words, to search for safe and low-risk ways to reach learning goals. This minimizes experimentation, reduces the use of alternative pedagogical approaches, and limits risk-taking in schools and classrooms. Research on educational systems that have adopted policies emphasizing achievement of predetermined standards and prioritized core subjects suggests that teaching and learning are narrower and teachers focus on “proven methods” and “guaranteed content” to best prepare their students for the high-stakes tests (Au 2009, pp. 68–71). The higher the test result stakes, the lower the degree of freedom in experimentation and risk-taking in classroom learning.

Some risk-taking, however, is necessary for creativity and innovation in schools. Moving to teach for predetermined results has taken away autonomy and the responsibility that teachers and schools have had when they have crafted the best curricula for their students. Many teachers feel that their work is being de-professionalized and that their moral imperative to teach and work in schools has suffered leading to “alienated teaching” (MacDonald and Shirley 2009, p. 2).

The fourth globally observable trend in educational reform is the *transfer of innovation from corporate to the educational world* as a main source of change. This process, where educational policies and ideas are lent and rented from the business world, is often facilitated by international development organizations and private venture philanthropy as they look for general remedies to poorly succeeding education reform efforts. Faith in educational change that depends on reform ideas brought from outside the system undermines two important elements of successful change. First, it often limits the role of national policy development and the enhancement of an education system’s own capability to maintain renewal. Perhaps more important, it also paralyzes teachers’ and schools’ attempts to learn from the past and also to learn from each other. It thereby prevents lateral professional development within the system when the main focus is on adopting imported reform ideas from without.

The fifth global trend is the adoption of *test-based accountability policies* for schools. School performance—especially raising student achievement—is closely tied to processes of accrediting, promoting, inspecting, and, ultimately, rewarding or punishing schools and teachers. Pay-per-performance is one popular approach, especially in the American context, to holding teachers accountable for their students’ learning (Springer 2009). The success or failure of schools and teachers is often determined now by standardized test results and external evaluations that devote attention to limited aspects of schooling. These include student achievement in reading and mathematics, exit examination results, or intended teacher classroom behavior.

Finally, the sixth element of GERM is the *increased control* of school. The ideology of open market-based education has expanded parental choice and school autonomy on the one hand but also introduced stronger measures of control over schools on the other. Inspections, audits, evaluations, and reviews are regular means now to collect data from schools, and this data is used by policymakers to identify and target low-performing schools. Centrally mandated educational standards, accompanied by new policies that tighten administrators' control of teachers, are narrowing the space that teachers have traditionally had to create optimal learning environments for their students. Test-based accountability policies that often rely on data from standardized tests from students and contain sanctions for teachers in case of failure to meet expected standards have also forced many teachers to do whatever they can to achieve the set performance targets.

As shown in Table 1, GERM can have significant consequences for teachers' work and students' learning in schools wherever it has been a dominant driver of change (Au 2009; Center on Education Policy 2006; Darling-Hammond 2010; Hargreaves 2003). The most visible consequence is standardization of educational and pedagogical processes. Performance standards set by the educational authorities and consultants have been brought to the lives of teachers and students. Assessments and testing that have been aligned to these standards, as Ravitch (2010) writes, have often been disappointments and brought new problems to schools.

GERM has gained global popularity because it emphasizes some fundamental new orientations to learning and educational administration. It suggests strong guidelines to improve quality, equity, and the effectiveness of education such as putting priority on learning, seeking high achievement for all students, and making assessment an integral part of the teaching and learning process. However, it also strengthens market-like logic and procedures in education. First and most importantly, GERM assumes that external performance standards, describing what teachers should teach and what students should do and learn, leads to better learning for all. By concentrating on the basics and defining explicit learning targets for students and teachers, such standards place strong emphases on mastering the core skills of reading, writing, and mathematical and scientific literacy.

Second, GERM assumes that the most effective way to improve educational systems is to bring well-developed innovations to schools and classrooms. The systematic training of teachers and staff is an essential element of this approach. Third, GERM relies on an assumption that competition between schools, teachers, and students is the most productive way to raise the quality of education. This requires that parents choose schools for their children, that schools have enough autonomy, and that schools and teachers are held accountable for their students' learning.

The global landscape of performance

The popularity of international student assessments, especially PISA that is administrated by the OECD, has enabled comparisons of national education systems. Most often, these comparisons are made by looking at the national averages of 15-year-old students' test scores in reading, mathematics, and science.

Table 1 Global trends in educational development to improve student learning since the early 1980s

Global Educational Reform Movement (GERM)

<i>Feature of GERM</i>	<i>Impact on teaching</i>
Standardizing Teaching and Learning Setting clear, high, centrally prescribed performance standards for all schools, teachers, and students to improve the quality and equity of outcomes. Standardizing teaching and curriculum in order to have coherence and common criteria for measurement and data.	Changes the nature of teaching from an open-ended, non-linear process of mutual inquiry and exploration to a linear process with causal outcomes. May also be harmful for creativity and innovation in teaching and learning.
Focus on Literacy and Numeracy Basic knowledge and skills in reading, writing, mathematics, and the natural sciences serve as prime targets of education reform.	When educational performance is determined according to students' test scores in reading and mathematics, it has a reduced focus on other subjects, especially art, music, drama, and sports.
Teaching for Pre-determined Results Reaching higher standards as criterion for success and good performance. Outcomes of teaching are predictable and described in a uniform way.	This minimizes risk-taking in teaching and learning and, therefore, reduces creativity. Often narrows teaching to the desired content only and promotes the use of teaching methods beneficial to attaining preset results.
Renting Market-oriented Reform Ideas Sources of educational change are external innovations brought to schools from the corporate world through legislation or national programs.	Distances teachers from the moral purpose of their profession. Competition, efficiency, and productivity may demoralize teachers and may jeopardize attractiveness of the teaching profession.
Test-based Accountability School performance and raising student achievement are closely tied to processes of promotion, inspection, and ultimately rewarding schools and teachers. Winners normally gain fiscal rewards whereas struggling schools and individuals are punished.	Increases teaching to the test when stakes of accountability are high. May also increase malpractices in testing and reporting if the stakes include rewards or sanctions for teachers or the school.
Control In tandem with increased choice and local autonomy, schools are more frequently controlled by data collected from various aspects of the teaching and learning process. Continuous reporting, evaluations, and inspections are diminishing the actual autonomy of teachers and the degrees of freedom of schools.	Increases bureaucracy in the school as the management of data requires more resources. May increase teaching that aims to showcase good practices rather than helping students to learn. This narrows the focus on pedagogy and encourages standardized behaviors.

League tables allow policymakers to assess how well their school systems are doing not only across countries but also within them; for example, Canadian superintendents and principals can assess the strengths of their provinces by comparing Ontario to Alberta, or British Columbia to Manitoba (OECD 2010). As the stakes are getting higher (both politically and economically) with these international student assessments, the risk of employing practices that help to boost the test scores is growing. I have seen “PISA schools” and “PISA methods” used in some countries. This is not the purpose of these tests.

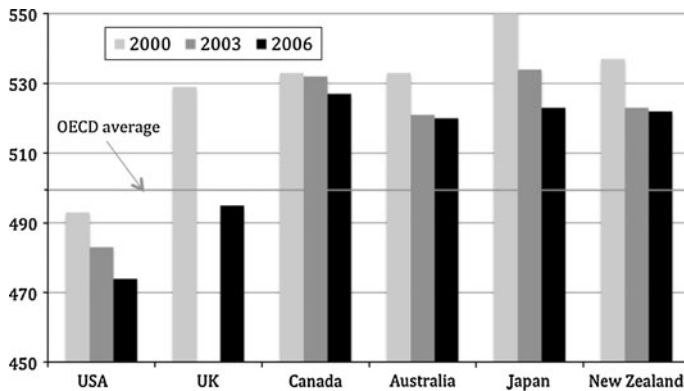


Fig. 1 National averages of students' performance in the OECD PISA mathematics scale in 2000, 2003, and 2006 in selected countries (OECD PISA database at www.pisa.oecd.org)

What has received less attention in these international studies is the comparative analysis of education policies and reforms in participating countries. For example, one may ask whether the evidence from PISA supports the assumption that educational reforms that are based on competition and choice have improved student learning in the countries that had adopted these policies in the 1990s. This is an empirical question, which if answered negatively, should lead us to question GERM as an ensemble of reform strategies.

The following countries employed education policies that, in one way or the other, contained elements of GERM especially competition and intensified student testing: United States, England, Canada, New Zealand, Australia, and Japan. Figure 1 compares countries employing education reforms that have included a combination of competition, choice, information, and accountability as a means of raising the quality of their education systems.

Figure 1 reveals the impact of education policies of the 1990s on students' learning in mathematics as measured in PISA between 2000 and 2006. The overall trend in all selected countries is consistently declining. These trend lines should capture the attention of policymakers globally leading them to question whether GERM really is the best way to conceptualize change and improve student learning. Of course, there may be some other factors that explain this unexpected development; for example, the popularity of new technologies among young people may be distracting them from paying sufficient attention to mathematics as a discipline. But since the trends are very much the same in these countries in reading and science as well, there has to be something fundamentally wrong in the recent education policies in these countries.

The Fourth Way of Finland

The situation becomes more interesting if we add to the picture the only OECD country that had consistent improvement in all first three PISA mathematics tests:

Finland. Finland has been a consistent high-performer of PISA (Sahlberg 2011). Significantly, none of the elements of GERM mentioned in Table 1 have been adopted in Finland in the ways that they have been accepted within education policies of many other nations, for instance those in Fig. 1. This, of course, does not imply that standardization, student testing, accountability, or even competition are bad and should be avoided in seeking better learning or educational performance. Nor does it say that these ideas were completely absent in regard to educational developments in Finland. But, perhaps, it does imply that a good educational system can be created using alternative policies orthogonal to those commonly found and promoted in global education policy markets.

By contrast, a typical feature of teaching and learning in Finland is high confidence in teachers and principals as professionals (Sahlberg 2011). Another feature involves encouraging teachers and students to try new ideas and approaches—in other words, making the school a creative and inspiring place to teach and learn. Moreover, teaching in schools aims to cultivate renewal while respecting schools' explicit pedagogical legacies. This does not mean that traditional instruction and school organization are nonexistent in Finland; it is quite the opposite. What is important is that today's Finnish education policies are a result of three decades of systematic, mostly intentional, development that has created a culture of diversity, trust, and respect within Finnish society, in general, and within its education system, in particular. This may be a reason for the commonly noted pedagogical conservatism that is yet another paradoxical feature of the modern Finnish education system.

The Finnish Way of educational change is interesting because it captures the story of an education system that has traversed from being mediocre in international standards in the 1980s to excellent in the 2000s. Sustained system-wide educational improvement has occurred while Finland fell into and recovered from a deep financial and economic crisis in the 1990s. Indeed, the evidence shows that the progress of educational performance in Finland has been steady and sustained before and then throughout the OECD PISA tests since 2000. What distinguishes Finland from most other nations is that this proven high level of educational performance has occurred simultaneously in student learning and systemwide equity in education.

The Finnish Way has clearly inspired the Fourth Way of change as Hargreaves and Shirley (2009) show in the following citation:

The Fourth Way is a way of inspiration and innovation, of responsibility and sustainability. The Fourth Way does not drive reform relentlessly through teachers, use them as final delivery points for government policies, or vacuum up their motivations into a vortex of change that is defined by short-term political agendas and the special interests with which they are often aligned. Rather, it brings together government policy, professional involvement, and public engagement around an inspiring social and educational vision of prosperity, opportunity, and creativity in a world of greater inclusiveness, security, and humanity. (p. 71)

In the quotation above, the word, “Fourth,” could be replaced by the word, “Finnish.” The Fourth Way of Finland is a professional and democratic path to improvement that grows from the bottom, steers from the top, and provides support and pressure from the sides. “Through high-quality teachers committed to and capable of creating deep and broad teaching and learning,” as Hargreaves and Shirley describe the Fourth Way, “it builds powerful, responsible, and lively professional communities in an increasingly self-regulating but not self-absorbed or self-seeking profession” (Hargreaves and Shirley 2009, p. 107). In the Fourth Way of Finland, teachers design and pursue high quality learning and shared goals and improve their schools continuously through professional teamwork and networks, from evidence, and from literature in their trade.

Conclusion

We live in a time of evidence and data. Wikipedia, social media, and WikiLeaks are the signs of a time when it is practically impossible to control how data is used. Educational research is also beginning to reveal unfortunate incidences where data have been manipulated in order to frame a policy situation (Nichols and Berliner 2007). In general, data are good, but more data necessarily aren’t. Some jurisdictions are still in the situation where they desperately need more and better information about their educational systems. Some others, in turn, are beginning to be buried by continuously collected data from schools; they are being “data-driven to distraction” (Hargreaves and Shirley 2006).

Data is a powerful tool in business, politics, and in education, too. It can be used, as said above, for good or bad. Those who have the information and access to communicate it hold the power. The danger is that as the data about schools and education systems get richer, it will be used in a selective way. For example, focusing solely on student test scores and using them to judge the effectiveness of individual teachers or the quality of schools is inappropriate. Similarly, simply ranking countries by using the data from international student assessments is only a part of the picture. However, the media widely reported the recent 2009 PISA results by only referring to the country rankings of measured average student achievements. Narrow use of available data from national or international purposes is fueling the spread of GERM as a remedy to improved teaching and learning.

The purpose of this presentation of the Global Educational Reform Movement is not to seek straightforward categories of educational reform. Nor is it to claim that some of us are wrong and some have got it right in educational change. My intention with this essay is to bring another, alternative perspective to the ongoing efforts to find the way out of the global educational crisis. The Fourth Way of Finland is not an unobtainable utopia; on the contrary, it contains a number of simple design principles that could be adapted by any jurisdiction (Sahlberg 2010). I am particularly concerned, with many others, of the growing number of those who believe that people from the corporate world have the answer to educational change and that they know best where to go next. Among them are those who insist for more data and performance targets. These same people believe that more

competition between schools is the key to more effective education and that pay-per-performance for teachers will attract better people to teaching.

The work of Andy Hargreaves in understanding educational change and what is at stake now in our public education systems is essential. The evolution of his scholarly thinking from changing teachers' work, improving schools, teaching in the knowledge society, sustainable leadership, to the Fourth Way of change contains an unchanged thread: The world in which we live in is much more complex than it seems. It is a theme of change that has shades of postmodernism in it. I say this although the term "postmodern" rarely appears in Hargreaves' writings or speaking. The idea that I have called "Global Educational Reform Movement" appears throughout his works but under different names; most recently he has placed it in upper case letters entitling it the "New Orthodoxy" of educational change (Hargreaves and Shirley 2009, p. 23). The Fourth Way in a way is a culmination of his work. It is a path of complexity and chaos and, thereby, also a postmodern view of change.

The writings and the leadership of Hargreaves have greatly helped the research community around the world to discover the nonlinearity of change and the fascinating world that it offers to be explored. His influence in gaining understanding of Finland as a Fourth Way alternative to GERM and one of the consistent high-performing education systems is unchallenged. Analyzing educational leadership in Finland with the OECD and visiting Finnish schools provided him with a unique position in the educational change community with firsthand access to the lives of Finnish teachers and leaders (Hargreaves et al. 2008). His endless source of creative thinking and encouragement helped me personally to further pursue the work on "Finnish lessons" (Sahlberg 2011) that is also a tribute to Hargreaves' commitment to speak out for public education emphasizing the importance of its maintenance.

In his famous speech, "*Beyond Vietnam: A Time to Break Silence*," delivered at the Riverside Church, New York City, in April 1967, Martin Luther King Jr. said, "A time comes when silence is betrayal." Dr. King's condemnation of the war in Vietnam cost him many allies in the Democratic Party, but he stood by his view without wavering in the last year of his life. But all too often, those who speak truth to power come to regret it.

The way I see it, our time to speak out is now. Andy Hargreaves has eloquently mentioned that just as much as there are cornerstones for any grand ideas, we need corner stores for alternatives. I remain one faithful client to be met there.

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