

PROMOTING INCLUSION TO COMBAT EARLY SCHOOL LEAVING PICESL



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Cristina
- a teacher from
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Update of the project Our toolkit is finally out!

After several hiccups due to school closures, re-opening, closures, re-openings and various challenging and innovative methods of both research and data collection we are thrilled to let you know that our **'Practical Toolkit for Teachers on Inspiring Practices that Prevent Early School Leaving in Multicultural Educational Settings in Europe.'** [LINK HERE](#)

The toolkit draws on the day to day experiences of several teachers working with primary to secondary aged students from a diversity of backgrounds. The practices are explained with contextual information and factors that are pre-cursors to the implementation are detailed, so that schools and teachers can assess whether their circumstances are similar or different before a 'blind-trial'. The toolkit also offers self-reflective questions for teachers that will allow them to analyse their own behaviours, attitudes, skills and knowledge before, as and after they implement a practice? In addition it is designed for teachers to 'dip' in and out rather than be expected to read the whole booklet before being able to start anything.

A little preview here on the practices...

First, a practice which engages students in service-learning projects so that students learn that they are active citizens and changemakers in their communities and see how they can become co-creators of real projects, facilitated by their teachers. This practice developed by the CEIP Malala school in Seville, Spain impacts students by deepening their commitment to organization of their own learning process and learning, as well as fostering collaboration skills and participation in school and wider community. It creates an environment where students see their self-value and gain confidence in their learning.

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EU Leads Policy Change on Early School Leaving

As promised in the European Education Are published in September of 2020, the Commission Pathways to School Success initiative has launched an open consultation on early school leaving focusing around 3 issues.

- giving all young people the chance to reach a certain level of proficiency in basic skills
- minimising the number of young people leaving education without at least an upper secondary degree
- ensuring pupils' well-being at school.

While all of these issues are clearly critical in terms of enabling young people to become confident and successful citizens in our future Europe, the PICESL project desk research and collection of school practices has so far shown that

Secondly a practice highlighted is a summer camp held by ICS Giovanni Falcone in Sicily, Italy which has a strong focus on deepening the bonds between students and teachers and in the school community itself. It also creates a positive learning environment for children to access during the holidays, a space where they can grow in confidence and in understanding their own value in a learning community.

Thirdly a beautiful practice from Gimnazija Vladimira Nazora Zadar, Croatia where secondary students are paired with primary students in a collaborative project to create a picture book of their city. This projects fosters stable relationships between the students throughout the year and shows the secondary students how valuable they can be in the life of a young child. It encourages both young and older students to discover their city, improve their study and self-organisation skills, see their value as a young or older student and develop new ways of relating to others. It foremost engages students through developing the skills of relationship building, organisations, developing curiosity and organization of information.

Finally an important program put in place by the Agrupamento de Escolas do Cerco de Porto in Portugal which worked closely with teachers and students to give them the time, space and reflective opportunities needed to dig deep into why early school leaving may be occurring and then put into place individuated responses for students. The combination of an opportunity for teachers to reflect on the dynamics in their classrooms, the backgrounds of students that are struggling, the peer and teachers relations and the academic environment was a welcome initiative and allowed for creative and inclusive process of developing individual education plans for various students.

These types of initiatives, student-centered, teacher-supportive and relationship strengthening emphasise the value that each individual, whether student or teacher can bring to the educational process and school community. We do this by offering them a new relationship, project, area to explore or time to reflect and thus strengthen each individual's inner resources and ability to connect to our school communities thereby focusing on engagement and seeing an asset-based approach to school engagement rather than a deficit-based approach which conceptualizes certain students as 'problems' and early school leaving as 'something to fix'.

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focusing on creating safe, nurturing and environments for students where their well-being is addressed first and foremost is critical to engaging them in their learning. And that engaging students in their learning and school communities should be the asset mindset taken, as opposed to the deficit goal of only 'early school leaving'. We therefore welcome the focus on ensuring pupil's well-being at school and encourage the European Commission to focus on this aspect of their 3-point consultation. To highlight this, take a look at our toolkit developed both by researchers and teachers with ideas of classroom and school practices taken from four countries across Europe Spain, Italy, Croatia and Portugal.

We await the results with bated breath!

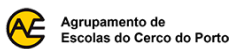
Interview with Cristina from Malala Center in Sevilla, Spain

"What students today are asking to us is that we haven't forgotten their feelings and emotions. Emotional abilities, and emotional intelligence, is something we can't forget about. A curriculum about this, would be useful for them, and their future would be better."

Click on the image below to watch the whole interview.



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