



MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE
FINLAND

Future Of Education 2045

Finland 2024-2025

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**We have already exceeded our
planetary boundaries.**

**How do we teach the
new generation to create
sustainable ways of life?**

**Traditional jobs may not be available
for all in the future.**

**What do we need to teach in
schools to give relevant skills
and to motivate pupils?**

Lack of mental wellbeing is the number one reason for absences and exclusion for the young.

How can schools prepare pupils to find a sense of purpose and well-being?

Democracies are increasingly being threatened by social polarization and conflicts.

**What kinds of competences
can divert risks of
misinformation and conflicts?**

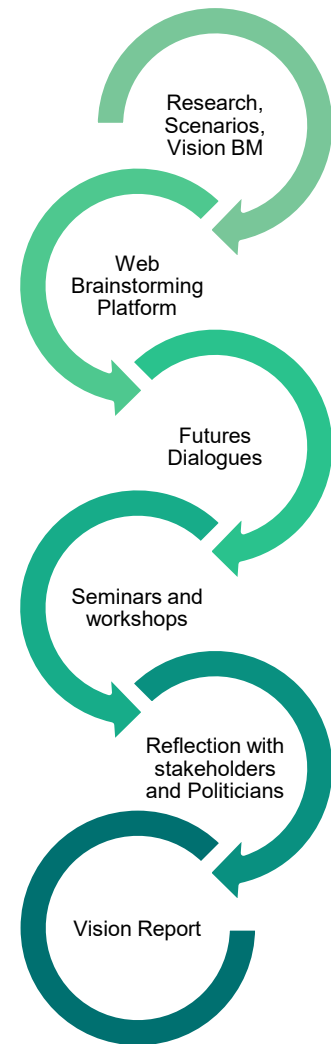
Vision for 2045: Where do we want education to take us?

- Need for vision: the current and emerging global social, ecological, technological and economic tectonic shifts, and educational crisis of the young people, demonstrate a deep need to **redefine education** – they also demonstrate that “more of the same” will not be enough to fix these problems, and we need to **redefine the purpose of education**
 - Otto Tähkäpää: “lack of future”: Young peoples’ future hope and sense of purpose and meaningful life
- A long-term vision to serve as a direction vector and a **point of reference in the future horizon**, as basis for development work and the coordination of strategic goals
- Delegation of 46 experts appointed by the Minister of Education: a diverse group that brings a range of perspectives from futures studies to business and local education administration, chaired by researcher Katri Saarikivi
- Thematic groups: learning and skills, ecological and social sustainability, technology and AI
- International reflection with the OECD’s High-Performing Systems For The Future – Education for Human Flourishing project, to ensure resonance with the emerging global futures



Process and methods

- The project aimed at inclusivity, momentum, and finding common future threads and levers for change through methods of co-creation: inclusive dialogues (national “Timeout”-dialogue method), online forums in several languages, seminars and other events to engage diverse stakeholders.
- Key activities included:
 - Online Brainstorming Platform: The tool allowed citizens to contribute ideas and perspectives, and the brainstorming platform in September 2024 collected nearly 4000 responses from teachers, parents, pupils and citizens
 - National and Regional Dialogues: Events across Finland ensured grassroots-level engagement. 8 large dialogue events (including multilingual school, Sami education and immigrant perspectives)
 - Continuous website interaction, pupil engagement, dialogue cards for organisations, podcasts etc.



Orientation of the vision

The basic school is Finland's most important *institution for the future*. Its role is not only to prepare young people to adapt to expected changes in the future, but also to equip them to change the world and reshape future. The vision for the basic school is founded on *sivistys*, meaningfulness, the common good, agency, and hope.

The crises surrounding us show that we need strong social development to complement technological advances. In our vision, the basic school responds to this challenge: learning is humanity's opportunity to evolve.

In this vision, the school is both a community and a transformative force. It empowers every child and young person to live a meaningful life and to build a shared future in ways that are both socially and ecologically sustainable. The future school is for life: a meaningful life for everyone, life together and life on the planet.



Future-proofing strengths and new vision elements

- The vision is supported by the enduring strengths of the Finnish basic school — strengths upon which new developments can be created. Recognizing what must be preserved is essential in order not to lose these assets in a rapidly changing world. A common, free public school for all and motivated, academically trained and skilled teachers form a globally strong foundation for the future of meaningful education. New or newly emphasized elements in the vision include, in particular:
 - **A strong emphasis on community:** Our era is characterized by increasing individualization, and many forces are pushing both schools and society toward greater fragmentation. The role of the basic school in this vision is to strengthen communities that also make room for individuality.
 - **Skills for change and life skills:** Alongside strong foundational skills, there is an increasing need for ethical capacities, the ability to understand oneself and others, and the ability to sustain hope in uncertain circumstances. These new skills are also essential for a sustainable economy.
 - **Meaningful life:** The school supports a meaningful life by helping each learner discover what is meaningful to them — things that also matter to others. A meaningful life aims toward the common good.
 - **Well-being:** Well-being is a prerequisite for learning, and learning creates well-being. The school is a community in which perseverance is learned. It is a place where one can succeed and fail safely.
 - **Respect for all life on the planet and planetary boundaries:** Nature is present in schools both as a personal and strengthening relationship with the natural world, and as an understanding — visible in all school activities — of the need to respect the boundaries of our planet.



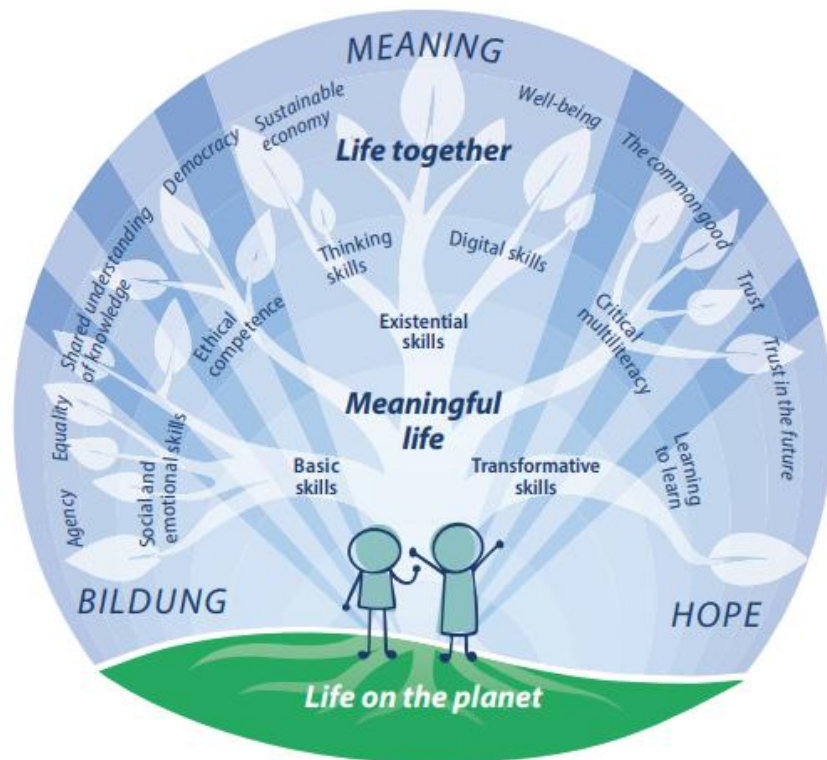
Basic education 2045: For Life

Vision Summary

The *Peruskoulu* comprehensive school is Finland's most important future institution. Its purpose is not only to prepare young people for the changes ahead, but also to equip them with the capacity to change the world and to shape society.

The world surrounding basic education is undergoing profound transformation. The challenges and crises we face cannot be solved by technological innovation alone, but require strong human development. We must find ways to alleviate social polarisation, strengthen democracy, use rapidly advancing technology wisely, and live within the planetary boundaries. In our vision, basic education responds to this challenge by recognising that learning is humanity's opportunity to develop.

In our vision, school is for life: for a meaningful life, life together, and life on the planet. The future of basic education is built on *sivistys* or *Bildung*, meaning, hope, agency, and the common good. The most profound transformation envisioned for the future of basic education is to continue the learning journey from individual knowledge and skills towards shared agency and the co-creation of a meaningful life together.



Meaningful Life

Sivistys, Bildung as a force for change

Comprehensive school's definition of *sivistys* or Bildung, holds as its core the motivation to use one's knowledge and competence for good. School does not merely react to expected changes or future scenarios, but actively shapes the path toward a positive future.

Learning and human growth

The goal of learning is human growth and flourishing, in which strong foundational knowledge and basic skills are combined with ethical competence, social and emotional skills, flexible thinking skills, metacognitive skills, and the ability to direct one's own learning. Teachers support students in strengthening transformative skills, existential and life skills, as well as their capacities for meaning-making. These include agency, the ability to understand oneself and others, and the ability to sustain hope in uncertain situations. Teaching is diverse: the importance of emotion, movement, imagination, and culture for the development of skills and human growth is recognised in basic education.

Wellbeing as the foundation and outcome of learning

The interdependency between learning and wellbeing is recognised and nurtured: wellbeing is a prerequisite for learning, and learning enhances wellbeing. Well-being is understood as both a shared quality and an individual goal. The psychological, social, and physical wellbeing of the entire school community also supports the individual wellbeing of each student. A well-functioning and safe school is a place where it is possible to fail and try again safely and where everyone's success is shared and celebrated.

High level of competence combined with social sustainability

School ensures equality in students' basic skills, learning, and human growth in an increasingly

diverse society, even if social gaps in individual backgrounds and resources widen. Equality and equity are promoted by maintaining high expectations for each student and by providing systematically sufficient support to achieve learning goals. High overall competence strengthens Finnish society as students continue along the educational pathway to next levels of education.

Sustainable skills in the age of technology

Future technologies exceed many limits of human capacity. In this context, learning cannot be based on the assumption that humans must master what machines cannot do. The comprehensive school ensures the sustainability of *sivistys* by placing human growth and human capabilities at the centre of learning – with technology used to complement human capacities. Thinking skills and ethical skills are seen as core goals, combined with diverse digital skills, the ability to regulate one's relationship with technology, and the wisdom to understand what humans should not do, even if it is technologically possible.

Meaning and purpose are created every day

A meaningful life is woven throughout the school's educational mission. Teachers guide students toward personal purpose by helping them identify what is meaningful for them and what also contributes to the good of others. Meaningfulness is also connected to the experience of being meaningful to others. The school strengthens connections with other people and with nature, and guides encounters with humanity through the arts. A sense of meaningfulness in everyday life enhances learning; school does not motivate learning solely on the promise of a future, but is meaningful to students every day. A sense of meaning and purpose is also nurtured in the work of teachers and other adults in the school.

Life Together

School as a community aims for the common good

The comprehensive school positions itself courageously as a counterforce to developments that erode community, by nurturing communities that support participation and inclusion. Community does not require sameness, but accommodates diverse thoughts and world views. At the heart of the community lies a shared commitment to strive for the common good. Teachers and other adults in the school form the heart of the community, and pedagogy recognises that many of the most important future skills are learned together. A sense of belonging and responsible agency foster mutual trust in society and the capacity to face uncertain futures together.

A future-competent school and student

The school is oriented toward the future at the level of the entire education system. Shared goals are negotiated and re-evaluated through broad national collaboration so that the education system can seize positive opportunities in a rapidly changing world. Shared and systematic national practices and research-based development increase resilience and equality. Students' future competences also develop at school: strong learning-to-learn skills, an identity as lifelong learners, and diverse democratic skills together with a shared epistemic framework for knowledge.

Technology supports humanity

The school directs the continuously developing technologies to serve human growth. The selection and application of technology in school are pedagogically assessed and balanced. Technology is used to deepen human interaction and to enable guidance that takes into account students' individual characteristics, supports more equitable learning, and improves the use of data and knowledge in school practices. Practicing foundational knowledge and skills provides an

essential basis for the thoughtful use of artificial intelligence and technology in support of the development of thinking.

Strengthening collaboration with homes

In an increasingly diverse society, upholding trust and attachment to school requires consistent dialogue and cooperation. Skilfully led educational partnership with homes strengthen the school's capacity to fulfil its pedagogical mission. Through respectful collaboration, the school can also draw support from local communities and enhance students' equality by supporting families.

An ecosystem of learning supports the school

The school builds connections with society and neighbourhood communities, and the strengthening network of actors such as public services, organisations, companies, and citizens supports the school in its purpose. The collaboration between actors is organised into a functioning ecosystem of learning coordinated by the school. The aim is for the school to receive strong, goal-oriented support from beyond its own boundaries, as students' needs diversify and challenges become more complex. At the same time, collaboration enables more meaningful experiences of learning, belonging, and accomplishment for students.

School buildings as meeting places for communities

The role of schools as social hubs evolves: school buildings function as meeting places where different actors bring communities together and expand students' opportunities for hobbies and activities. School buildings also strengthen continuity in students' daily lives, safety, and bridge opportunities for exercise, hobbies, crafts and shared activities into the students' day.

Life on the Planet

Education within the planetary boundaries

The comprehensive school creates *sivistys* that promotes an ecologically sustainable life for the whole society. The scope of sustainability includes ecological, cultural, social, and economic sustainability, which are holistically present throughout both the curricular content and everyday school culture and practices. The school provides students with a systemic understanding of societal sustainability by integrating content across subjects. The school promotes agency that does not reproduce development exceeding planetary boundaries, but instead treats the planetary boundaries as its ethical foundation.

A deep relationship with nature

The comprehensive school fosters a relationship with nature, characterised by joy and understanding of nature's importance for individuals and for society as a whole. At the same time, understanding deepens of humanity's place as part of nature and of ecosystems as the foundation of life: the planet is our only home. Learning forms a cognitive, experiential, and action-oriented whole that strengthens compassion and a sense of connection. Nature is present in schools through the design of spaces and schoolyards, as well as through nature excursions that experientially support well-being and learning.

Agency fosters hope

The school's transformative capacity sustains hope and trust in the future. Hope does not mean the student's ability to wait passively for good things to happen, but an understanding of one's own agency and capacity to act for a better future, together with others. The school teaches students to imagine better futures and builds trust in humanity's ability to solve together even unknown challenges of the future.

As one young participant in the vision process expressed it:

"Don't be afraid of the future. Here, you'll learn for it."

Our vision for education is grounded in the identified strengths of Finnish comprehensive school, which provide a solid foundation for change. A shared, inclusive and publicly funded education system, together with motivated, highly educated teachers and other school professionals in both Finnish- and Swedish-language tracks, forms a globally strong starting point for meaningful education. Building on these strengths and supported by society as a whole, the comprehensive school of the future will be the best possible place for pupils to learn, and an attractive workplace for teachers.

The aim is that through implementing the change outlined in the vision, our comprehensive school and education system will continue to develop through national and international collaboration grounded in research-based knowledge, producing excellent learning outcomes with resources comparable to those of other high-performing education systems. The future school is also a source of meaning for teachers, principals and other staff, whose work is characterised by a having time to think, a strong sense of community, and opportunities for professional growth.

This vision is shaped by more than 5,000 voices. The co-creative vision process was designed to embody, in itself, the principles of a future-oriented and sustainable school. A diverse group of participants was invited into dialogue, including researchers, experts from various fields, teachers, education professionals, parents, grandparents and – most importantly – pupils. At the core of the vision process was a delegation of 46 members representing a wide range of professional backgrounds and areas of expertise.

The views and ideas gathered during the vision process 2024–2025 were brought together by an editorial team composed of civil servants from the Ministry of Education and Culture and the Finnish National Agency for Education, who are also responsible for the final formulation of the written reports of the vision.

The purpose of the vision is to serve as a tool that supports development and decision-making in changing circumstances and helps to shape a desirable future. Rapid and profound changes that are reshaping societal, economic and competence structures require an increasingly deliberate point of reference for development and for identifying new opportunities. Our hope is that vision-building through re-imagining futures will continue as an integral part of a future-skilled education system.

The time horizon of the vision extends far into the future, to the year 2045. The horizon is long to encourage us all to look and imagine beyond the immediate concerns of the present, and far enough ahead. At the same time, the aim is for start acting for the change immediately: the future starts tomorrow.