



# CURRICULUM REFORM AND DEVELOPMENT IN PETÄJÄVESI

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# NEW NATIONAL CORE CURRICULUM FOR BASIC EDUCATION: FOCUS ON SCHOOL CULTURE AND INTEGRATIVE APPROACH

The national core curriculum for basic education has been reformed. The core curriculum provides a common direction and basis for renewing school education and instruction. The work at national level was led by the Finnish National Board of Education in an open process. All relevant stakeholders were closely involved in the process. In addition the wider public were also invited to comment on the drafts.

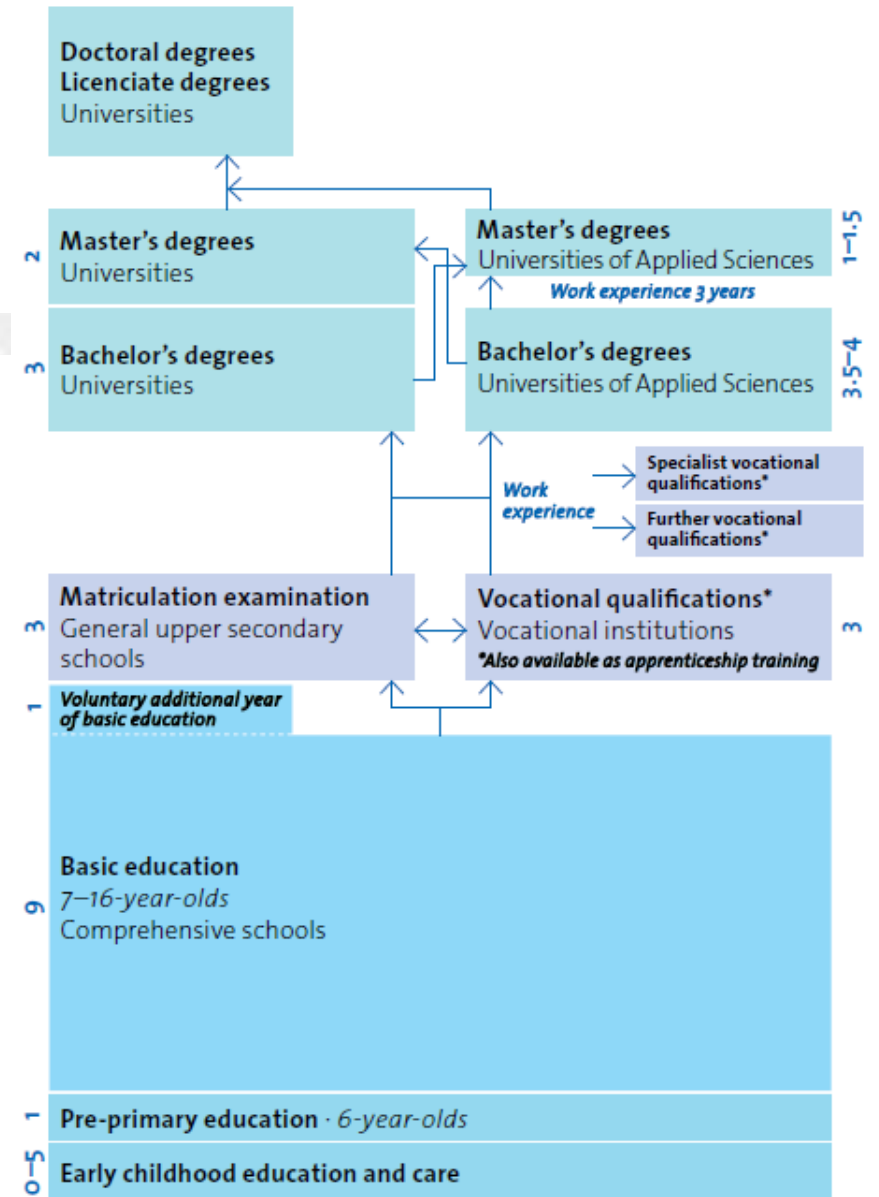
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[http://www.oph.fi/download/174369\\_new\\_national\\_core\\_curriculum\\_for\\_basic\\_education\\_focus\\_on\\_school\\_culture\\_and.pdf](http://www.oph.fi/download/174369_new_national_core_curriculum_for_basic_education_focus_on_school_culture_and.pdf)

# FINNISH EDUCATION IN A NUTSHELL

- ❑ A central objective is to provide all citizens with equal opportunities.
- ❑ Equity in education
- ❑ One of the basic principles of Finnish education is that all people must have equal access to high-quality education and training.
- ❑ The same educational opportunities should be available to all citizens irrespective of their ethnic origin, age, wealth or where they live.

[http://www.oph.fi/download/146428\\_Finnish\\_Education\\_in\\_a\\_Nutshell.pdf](http://www.oph.fi/download/146428_Finnish_Education_in_a_Nutshell.pdf)



# CURRICULUM SYSTEM IN FINLAND

Basic Education Act and Decree  
General National Objectives and  
Distribution of Lesson Hours  
(Ministry of Education)

- Goals for education and time allocation between different subjects

National Core Curriculum  
(National Board of Education)

- National regulation
- General framework for providing and organising education

Local Curricula  
(Education providers and schools)

- Local decisions and conceptualization of the national core curriculum

School's Annual Plan  
(Schools)

- Realisation of local curriculum



# CURRICULUM PLANNING IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF TEACHERS, SCHOOLS, AND MUNICIPALITIES

Curriculum planning is the responsibility of teachers, schools, and municipalities, not the state.

Most Finnish schools today have their own customized curriculum that is coordinated with and approved by their local education authorities.

This correctly implies that teachers and school principals have key roles in curriculum development and school planning.

The National Framework Curricula for comprehensive school and for upper-secondary school provide guidance and necessary regulations that each school must keep in mind in its curriculum development activities.

However, there are no strict national standards for or descriptions of student learning outcomes that Finnish schools must include in their curriculum, as is true in the United States, Great Britain, or Canada, for example. (Sahlberg 2015)

# NATIONAL CORE CURRICULUM LEAVES ROOM FOR LOCAL VARIATIONS

The national core curriculum is renewed approximately every ten years.

The Education providers draw up their own curricula within the framework of the national core curriculum.

Thus there is room for local or regional specificities.

All local curricula must, however, define the values, underlying principles, as well as general educational and teaching objectives.

Also questions such as the language programme and the local lesson-hour distribution must be addressed.

Further, cooperation with homes and instruction of pupils requiring special support or belonging to different language and cultural groups should be defined.

# THE SIGNIFICANCE OF LOCAL CURRICULA AND THE LOCAL CURRICULUM PROCESS

The local curriculum is an important part of the steering of education.

It plays a key role in setting out and implementing both national targets and goals and tasks considered important locally.

The local curriculum lays a common foundation for and points the direction to daily school work. It is a strategic and pedagogical tool that defines the policies for the education provider's operation and the work carried out by the schools.

The curriculum links the operation of the schools to other local activities aiming to promote the well-being and learning of children and young people.



# FINNISH CURRICULUM PLANNING CAN VARY FROM SCHOOL TO SCHOOL

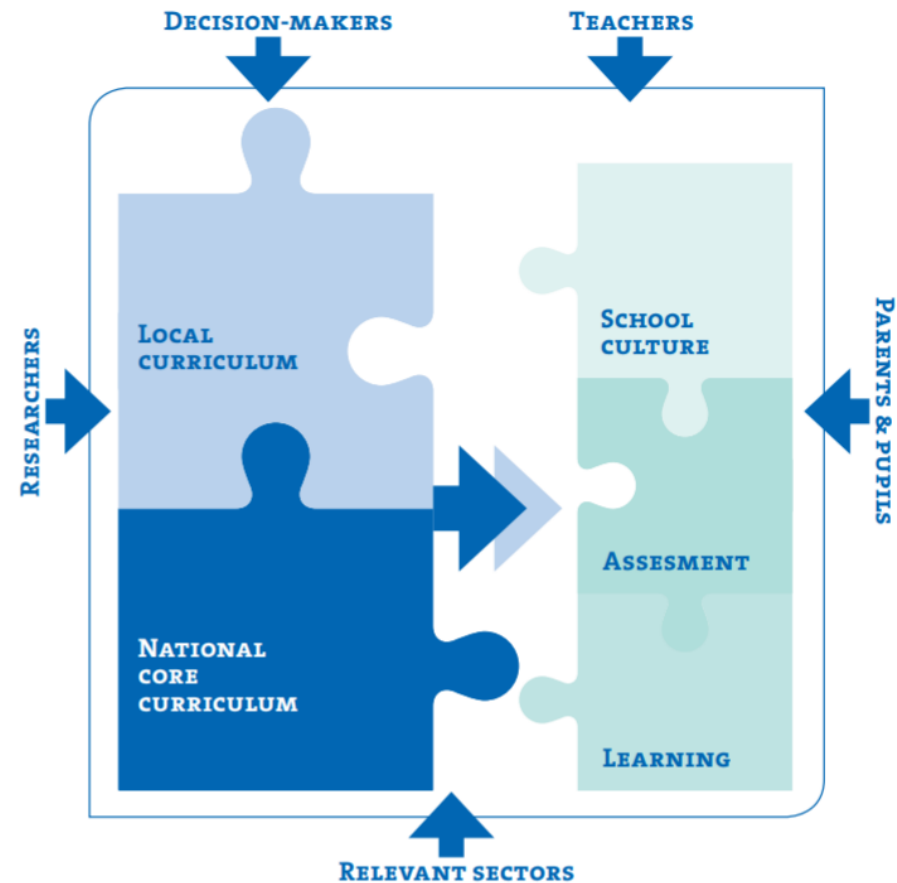
Finnish curriculum planning and the curricula that result from it can vary from school to school.

The teachers' key role in pedagogical decisionmaking clearly requires teacher education to install in all prospective teachers well-developed knowledge and skills related to curriculum development, student assessment theory and practice, and teacher leadership.

“Moreover, it has shifted the focus of Finnish teacher professional development from fragmented inservice training toward more systemic school improvement that builds better ethical and theoretical grounding for effective teaching.” (Sahlberg 2015)

# ACTIVE INVOLVEMENT OF PUPILS, MEANINGFULNESS, JOY OF LEARNING AND INTERACTION IN FOCUS

- ❑ All relevant stakeholders were closely involved in the process.
- ❑ A curricular reform is always preceded by a renewal of the distribution of lesson hours, which states the minimum statutory lessons to be taught in different subjects.
- ❑ In the curricular reform, reflection on the changes in the surrounding world and their effect on children and young people, learning, school work and life skills played an important part.

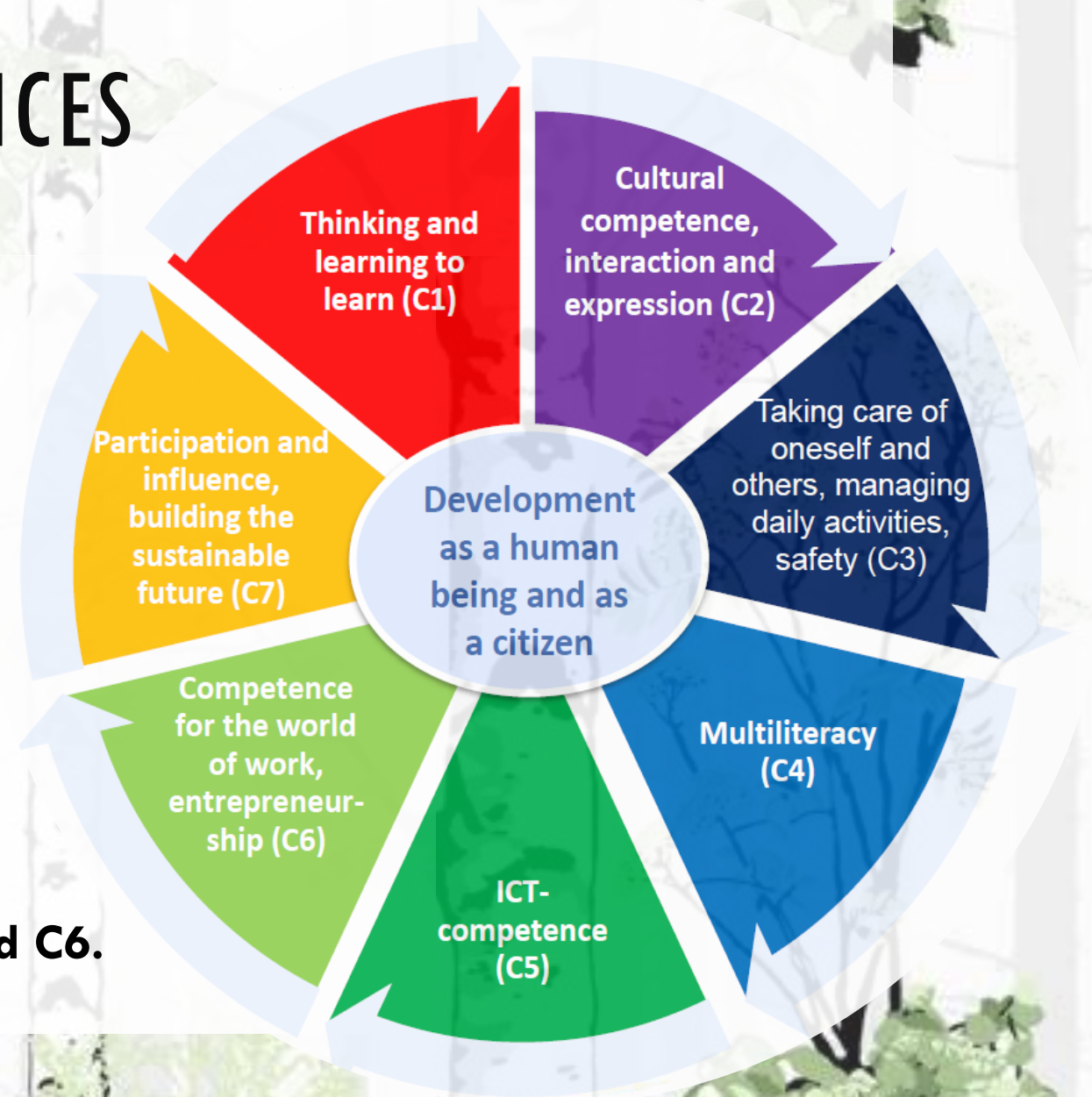


# TRANSVERSAL COMPETENCES

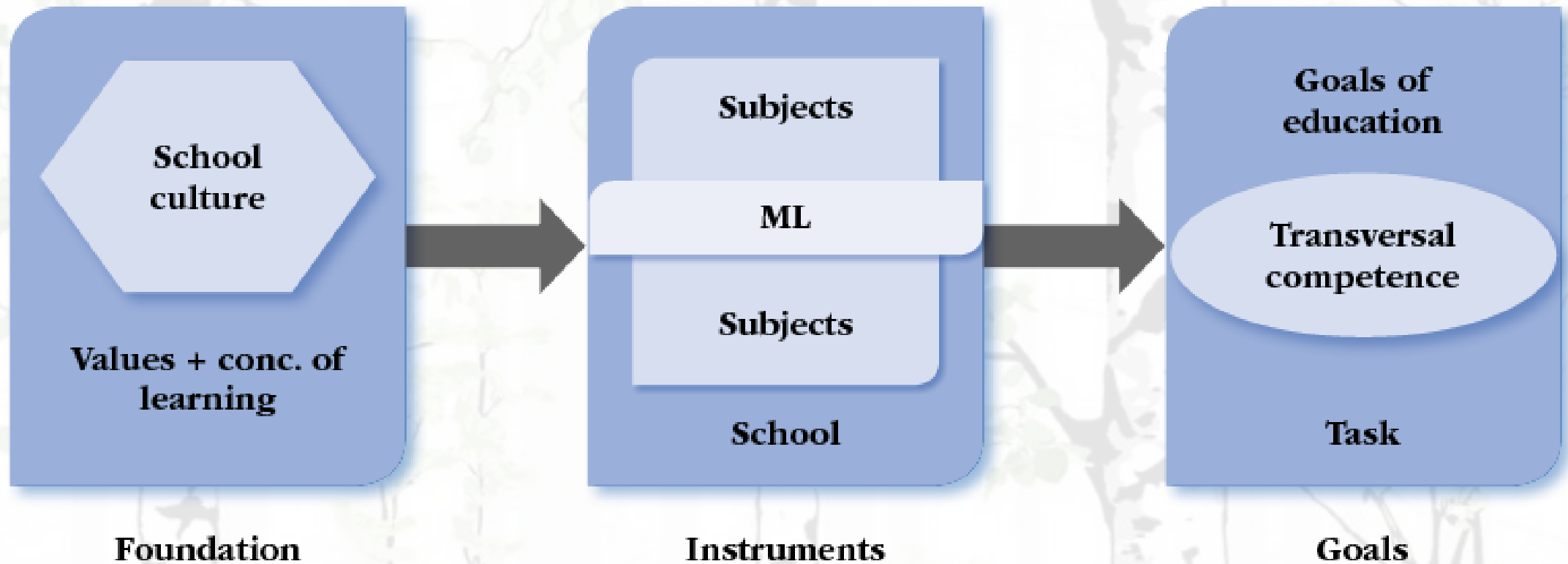
Transversal competence refers to an entity consisting of

- knowledge,
- skills,
- values,
- attitudes and
- will.

**Local emphases of the transversal competences in Petäjävesi are C1, C3 and C6.**



Multidisciplinary learning modules (MLs) are study periods of integrative instruction based on cooperation between subjects. Their implementation should showcase the school's values and conception of learning. The learning modules express in concrete terms the principles that guide the development of the operating culture of basic education and support the development of transversal competence.



# MULTIDISCIPLINARY LEARNING MODULES IN BASIC EDUCATION

- Pupils are entitled to at least one integrative, multidisciplinary learning module every school year
- Learning modules integrate skills and knowledge of various school subjects, teachers work together
- Pupils participate in the planning of these modules
- Goals, content and ways of working are planned and decided at the local level
  - *They should be interesting and meaningful from the pupils' point of view*
  - *They realize the principles of the school culture*
  - *They promote the development of transversal competences*

# LOCAL EMPHASES

- the theme of the school year is according to Finland's 100th anniversary TOGETHER
- local emphases of the transversal competences in Petäjavesi are C1, C3 and C6.
- assesment and the use of ICT in teaching and learning



# EVERY PUPIL IS UNIQUE AND HAS THE RIGHT TO HIGH-QUALITY EDUCATION

## Equity and equality

- A learning community promotes equity and equality. Members of the community are encountered and treated as equals, independently of any personal characteristics.
- Equality does not mean that everyone is the same. Equal treatment comprises both safeguarding everybody's fundamental rights and opportunities for participation and addressing individual needs.

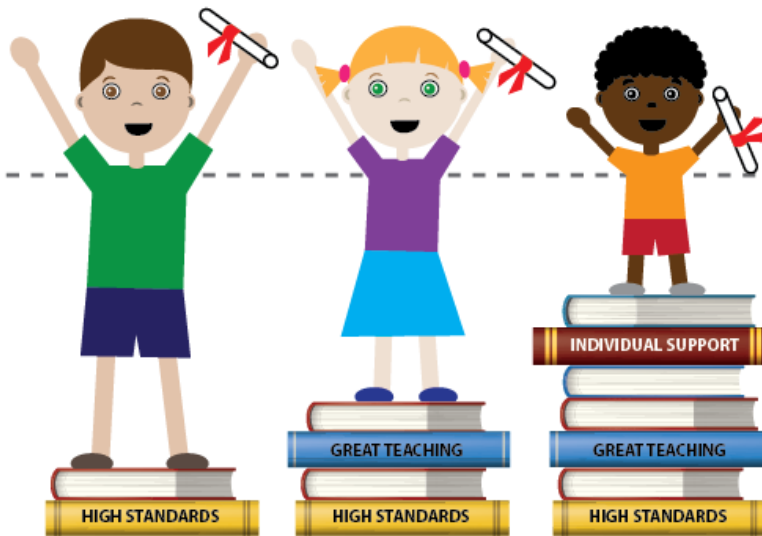


# EQUALITY DOESN'T MEAN EQUITY

## EQUALITY



## EQUITY



**Equity** involves trying to understand and give people what they need to learn.

**Equality**, in contrast, aims to ensure that everyone gets the same things in order to learn. Like equity, equality aims to promote fairness and justice, but it can only work if everyone starts from the same place and needs the same things.

[http://www.aecf.org/m/resource/doc/AECF\\_EmbracingEquity7Steps-2014.pdf](http://www.aecf.org/m/resource/doc/AECF_EmbracingEquity7Steps-2014.pdf)

<http://culturalorganizing.org/tag/equity/>



# DIFFERENTIATION

The selection of working methods is guided by differentiation of instruction. Differentiation is based on the teacher's knowledge of their pupils' personal needs.

- It is the pedagogical point of departure for all instruction.
  - It concerns the extent and depth of learning, the rhythm and progress of the work and the pupils' different ways of learning.
  - Differentiation is based on the pupils' needs for and possibilities of planning their own studies, selecting different working methods and progressing at an individual pace.
  - The individual and developmental differences between pupils are also taken into account in the selection of working methods. Differentiation supports the pupils' self-esteem and motivation and promotes a peaceful setting for learning.
  - Differentiation also pre-empts needs for support.

# INDIVIDUALISATION OF THE SYLLABUS FOR A SUBJECT

If, regardless of the support provided, the pupil cannot at least acceptably achieve the objectives related to the key contents of a subject, the syllabus for that subject may be individualised.

- Issues such as
  - linguistic and
  - cultural background,
  - absences,
  - lack of motivation,
  - shortcomings in the studying techniques or
  - challenges in behaviour

may not as such be used as grounds for individualisation of a syllabus, and the pupil must be supported in coping with these issues.

# INDIVIDUAL EDUCATIONAL PLAN (IEP)

In order to execute a decision on special support, an individual educational plan (IEP) shall be drawn up for the pupil. The plan shall describe the education and other support provided in accordance with the decision on special support. All support provided to a pupil receiving special support is recorded in the IEP. It is a written plan containing the goals and contents of the pupil's learning and school attendance, the teaching arrangements to be used, pedagogical methods and the support and guidance needed by the pupil.

# SUPPORT FORMS STIPULATED IN THE BASIC EDUCATION ACT

## Remedial teaching (Tukiopetus)

A pupil who has temporarily fallen behind in studies or otherwise needs short-term support in learning shall be entitled to remedial teaching. Remedial teaching shall be commenced as soon as difficulties related to learning or school attendance are observed in order to prevent the pupil from falling permanently behind in his or her studies.

Remedial teaching must be provided systematically and as often as needed.

## Part-time special needs education (Osa-aikainen erityisopetus)

A pupil who has difficulties in learning or in school attendance shall be entitled to part-time special needs education in connection with other instruction.

## Services and aids required to participate in education (Opetukseen osallistumisen edellyttämät palvelut ja apuvälineet)

A pupil has the right to get the interpretation and **assistance services** he or she needs to participate in education, other educational services and special aids free of charge at all levels of support.

THANK YOU!

