Chapter 6
Educational Governance: Politics, Administration and Professionalism

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Abstract The current restructuring of Nordic educational governance systems is creating new relationships between the state, local authorities and schools and, therefore, between politicians, managers and educational professionals. With inspiration from transnational agencies – primarily the OECD – new chains of governance are being created. Some elements of governance are being de-centralised, whilst other elements are being re-centralised. The couplings of economies, human resource management and operations are being loosened while at the same time the links between an educational content, aims and accountabilities are being tightened. This tendency has also led/made many municipalities to restructure the municipal political and administrative system into a more steep hierarchy.

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This restructuring also influences the work of school boards and their relations to administrators and educational practitioners. School boards are increasingly responsible for a greater part of the life of children and adolescents and, consequently, they are responsible for an increasing number of institutions. New power-balances are being created with the use of diverse forms of influences. Structural power, discursive influences and social technologies are being used in new combinations. Different groups of stakeholders are being targeted in a way that prioritises management and consumers, while politicians and educational professionals lose influence in new neo-liberally inspired forms of New Public Management.

In this chapter, we draw upon theories and policy papers on governance (Foucault 2001/1978; OECD 1995; Osborne and Gaebler 1992), power (Foucault 1983; Moos 2009b) and public institutions (March and Olsen 1976; Meyer and Scott 1983) to identify and describe general trends and tendencies in the development of school boards in Nordic countries and the USA. We selected this approach because we are interested in making sense of new patterns in educational governance (Weick 2001). We view patterns as plausible explanations of the school boards' current relations and situation, and we wish to identify plausible understandings of relations, links and couplings between agents and agencies.

6.1 Restructuring Public Sectors

As described above, we claim that politics has been developing the fundamental paradigms of governance from the 1980s onwards (specific accounts of recent and current public sector trends are provided in the country reports). Following World War II, many countries worked on developing social, democratic welfare states. However, from the 1980s onwards, these states focused more on remaining competitive in the global marketplace (Pedersen 2010). A very influential player in this development was the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), which issued one of the soft governance instruments – a report on the urgent need for reforms of public sectors in the OECD member states (OECD 1995). The OECD found inspiration in the work of management theorists like Osborne and Gaebler (1992). The OECD report can be traced in many national policy papers in the Nordic countries, and the so-called soft governance – the advice and comparisons provided by the OECD – proved to be immensely influential (Bovbjerg et al. 2011).

This shift can be identified in the social and labour market as well as educational policies; in fact, it can be seen in all public sector politics, because this shift represents the intention to change the role of the state and its institutions in order to perform better – more efficiently and effectively – in the marketplace. This entails new structures, positions, relations, values and norms at all levels of the governance chain: from state (parliament and government) to regional and local level (regional/

municipal council and administration with superintendents) and ultimately to institutional level (local school board and school leader/head teacher).

In the following chapter, we shall focus on the municipal level. We shall examine its inner workings as well as its relationship to the state and public institutions. However, before providing this analysis, we shall first introduce the fundamental logics of traditional governance in the monocentric state, which was based on the separation of power between the executive, judiciary and legislative institutions and which also imposed sharp distinctions between policymakers and civil servants. On this monocentric model, politicians were seen as legitimate because they were elected in parliamentary ways, and civil servants were seen as legitimate because of their level of expertise and experience. The primary task of politicians was to develop politics, purposes, values and aims, while civil servants were occupied with operation, strategies and execution. The division of tasks and responsibilities between these two groups was clear and distinct, as is the case in Max Weber's ideal bureaucracy (Bogason 1997; Jæger 2003).

6.2   Polycentric or Segmented States

The opening up of states to collaboration and competition with other states, international enterprises, agencies and (most importantly) other marketplaces has brought about changes in the way states are viewed and the way in which its sectors and institutions are managed. New structures and relations are producing a new kind of state: a polycentric state, with very complex relations to and networks of political agents and agencies from other sectors of social life, such as production and culture (Pedersen 2005). This restructuring of the public sector is often performed in non-political ways; for example, it is based on the market, or it is based on public-choice theories, principal-agent theories, scientific management theories and transaction cost economy theories. The general concept that is often referred to – with inspiration from the OECD – is called new public management, which is characterised by marketplace thinking, product or outcomes thinking, consumer thinking and low-trust leadership thinking (Moos 2013a).

Restructuring processes are employed in order to facilitate the management of public expenditures as well as welfare state institutions and initiatives. They also further competition between institutions and sectors. It is for this reason that governments and parliaments pass legislation on budgeting, administration, and staff politics and wages, which often moves decisions from one level to another: from the government to the municipal council or to institutional boards.

A parallel development has been identified in Norway by researchers who describe a move from (what they term) a 'segmented state model' towards a 'fragmented state model'. A 'segmented state model' is based on a number of assumptions. First, there is a clear and visible division of work between societal sectors and institutional spheres in society, for example, between the corporate sector and the

political system, and similarly between the organisations in the civic community and local government. Second, in the segmented state model, the boundaries between the political sectors are clear and visible and, consequently, it is easy to determine who does and does not belong to a policy sphere. Third, the boundaries between policy sectors are more or less impermeable, which limits access to the various policy discourses. As argued by Tranøy and Østerud (2001), this pattern changed into a fragmented model at the turn of the millennium. There are two main consequences of this change: Firstly, there are now more players in the policy fields and, secondly, players are able to enter and exit various policy spheres. One of the many cases analysed by the researchers in 1998–2003 was the restructuring of the finance business sector, in which a large number of players participated in critical decision-making processes that affected the restructuring of the finance sector in the early 1990s. Moreover, players were able to enter and exit the field, and the nature of the decision-making displayed many of the features portrayed in the 'garbage-can' model (March and Olsen 1976). On this basis, it can be argued that there has been a move towards a more polycentric state model in Norway over the last few decades. So, in many ways, we can identify similarities between Denmark, which is a member of the European Union, and Norway, which is not a member of the European Union but is a member of the European Economic Area (EEA) with the EU and other countries.

While the development in Denmark and Norway is similar overall, we can see that Swedish policies are more inclined to continue to develop a monocentric state model. Sweden is as dependent on global competition as other Nordic countries, and it recognises the need to distribute power among more agents than the ministries; however, Sweden's preferred solution is to invest more resources in state agencies like inspectorates. These agencies engage in detailed governance of municipal agencies and authorities, yet, on educational issues, they leave some room for manoeuvre to somewhat autonomous municipalities (their level of autonomy has been restricted to some extent over recent years).

Finland is also a member of the European Union and a player on the competitive global market; however, it has developed its national governance system differently from Denmark, Norway and Sweden. The municipal level – with numerous small municipalities – is strong and independent both in relation to the state and in relation to schools. This was stated in the Finnish Constitution in the 1980s.

6.3   Network Governance

The development from monocentric states towards polycentric states was structured through the development of different kinds of network governance (Sørensen 2003). Network governance is a mixture of meta-governance and self-governance. *Meta-governance* involves implementing financial and legislative frameworks and initiating discursive governance. It is a governance form that does not resemble governance: It imposes frameworks and attempts to influence discourse, yet it defers

actual governance activities to different levels. A set of very important governance tools are social technologies, such as standards and testing, quality reports and student plans, regular staff appraisals and budget models (Moos 2009a). Through various frameworks and soft governance (Moos 2009b), the government encourages local authorities and institutions to produce and find their identity as an institution (March and Olsen 1976), with specific aims, meaning and accountabilities. On the other hand, *self-governance* (Foucault 1983) means that institutions can – and wish to – govern themselves in self-governing institutions and networks. Some decisions are made at state level, while others are distributed to lower levels, creating new relations between policymakers and civil servants and different combinations of these members on all levels: Municipal managers, like superintendents, are given more room to describe and produce local solutions in ways that policymakers used to, and school leaders are also given more room within the given frames and aims to create local solutions to local challenges.

In many ways, ministries and their agencies are still in command of purposes, aims, frames and organising, since they make use of autocratic ways of governance (legislation, regulations, economical frames, etc.). They set the goals and monitor the outcomes. However, in some areas of responsibility, they delegate decisions on how to achieve these goals and outcomes – in other words, the operational aspects of proceedings – to lower-level agencies and institutions.

In all Nordic countries, there are clear tendencies towards meta-governance when it comes to educational aims, accountability programmes and overarching financial frameworks for municipalities, while operations, human resource management and educational practices are, to some degree, left to the practitioners' self-governance. However, the steering is left to practitioners only to a certain extent, because ministries continuously attempt to influence the reflections and practices through quality assurance initiatives with clear national standards or indicators and the monitoring and assessment of outcomes.

6.4 Municipal Governance

In all Nordic countries, there are municipal councils, which are elected by citizens of the municipality from within political parties or as personal candidates. In Denmark and Norway, a majority of council representatives elect the mayor. This position is very powerful. In Finland and Sweden, the municipal council also elects a municipal executive board. We could refer to the municipal council as the 'municipal parliament' and the municipal executive board as the 'ministry'; as such, the municipal executive board is very powerful. The position of chair of the executive board is influential, but not as influential as the mayoral positions in Denmark and Norway. In most cases, it requires a coalition of several political parties to reach the requested majority. The municipal council members decide which political boards they wish to have in the municipality and elect members of these political boards on the basis of their size; however, chairs are elected as a result of coalition agreements.

6.5 Public Institutions or Companies

As part of governance reforms, municipal administration, governance and management have also been reformed. For several decades, municipalities in Nordic countries have been free to structure their political work and administration as they wish; however, in some cases, they are given a great deal of advice from the government and local government when doing so. One such piece of advice was to change the municipal structure from three layers of political boards/committees and administration to two layers. If implemented, this would produce wider fields of responsibility, such as the right to make all relevant decisions regarding children aged 1–18, and also result in a steeper hierarchy. It is possible to view this new model of public institutions as a company model (Christoffersen and Klausen 2012): the concern/group, the enterprise and the workplace. The *concern* (the municipal, political and administrational section) takes care of aims and frameworks, budget models, organisational development and professional management of quality and outcomes in the interface between policymakers and enterprises. In education, this will most often be the municipal school board and its director/superintendent. The *enterprise* manages the economy, operations and staff who have a contract with the concern. This corresponds to the schools and their local board (in countries where this applies) and the school leader. The *workplace* decides on and organises internal organisation and relations between leadership and staff through a set of new social technologies, such as incentives and employee interviews. This refers to the internal leadership of the school, its departments and its teacher teams (where this applies). The situation at the municipal level will be described below. At the school level, we know that governance is diverse within the Nordic countries, as more decisions have been delegated to schools in Denmark, Sweden and Finland than is the case in Norway.

It is built in into the new structure that school board members are to decide on a level that overarches several types of institution, be it schools or day-care institutions, leisure time institutions or other cultural institutions. This means that the members require an insight into the work of several types of institution: their aims, outcomes, ways of operating and the competencies and commitment of their professional staff. This also applies to the concern manager, the superintendent, which means that the relation to individual institutions and their leaders and staff has become steeper and more distant. Seen from the institution's perspective, the distance is greater and it is therefore more difficult to communicate with and be heard by political decision-makers and the superintendent.

A similar development can be identified in Norway, where a series of redesign initiatives were launched in order to deflate the administrative hierarchy towards a two-layered model, visibly inspired by similar trends in the corporate sectors (Røvik 2007). Despite the vast difference in the municipalities' sizes, local histories, political coalitions and demographics, a two-layered model emerged relatively uniformly. Thus, in 2004, 41 % of Norwegian municipalities reported that they had implemented a three-layer structure in their administrative organisation (Hovik and Stigen 2004). Consequently, a significant number of Norwegian municipalities dismantled

the central school office and the superintendent position. By 2006, approximately two-thirds of Norwegian municipalities reported that they were, or had been, in the process of deflating the administrative hierarchies (Pedersen 2009). However, there is also evidence that most of these reform initiatives culminated around 2005 (Hovik and Stigen 2008).

In Sweden and Finland, we can identify a parallel development, yet the overall picture is as complex and hazy as the Danish and Norwegian picture: Traditional models of area-specific boards and administrations (like schools and day-care institutions) are mixed with cross-area boards that include several areas. At this point, it is worth highlighting that the common argument for restructuring was the need to find more efficient structures that deliver a high-quality service and further the citizen's democratic participation in local politics.

6.6 Redesigning Municipal Administration

The overall picture reveals that the Danish, Finnish, Norwegian and Swedish municipal structures are, as mentioned above, in the midst of a transitional process from a three-layered model – with the municipal council and area-specific boards – to a two-layered model, with the municipal council, the political board and specific administrations that refer to the wide political board. Approximately half of the boards are now wide and cover multiple areas, such as day-care institutions, primary schools, secondary schools, libraries and culture. The other boards, which are still in a transitional phase, are responsible for only one specific part of education, such as primary education. However, in most places, this transition is not clear and could change direction.

The new structures provide board members with new challenges, since they need to know and be informed about a wider range of issues, problems and relations. At the same time, they have to manage the effects of reforms in national governance, which entails the decentralisation of economical and human resource management and the re-centralisation of curriculum and accountability aspects of education. These changes seem to have brought about a shift in the work of school boards, whereby the focus is no longer on educational issues, but on economical and managerial issues instead.

6.7 School Board Members and Chairs

In all Nordic countries, the school board is viewed as the link in the chain of political governance (from state level to institutional level) with both a political and an administrative function. Therefore, school board members are seen as local politicians who represent local political parties. In some of the countries, all school board members are also members of the municipal council, but, in others, only a

section of the members are also members of the council. In Denmark, all school board members are members of the municipal council. This is prescribed by the Danish Act on Municipal Governance (Finances 2013, §19). In Finland, only 41 % of the school board members are also members of the municipal council, compared to 77 % and 66 % for Norway and Sweden, respectively. The remainder of the members are appointed by the council, but selected from outside the council. In Sweden, 26 % of school board members are also members of the executive board, which gives them (and their educational issues) a more powerful position and role in political decisions.

All Nordic school board members are, as previously mentioned, politically appointed. The majority of them are elected members of the municipal council or appointed by the council and, therefore, most of them are members of a political party; however, as in Denmark, they can also be individually and personally elected. Seats on the board are decided on the basis of the party's size on the municipal council, which means that, proportionally, all parties have the same representation on the school board as on the municipal council. It is the political parties that decide which party should chair the political board. This decision is made during the coalition-forming negotiations that follow the election of the council. It is a priority for the political parties to chair the school board, because doing so means they are able to set the agenda, chair meetings and, thus, chair decision-making. It also means they are in charge of acquiring information for the board. In Denmark, the Socialist People's Party has focused heavily on acquiring this position and, in the local elections in 2009, they obtained three times as many chairs as board members. It is in the party's interest to obtain the chair, since this position provides them with a good opportunity to influence political decision-making. If we compare this picture with Norway, we can see that one Norwegian party – the Centre Party – is three times overrepresented on school boards.

When asked why they accepted the appointment to a school board, members usually give two main answers: (1) that it is his/her personal interest (and also often occupation) and (2) that the seat provides his/her party with an important opportunity to influence development in the municipality. Most chairs agree that, with regard to strategy and economy, they gain political influence by being on a school board. The board members are less optimistic.

6.8   Important Political Issues

In order to analyse the survey data on important political issues, we would now like to introduce the OECD school leadership study (Pont et al. 2008), since this report, like other OECD tools for soft governance, is currently influencing national politicians and policymakers in their perception of public governance. Earlier in our analysis, we introduced the Governance in Transition study (1995). This study summarises our project's country reports in describing the new expectations on school leaders in three categories. The first is called *leading autonomous schools*

like small businesses. Here, there is a need for competences in human resources management and the management of economical and human resources. The second category is called *leading for accountability and outcomes*. The focus here is the need for competences in strategic planning, assessment and monitoring. And the third category is called *learning centred leadership*, in which there is a focus on new approaches to teaching and learning (OECD 2008).

This general picture fits well with the political expectations in the Nordic school boards: Governance is almost exclusively about management and assessment of resources and outcomes – which is in line with managerial and marketplace accountabilities – while the educational focus receives little interest (Moos 2013b). This is because municipalities have little influence over educational content: Matters of curriculum and the assessment of results have been re-centralised to the national level, bypassing the local level. This is the general image in Denmark, Norway and Sweden; however, in Finland, the situation is different. The Finnish local curriculum is important, and quality assurance takes place at the local level. No reports are sent to the national level. Even the execution of the quality assurance system takes place at the local level. They choose the tools. In fact, in the 2016 curriculum reform, the national emphasis will be on how teaching and learning should be conducted. The education provider will become increasingly responsible for the content of the curriculum.

This is in line with the ideas of a concern, which we mentioned earlier. When asked what they considered to be the most important policy issues with which the board should engage, chairs answered 'structure and economy' followed by 'day-care and youth issues', which are both relatively new issues for the board. Ordinary members placed greater emphasis on the curriculum and quality monitoring. Chairs are fully aware of their responsibility as policymakers at this concern level. They also indicate that the board leaves educational decisions, such as quality issues and curriculum, to the next level in the governance chain. The links between these levels can be contracts, like quality reports, and social technologies, like employee interviews.

When asked about the type of knowledge they require for their work on the school board, local school politics and budget procedures emerged as top priorities. Next on the priority list was knowledge regarding the outcomes of education, and at the bottom of the priority list was knowledge of curriculum.

Let us now turn to our interpretation of these observations. In a review of Norwegian school government between 1970 and 2007, Engeland and Langfeldt conclude that independent school policy formation and policy initiatives are very seldom observable in Norwegian municipalities (Engeland and Langfeldt 2009). The Norwegian government apparently assumed that the municipalities should 'fill in the gaps' in vague and underspecified goal formulations in the national curricula with their own local strategies, policy initiatives and priorities. However, municipal policy goals and local educational strategies, as observed in written documents, are also general and vague, and they come across as "blueprints" of national policies. This is particularly the case when it comes to the content of the curriculum, i.e. the ideological steering of schools; locally developed evaluation criteria (regarding school principals and teachers) as well as local curriculum development are seldom

found. The situation is similar in Sweden and Denmark; for example, when a new act on the school was launched in 1974, most Danish municipalities established local working groups to 'localise' the curriculum. Between 2001 and 2011, there was no local work on the new acts, so municipal authorities – including school boards – have had to accept the national legislation and curriculum as a blueprint for their local curriculum. However, as described above, the Finnish situation is different: In Finland, there is still a clear focus on the local education provider, influence on curriculum and accountability.

6.9   Relations to Administration

The most important civil servant for the school board is the superintendent (Moos 2011). Superintendents see themselves as both civil servants and policymakers, because they are engaged in many meetings where they take part in producing premises for decision-making and, in this way, they set the agenda for the policymakers' actual decision-making (Moos 2009b). At the same time, they actively disseminate decisions to school leaders. Through dialogue and social technologies, such as quality reports, they ensure that decisions are connected to actions in the schools.

Generally, in Denmark, this corresponds well with answers to the following question: *In which cases should the school board monitor the work of the superintendent?* The results are listed below:

1. Quality, evaluation and outcomes
2. Implementation of political decisions
3. Budget and economy
4. School structure and school development
5. The occupational environment for students and teachers

The Swedish school board provided similar answers, though priorities 1 and 2 were different:

1. Budget/economy
2. Student outcomes, monitoring and effectiveness

In Finland, the first priority is also finances, but the second is personnel issues, such as recruiting teachers and leaders.

Again, a picture emerges of a political board that generally adheres to political decisions and to transferring these decisions into actions. The fact that many members are also members of the city council – and that, in Finland and Sweden, the chair can also be a member of the executive council – may help us understand the members' professional and political conception of their role and position.

While board members consider their activities important and influential, it is perhaps a little surprising that half of the chairs claim that the superintendent writes the agenda for board meetings (only 10–15 % of chairs claim that they themselves

write the agenda). This can be taken as an indication of the increasing political influence that the professional manager has on the expenses of the politically elected chair, or it could be an indication of the question being interpreted with the following premise: Writing the agenda does not necessarily mean deciding on it (Kanervio et al. 2014).

6.10   Relations to Schools, City Council and State

Relations between the school board and the city council are often very clear: Members of the board are either members of the municipal council or have an affiliation to a political party. Therefore, they are able to contribute numerous thoughts, ideas and decisions in both directions. Relations between the school board and the school are indirect – and operate via the superintendent, middle leaders or other administrative staff – as none of the members has a formal relation to the school. They occasionally visit schools, but not always in a formal capacity. They may visit schools for personal or occupational reasons, or they may visit in a parental capacity. This means that relations between schools and school leaders are not on a purely political level; instead, they are on a political-administrative level.

This trend was underlined when board members were asked about their role towards school leaders. Generally, they do not prioritise these relations highly. On the contrary, they view them as fairly unimportant. This could be because school boards assume that the superintendent is responsible for such matters, which emphasises our earlier point that relations between the professional school level and the political level are mediated through the administration and its CEO, the superintendent. However, it could also be because schools are not the only institutions in the school board's field of responsibility; the board is responsible for many other types of institution.

School board members and chairs are interested in the quality and outcomes of school activities, but again at a distance. When asked which initiatives need to be taken in the case of underperforming school boards, we again find that the actual initiatives are to be taken by the administration, not by the policymakers themselves. However, the Swedish school board members question whether the information and analyses they receive from their administration is sufficient for their decision-making. As the majority of school board members are fully employed in other jobs (and are engaging in political work over and above this), they request better-prepared analyses from the administration.

The majority of school board members and chairs claim there are tensions between themselves and the state, the higher level in the governance chain. This is because they believe the state interferes too much and in too many details. They emphasise the need to acknowledge, what is traditionally called, the right to local government. Schools are usually thought of as owned and run by the municipalities, and they operate within a few national aims, frameworks and rules. Over the past

two decades, municipalities have experienced what they call 'a flood' of detailed regulations, standards and demands for reports and accountability that distract them from the important issues. They have also experienced having too little room for local decision-making.

Board members may also feel uneasy about the development of relations between the state and the municipal level and, thus, about their board's function with the 'bypassing' tendencies in educational governance and with the 'blueprinting' tendency in relation to local influences on curriculum (again, with Finland as an exception). Both tendencies contribute to placing school board members in a resource-managing and outcomes-assessing role, which neglects the original reason that most members wished to join the school board, namely, because they were committed to and concerned about education and schools.

6.11   Predictions

School boards think the current trend towards more autonomous/free-standing/ independent schools, with regard to finances and operation, is likely to continue, since they believe that politics will stimulate parents to actively choose schools for their children. This trend is not seen in Finland, where autonomous schools are not viewed as a political issue (the Finnish school board also holds this opinion). The Danish, Norwegian and Swedish trend is more in line with general development trends in meta-governance and the 'company model' that builds on and promotes free-standing institutions and independent schools. School boards also foresee that the influence of pupils and parents will increase in the future, as will the influence of school leaders as managers of small businesses. They seem to anticipate the strengthening of the state and the schools and the weakening of the municipal level. This, in turn, will lead to the weakening of the democratically elected municipal council, school board and the professional superintendent in favour of a strong administrative state that exercises meta-governance and also in favour of popular stakeholders, consumers, who directly influence schools.

6.12   Conclusion

Analyses in this chapter build on the 'Concern' governance model with three layers: concern, enterprise and workplace. The metaphor, developed by Dorthe Pedersen, is imported from analyses and theories of corporate life in a neoliberal, global market-place. The intention of using this model on the school board analyses is to test out whether theories about global marketisation can be employed on public governance at the municipal level, which would mean accepting the hypotheses that public governance is being moved from a political field into an economical field.

Analyses of the data showed that the model is valid and usable for this analyses: The concern overriding enterprises, which again are overriding workplaces in a straight hierarchy with mixed forms of couplings, is what we found in Nordic municipalities. However, the top-down hierarchy, which is immanent in the concern model – the municipal top describes the frames and aims, the next levels carry them out – is only part of the picture. We see a split model, where much of the human and financial resource management and 'running a small business' is decentralised from the state to the concern, the enterprise and even the workplace, the school. At the same time, setting aims and developing social technologies (indicators, standards, test and curriculum development) is re-centralised. Decision in this field is thus been taken back from municipal to national level, leaving administration of teaching programmes and monitoring of outcomes (quality assurance) to the municipal level. Those trends can be seen in the answers members and chairs of political boards gave on questions about core issues in the boards' work and priorities.

One more tendency, not captured by the concern metaphor – and only vaguely in the survey, is the move towards privatising schools by making them self-steering. This tendency is strongest in Denmark and Sweden and can be detected, when board members give their anticipation of the time to come: The free choice and the influence of students and especially of parents are underscored, which point to loosening couplings between state and institution as foreseen by the OECD and seen in England and the USA.

To sum the trends up, we see significant moves towards strong and detailed national steering of curriculum, preferably through indicators, standards and accountabilities, in line with European Union governance tendencies. This can only happen on the expense of the middle layer, the municipalities, which are loosing influences on curriculum. The local curriculum, traditionally a characteristic of Nordic education, is disappearing in order to make room for national and transnational indicators and standards. Finland is an exception on this – as it is on PISA.

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