

“Migration and Education: The pathways in NYC and Lower Austria”
A cross-fertilizing Dialog dedicated to the
“Long Refugee Day” in Austria

Friday, October 6, 2023

2PM - 4PM CEST

8AM - 10AM EST

Key messages and takeaways from the Dialogue – Future milestones/landmarks on migration & education

Welcome Speech by the Rector of the University College of Teacher Education Lower Austria – Erwin Rauscher (attached)

Program Opening by Alfred S. Posamentier – City College of Technology New York

- This research program, comparing immigrant issues in New York and Austria would seem to be the culmination of a variety of extremely useful cooperative programs that have been coordinated over the past few decades, in large part by the Austrian American Educational Cooperation Association.
- Beginning with exchange visits by top educators from New York City (high school superintendents) and Austria (section chiefs and ministers of education) many useful programs have evolved. For example, American master’s degrees have been offered to Austrian teachers in such fields as English, mathematics, and leadership, and a time well before such degrees were being offered in the European Union following the Bologna process.
- A very successful program based on the Austrian program of “practice firms” has been replicated throughout the United States and currently involves over 500 high schools offering “Virtual Enterprises International.” From 1998 to 2008 Austria provided over 750 mathematics and science teachers to New York City public schools. These are just some of the programs that have provided a very strong link between Austria and New York City public schools. As times change, other programs of mutual interest evolve.
- One such is the current emphasis on studying how to provide effective educational programs to migrant populations. First, using outstanding researchers from Long Island University the current program got a good start. This was then followed by the City College of New York (CUNY) taking a leadership role in the research program headed by Dr. Aminata Diop. Follow along as this exciting program continues to take great strides in approaching the continued challenges of educating migrant children.

Core Findings of the Research Project conducted in Lower Austria – perspectives of students, parents, teachers, school leaders – by Almut Bachinger and Karl J. Zarhuber.

Most salient factors for integration and successful school careers in migrant and refugee youth:

- important role of school as educational institution and social live world in general
- social capital acquisition through friendship between and within cultural groups of youth
- attitude of teachers in facilitating migrant youth's cultural integration
- biculturalism and retaining own cultural identity.

Student and Teacher Introductions by Aminata Diop, Chan Lin, Fatumata Juwara, Angelika Riedl, Irene Ille, Monika Plomer-Breitschopf, Alexandra Lux, Ursula Ungerböck, Rashema Brown, Patricia Monge plus **Questions & Answers**. From this Dialog, moderated by Aminata Diop, you will find a glossary of key messages on our pathways in NYC and Lower Austria highly recommended for further development and implementation.

- **Dialog building the bridge over the Atlantic Ocean:** One of the key values and insights of this international dialogue is to learn that teachers/educators in different parts of the world face the same or similar challenges and at the same time develop diverse responses. This makes the dialogue special, strengthening colleagues based on the message of solidarity: “You are not alone”!
- **Celebrating** Chinese New Year, Thanksgiving ... together
- **Future thinking** should be the driver and orientation for all circumstances and for all included to education and school (futures literacy)
- **Languages: Language access is important.**
 - The need to approach bilingualism and multiculturalism differently.
 - The importance of translanguaging (this is Ofelia Garcia’s word). Follow her academic work here: https://academicworks.cuny.edu/gc_pubs/402/.
 - Multilingualism: There is a huge room of improvement. Hearing someone explaining in German and translating afterwards into English was in interesting experiences.
- **Orientation:** We need “students driven schools”!
- **Our teacher education programs** are more important than ever.
- **Parents:** Parental involvement is crucial.
 - Rethink the inclusive concept of working with parents. School information for parents in at least five languages is standard, with family carers available as resources...
- **Please never ask this question: “Where do you come from?”** That’s an exclusive question and opens the dynamic of “you and we” – not inclusive cooperation.
- **School must be a welcoming safe space for everyone:** Explain what this means in detail and in everyday life, e.g., after arrival - who is the supporting person?
- **School principals’ attitude is crucial for everyone.**
- **Students who refuse to learn the language of the country of arrival:** support them to find parallels for their country of origin in the culture of the country of arrival. Being different but being the same too.
- **Team teaching** is standard and not an exception.
- **Treatment:** Do not specifically treat students with a migration background in class, do not emphasize them, but rather treat all students equally as students