



First contributions to the base referential for innovation and improvement in education at RIMED (version 2, November 15, 2023)

What type of innovation and improvement in education do we promote?

We understand by **educational innovation**, “a set of ideas, processes and strategies, more or less systematized, through which changes are introduced in current educational practices, which contribute to the improvement of students' learning and educators' teaching practices, at the service of either subjects and communities based on democratic respect, equity and solidarity, or education understood as “a common good in the public space”” (Jesus, P. & Azevedo, J., 2021)

Key dimensions of educational innovation processes:

Educational research work that has sought to characterize innovation in schools referred to as innovative, around the world, has allowed us to construct a typology of educational innovation, which we consider here (Lomba, E. & Alves, J. M., 2022). This typology has the particularity of describing the organizational and pedagogical dimensions most present in innovative schools, at an international level, and allows us to highlight a set of areas around which RIMED can work.

Organizational dimensions: (i) flexibility in the creation and use of teaching-learning spaces; (ii) flexibility in the way students are grouped, (iii) flexibility in the organization of teaching-learning times and (iv) flexibility in the way students are allocated to teachers and vice versa.

Pedagogical Dimensions: (i) students, among themselves and with teachers, act collaboratively during the teaching-learning process; (ii) the use of digital resources in the teaching-learning process; (iii) curricular integration of an interdisciplinary nature; (iv) the use of learning practices linked to students' individual interests; (v) teachers' collaborative preparation of student learning; (vi) the use of learning practices linked to the surrounding community; (vii) the use of active, practical and experiential learning; (viii) flexibility in organizing the curriculum; (ix) the use of diverse, differentiated and flexible pedagogical approaches; (x) the reduction of transmissive teaching times; (xi) the use of learning practices linked to the natural world.

For RIMED, innovation and educational improvement is, therefore, a participatory process, built locally by the various actors-authors, integrating teachers and students and the classroom, which must be multidimensional, coherent and articulated, and which must seek always an impact on improving educational processes and results and well-being (personal, physical and social), within organizations that want to be learners.

What does it mean to join RIMED?

Joining RIMED means adhering to the following way of thinking/acting around innovation and improving education:

-the quality of education we seek focuses both on learning and access to knowledge, and on the global development of each student, as a unique person and active and supportive citizen;

-the values of humanism override any functionalist and technocratic logic of education, which is why the Network is committed to an education with a human face, attentive to



each and every student and capable of promoting the development and professional fulfillment of student's educators from each school;

-the projects and dynamics in which RIEMD is involved will always value the active participation of students, not as mere beneficiaries but as actors and authors committed to their learning and development and an active part of the innovation and improvement processes;

-the involvement of the management bodies of educational institutions in the design, implementation and evaluation of innovation and improvement processes constitutes a sine qua non of RIMED's involvement;

-no one changes the modern model of school education alone, in isolation, fighting against its secular institutionalization, rather the network connection between dispersed initiatives, autonomous projects, people and institutions is fundamental.

For this reason and for this to happen, RIMED adopts this mode of action:

-in any institutional initiative for innovation and school improvement, RIMED's intervention always begins by inventorying the "good school" that already exists, seeking to value its potential, as an integral part of a strategy to overcome existing weaknesses;

-any innovation and improvement initiative must result from the active participation of educators and school management, involving students and, when appropriate, families and other community actors;

- "collaborative professionalism" (Hargreaves & O'Connor, 2018) between educators, from each school and between schools, constitutes the best support for reliable innovations with significant repercussions on the educational tripod: teaching-learning-evaluation;

-any innovation and improvement initiative must initially include an evaluation system, in order to assess its immediate results and impact;

-any intervention and training initiatives to be carried out in schools and local authorities must not be isolated, but integrated into broader processes of innovation and improvement, as an integral part and as facilitators of their effectiveness;

-any innovation and improvement initiative must be focused on ensuring its sustainability, internalizing the necessary skills and adequate resources;

-in any process of innovation and improvement, those directly involved must be aware that, to have an impact and to achieve objectives, it is necessary to never lose focus, be persistent and count on time as an ally, in addition to needing be carefully monitored and evaluated.

In other words, more than participating in any innovative activism, RIMED is focused on collaborating with educational institutions and projects if they are integrated and focused on school cultures of innovation and improvement. Thus, RIMED represents an opportunity to co-build more and better education in Portugal. Step by step. Together.



References:

Hargreaves, A. & O'Connor, M. (2018). Collaborative Professionalism: when teaching together means learning for all. Corwin.

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