



FINNISH NATIONAL
BOARD OF EDUCATION

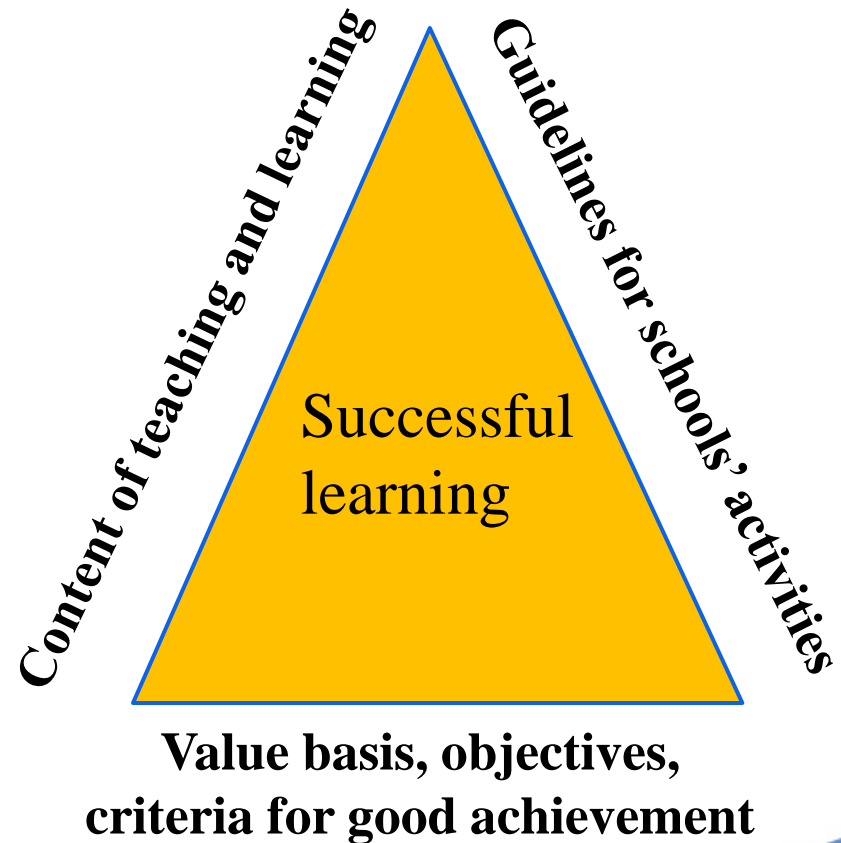
Finnish Curriculum System

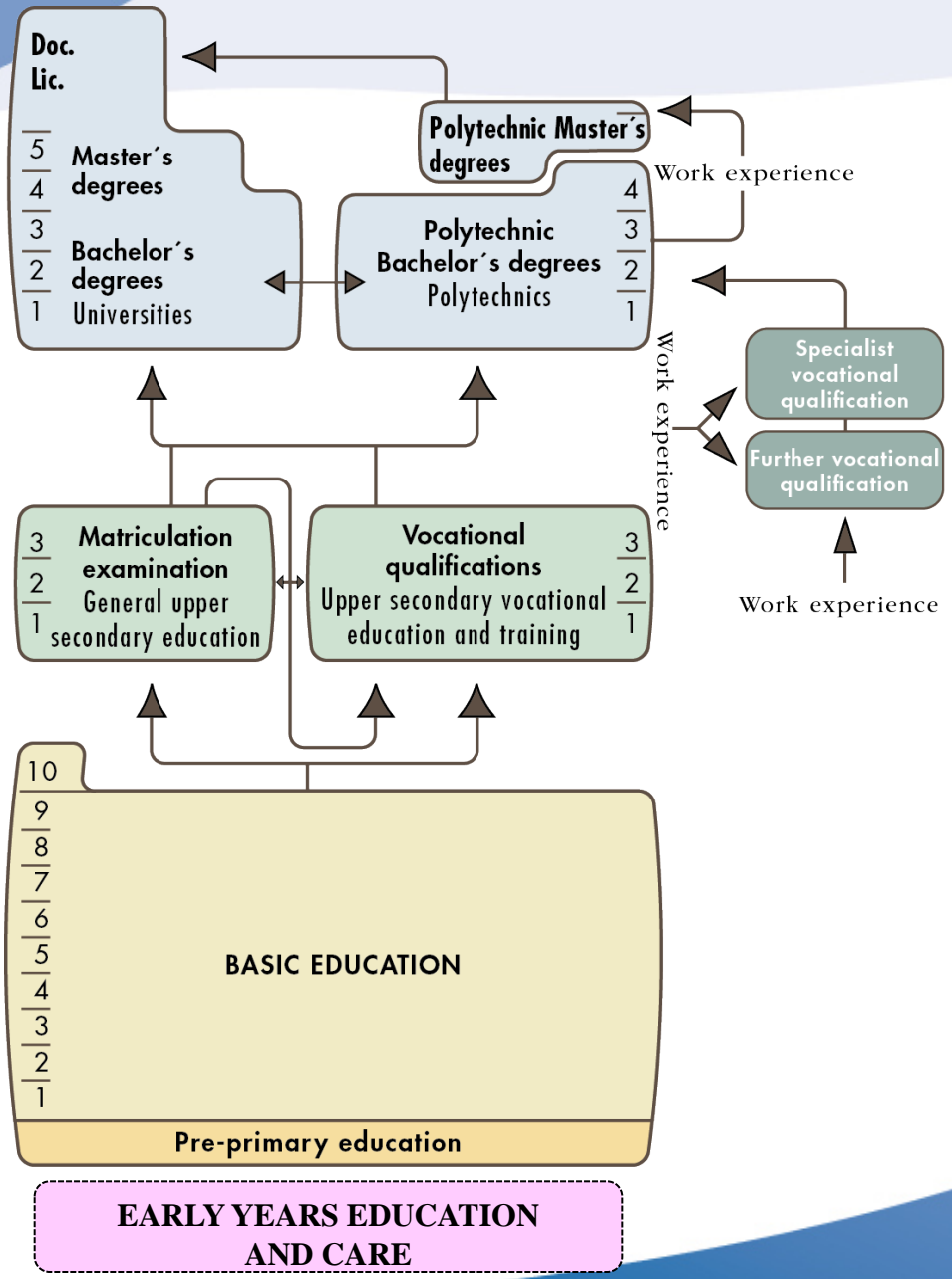
Tiina Tähkä and Erja Vitikka
Curriculum Unit
Finnish National Board of Education



Summary Overview

National Core Curriculum
forms a coherent basis
for the provision of
education





Background: Education in Finland



Reforms in Finnish Basic Education

- Divided parallel education system with consequent achievement gap until 1970
- **1970 first national curriculum** – strongly centralized
- **1985 curricular reform** – more decision making to the municipality-level
- **1994 curricular reform** – school-based decision making
- **2004 Curricular reform** – stronger national basis
 - National criteria for pupil assessment
- **2010 Reform of early intervention and learning support strategies**

TEACHING AND LEARNING

SCHOOL CURRICULUM
and a year plan based on it

MUNICIPAL CURRICULUM

Municipal QUALITY CRITERIA *strategies*

Teacher education

Study material

National Core Curricula
Government's Decree
on the General National Objectives and Distribution of lesson hours
Education Act and Decree

Current Framework: Curriculum System in Finland 2011



Broad conception of the curriculum

- ◆ Curriculum is a strategic document which reflects our best understanding of humanity, society and learning
- ◆ Curriculum covers all areas of school life, not only school subjects
- ◆ National core curriculum outlines
 - Common values
 - Mission and structure of education
 - Conception of learning
 - Principles for organizing instruction
 - Principles for student assessment
 - Support for learning and student welfare
 - Objectives and core contents of subjects



Important features of present curriculum system in Finland

- ◆ Two-layer system
 - National core curriculum – national framework
 - School/Municipal curriculum – local conceptualization
- ◆ All these are created in an open, extensive and interactive process – curriculum is more a process than a product
- ◆ Curriculum is a professional, pedagogical tool for teachers and school principals, for municipal education leaders and for national education authorities



Opportunities & challenges

- ◆ Good interaction between national, local and school levels
- ◆ Teachers are valued experts in the curriculum development and they have broad pedagogical autonomy
- ◆ Curriculum process emphasized at school level
- ◆ Strengthening the educational use of ICT is one of the central challenges in development
- ◆ Schools' central role in enhancing the sense of coherence and subjective well-being needs to be harnessed



Education Reforms 2010 - 2017

- ◆ Pupils' right to be supported in their school attendance, wellbeing and learning is guaranteed by law – **inclusion** by a three-level support system through curriculum reform 2010
- ◆ **Early years** education and care will be strengthened from 2013 onward
- ◆ **Basic education** (pre-primary year, primary 1-6 and lower secondary 7-9) core curriculum will be reformed between 2012 – 2014 and implemented between 2015 – 2016
- ◆ **Upper secondary education** core curriculum will be reformed between 2013 – 2015 and implemented between 2016 - 2017



Future directions: Basic Education Reforms

Strengthening the sustainability (quality, equality and coherence) of basic education

- by developing school culture and working methods in order to enhance **pupils' active and responsible role** in schools
- by developing flexible working structures and the use of ICT in learning in order to **combine formal and informal learning**
- by developing schools' welfare services and by strengthening extra curricular activities in schools in order to improve the **wellbeing of pupils**
- by enhancing **competences needed in the future**

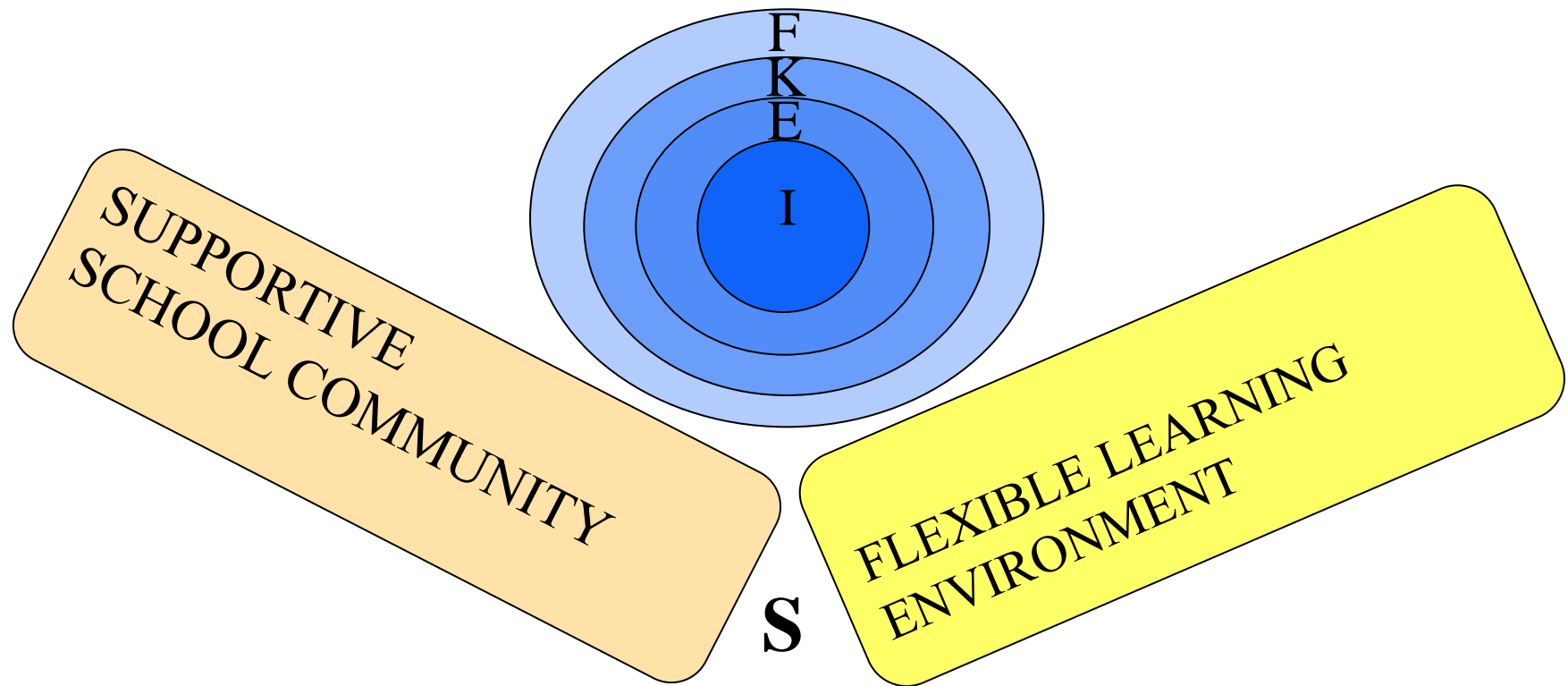


F = future orientation, responsibility

K = knowledge and skills, learning to learn

E = engagement, collaboration, dialogue

I = identity, self-efficacy



Thank you!

