

Networking and Cooperation as School Improvement Elements

El trabajo en red y la cooperación como elementos para la mejora
escolar

Cristóbal Suárez-Guerrero¹ & José Luís Muñoz Moreno²

¹Universitat de València, Valencia, España.

²Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Barcelona, España.

Received on: 31-12-16

Approved on: 30-03-17

Corresponding author

Email: cristobal.suarez@uv.es

How to cite:

Suarez-Guerrero, C., & Muñoz, J. (2017).
Networking and Cooperation as School
Improvement Elements *Propósitos y
Representaciones*, 5(1), 349 - 402 . [http://dx.doi.
org/10.20511/pyr2017.v5n1.150](http://dx.doi.org/10.20511/pyr2017.v5n1.150)

Summary

The school is an enriched learning environment, but it is not the only educational environment. The educational mission of the school should take into account the school-family coordination as a feature of its social project. A great part of this bridge between school and family is based on dialogue through the participation of the family in the comprehensive educational development, which is the basis of the democratizing notion of school. Therefore, this work addresses networking as a school improvement element through cooperation. It focuses on networking for learning and knowledge, and on cooperative teams as a networking unit. An example of this way of work can be specified in two relevant experiences in the Spanish context: the “*Polígono Sur Comprehensive Plan*” (Sevilla) and “*Sport and School*” (Ripollet). The main conclusions shows that open participation, consensus-building and interaction management are useful tools to foster cooperation and networking in the various contexts of intervention and the different action scenarios.

Keywords: School, family, cooperation, networking, participation.

Resumen

La escuela es un entorno enriquecido de aprendizaje, pero no es el único entorno educativo. La misión educativa de la escuela debe contemplar la coordinación escuela-familia como rasgo de su proyecto social. Buena parte de este puente se fundamenta en el diálogo desde la participación de la familia con el desarrollo educativo integral, base de la noción democratizadora de la escuela. Por ello, esta aportación aborda el trabajo en red como elemento para la mejora escolar desde la cooperación. Se focaliza en el trabajo en red al servicio del aprendizaje y el conocimiento y en los equipos cooperativos como unidad de trabajo en red. Una muestra de esta forma de trabajo se concreta en dos experiencias relevantes en el contexto español: el “*Plan Integral del Polígono Sur*” (Sevilla) y “*Deporte y Escuela*” (Ripollet). Las principales conclusiones ponen de manifiesto que la participación abierta, la

búsqueda del consenso y la gestión de la interacción son instrumentos útiles para fomentar la cooperación y el trabajo en red en los diversos contextos de intervención y los distintos escenarios de actuación.

Palabras clave: Escuela, familia, cooperación, trabajo en red, participación.

Introduction

School cannot be understood as a social abstraction. School is influenced by its social environment, to which it has a duty, and defines its needs, problems and also provides some solutions. The sociocultural theory is clear with respect to it (Vigostky, 2000): The environment, both in learning and cultural construction, is not a neutral entity, but it is part of the explanation and development of processes therein. The mission of the school only focused on teaching weakens if learning experience is not understood as a broad event that concerns the society, the professors and families. Saying that the school only teaches can sound disproportionate if only students go to school to learn content and deny the truth about reality and the coordination with families. Schools have to think about options that are more open to permanent educational dialog with their environment.

School and families can keep a productive dialog through the educational participation in the development and improvement of education (Vigo & Julve, 2016; Llevot & Bernad, 2015; Vicent, 2014). This is one of the main challenges in society democratization, since it is not enough to assign resources to improve the education quality, but it is also necessary to create opportunities to participate in the education environment and through collective interests. A democratic education, according to Bolívar (2005) should be constitutive as an aim and a means of public education.

Social interaction, public discussion, respect for and attention to diversity are important to education. Exercising the right to education must ensure an effective participation of families in the decision-making processes, as well (Morin, 2001). According to Gairín and San Fabián (2005), this is an indicator of democratic normalization, and according to Fernández (1997), it is a basis for democracy and development. The studies on effective schools already showed that the participation of families in education had a positive influence on the students' academic achievement. Some reasons supporting the thesis on collaboration between schools and families coincide with those stated by Mayordomo (1999): need for extension, definition and strengthening of

democratization principles; sense of responsibility and collaboration; support to creativity and critical spirit as a source of vitality; control of a proper use of resources financed with public funds; and contribution to democratic learning and to acquisition of a sense of community.

A proper context for this collaboration should ensure the necessary education to “know how to participate”, the organization of means to “be able to participate” and the motivation to “want to participate” (Martín & Gairín, 2006). Always based on respect for each other and mutual recognition, orientation to processes and results, inclusiveness (Lozano, Castillo, Cerezo, Angosto & Alacarez, 2014), willingness, equal opportunities and equity. The benefits of this include a better understanding of certain aspects and situations of what it is done, an approach to responsibility for collective problems and needs, a reduction of injustices and differences due to power distribution, better transparency and social control, an increased confidence and more legitimacy given the processes developed (Muñoz, 2012).

Schools educate and must guarantee that work it develops about values and competences ensures an optimal cohesion and coexistence in the school life and when students are adult and have direct responsibilities in social, work, family, political environments, since the citizenship development greatly depends on the level of cohesion and coexistence. The school and families and society are responsible for the attainment of this purpose based on the logic of co-responsibility for education. (Soler, 2006). According to Apple and Beane (2005), it is advisable to go beyond the school, concerning about injustices and social inequalities and understanding it as a social transformation place and not as an entity immersed in itself. Therefore, from which vision we can perform the coordination and co-responsibility between school and families to have a more significant educational impact on the comprehensive development of the students? This is the problem under consideration that we discuss herein.

The school as a social creation promoted and implemented to comply with the goals set by society, must be sensitive to the existing socio-educational

needs and demands. The participation of families in schools is needed to inform about the legal interests that all can have and to avoid the transmission of prejudices, stereotypes or discriminatory attitudes. For that reason, and understanding that school plays a decisive role in the education of citizens and inclusiveness (Bolívar, 2005), it is worth thinking that the classroom is also a cultural synthesis and a space for thinking development (Gairín, 1998). The need to understand the school as a cultural community project that collects proposals for coordination between school and society should be recognized (Muñoz & Tolosana, 2010). In this contribution, networking is characterized as an element to improve the function of the school based on a cooperation with society. Its feasibility is shown through two relevant experiences in the Spanish context: the “Polígono Sur Comprehensive Plan” (Sevilla) and “Sport and School” (Ripollet).

Networking for Learning and Knowledge.

To be a school that learns and promotes knowledge development and management (Revilla & Pérez, 1998) through the participation of the educational community, requires the incorporation of networking methodologies and dynamics that allows collaborating with the achievement of educational objectives. (Bassedas, 2007). So networking means to collaborate in a systematic, coordinated and complementary manner, building relationships and mutual understanding in common, open and diversified spaces to achieve these goals through specific actions. It is inspired by mutual and collective learning through critical reflection and self-assessment, but also by developing and managing knowledge (Rodríguez-Gómez, 2015).

Currently, fostering collaboration by schools is useful for improving reciprocal knowledge, reporting unfair situations, demanding equal opportunities and equity, sharing resources, participating in common projects, and establishing networks and other commitments (Muñoz, Rodríguez & Barrera, 2013). Based on this, it is possible to build peer-to-peer interpersonal networks, collective networks between areas and associations, internal or external school networks, service networks and others.

Networking focused on the knowledge development and management must necessarily go through several phases, as follows: a) planning of design of actions to be implemented based on the goals set; b) distribution of tasks, specifying the functions and activities that will be brought into play, in a democratic and participatory way; c) development, showing the interrelationships between network components and facilitating the horizontality of power distribution; d) coordination, for a better effectiveness, with open channels of communication and decision-making processes that generate a positive work environment, respect for own autonomy and a better participation of everybody; e) useful assessment aligned with its purpose, which is systematic, appraising, decision-making, prospective and based on the collection of rigorous information and aimed at making decisions, issuing value judgements and making suggestions for the future.

In order to be consistent with the foregoing, it is advisable to define common projects that make it possible to grow and develop together and to have spaces to do it (Gairín, 2004). However, we must become aware of the fact that networking consumes also time, sometimes it produces tasks overload and even can cause confusion due to specific irrelevant types of leadership (Ubieto, 2009).

A proper networking allows the individuals involved to have enough information and transparency, previous consultation, negotiation of positions, and it considers and analyzes all the proposals, avoiding the obstruction from sides, evaluating, delimiting agreements and practical actions and giving priority to answers to needs and collective interests. These elements are connected with other factors of success such as assuming a culture of network intervention, making the actors responsible for and involving them, starting up communication systems, matching work plans, participating in the decision-making processes or building bridges of understanding. Consequently, confidence, dialog and agreement are more than essential here and, in this regard, any process that begins must be based on the basis of the freedom of action, equal treatment, loyalty and commitment in terms

of collaboration, participation in joint policies, respect for differences, inclusiveness and complementarity (Muñoz, 2014).

Collaboration and participation give sense and meaning to networking, especially if they are understood as a joint and committed action, that can be applied to different situations (professional and institutional) and from different levels of content in support of learning and knowledge. They are key elements when several areas of the school have to keep synergies when developing certain educational proposals and policies. Moreover, learning and knowledge generate collaboration and participation processes where goals are shared through the flexible and solidary participation of all the individuals in achieving them, as well as in the resulting tasks (Koper, 2009).

This strengthens a common culture in favor of the individual and organizational learning and of the development and management of collective knowledge. Thus, the school contributes to modifying the ways how it works institutionally, shares values and common concerns with others, is open to change and innovation or generates commitments resulting in challenges in the knowledge society (Hargreaves, 2003); it is only possible through cooperative proposals aimed at the permanent education improvement.

The school, from this view, can gain greater institutional prominence in its social environment and with the community where it operates. It improves and develops through knowledge by creating, socializing, assessing, renovating and updating it. (Blázquez, 2013). Knowledge becomes relevant since it is collective and it is shared to solve problems proposed to the school and as long as it allows the education community to have the opportunity to learn. In short, it is about moving away from competitiveness in order to gain in sharing and transversal skills.

The construction of a school generating learning and knowledge must be based on a medium- and long-term vision and on the conviction of gradual improvement. The school and its respective education community, with respect to knowledge creation and management, are responsible for its improvement

and development, for the capacity of cooperating and networking in order to promote and facilitate constant learning and innovation (Nagles, 2007) of people, community and organization. Even more so when the investment in learning and knowledge reduces specific socio-educational barriers from a social view, it strengthens the democratic proposals from a political view and generates a better productivity from an economic view.

Networking focused on these aspects will completely make sense as long as it is used for the school's transformation processes and overcomes the simple superficial knowledge of things. The relationship between the development of the school and the improvement of the education community cannot stay on the sidelines of the organizational transformations the school can promote if it really aspires to strong modifications in education processes and in teaching and learning (Senge, 1990). Undoubtedly, creating and managing knowledge strengthens education goals collectively set and the development of cooperative processes of permanent review and improvement.

Cooperative Teams as Networking Unit.

Networks are nodes of cooperation operating according to common goals and communicate with each other for such purpose. (Suárez y Gros, 2013). Cooperation as a social strategy of development (Santos Guerra, 2009) has not finished having a deep effect on the forms of educational comprehension. Although cooperation is traditionally used in learning (Pujolàs, 2004; Johnson, Johnson & Holubec, 1999; Slavin, 1999) as a social learning model (Joyce & Weil, 2002), it is still an option of how to organize the classroom and the way to work in the school. In spite of its educational value and impact on learning (Suárez, 2007), cooperation plays an important role as a strategy of coordination and social organization of the school (Fernández Enguita & Terrén, 2008). Therefore, the challenge of cooperation and networking is also an organizational challenge (Rudduck & Flutter, 2007) the school must assume as a quality feature.

This challenge can be estimated according to this dilemma: the school as institution, for which teaching and educating are its purpose, not a means for nothing, can choose not to consider such challenge and disagree with it or to try to promote cooperation with educators and introduce certain shared sense in the tangle of opportunities for and demands on childhood and youth. The former supposes bureaucratization and isolation of the organization; the latter, networking (Fernández Enguita, 2012). The teacher-student relationship in learning and vertical relationships in the school are methods usually used in the educational practice that, definitively, are not the only ones. If these methods still exist is because, among other factors, the way of representing education or specifically, the educational relationship remains in force.

Any learning and educational option has a relationship option. The question that can be made now is the following: Is any educational relationship option equally significant and beneficial to educational experience? Or is it possible to think about a type of educational relationship that is more qualitatively beneficial? Change supposes practice, but also the conceptual re-development of the way of thinking, the relationship between educational agents, breaking point to detect other development thresholds.

An educational mistake is usually a mistake of relational conception (García y García, 2001). The relational mistake usually has consequences in different levels of the educational process. For that reason, when an educational option is proposed, we are facing in an explicit or implicit way a relational option of what and how learning environments can be enriched thanks to education. Here is where cooperation acquires sense as an educational development strategy (Mir, 1998). But not everything remains as a statement, but questions have to be made: What changes in an educational situation when thinking in terms of cooperative coordination?

Firstly, the cooperative activity is different from competitive and individualistic procedures which are usually characterized by valuing the isolation and lack of communication as educational development factors.

Educating in terms of cooperation means to educate under the motto of a new unit: the team (Suárez, 2010).

In addition, a team is not a group. There are many groups, but few of them work as teams. Interacting is not a clear differentiating feature of a team either, many individuals can interact, discuss or disagree and this will continue being called interaction. The relational option behind each team is the cooperative interaction with its distinguished features and forms of development. A team is a basic unit of intersubjectivity *inter pares* (Suárez, 2010), a concept that can be used to represent, understand and analyze the cooperative interaction in the classroom. For people to form teams not groups, it is necessary, agreeing with the opinion of Pujolàs (2004, p. 77), to change the following features:

- If they are really together and if they have something that unites them strongly (the sense of belonging to the same team, the objective they pursue, etc.).
- If there is an equal relationship between them, if nobody feels superior to others, if everybody is valued and if they feel valued by their mates.
- If there is an interdependence between them and if what affects a member of the team is relevant to others.
- If there is no relationship of competence but of cooperation, help and mutual demand between them and if helping a mate favorably affect oneself and the whole team.
- If there is friendship between them and an affective bond that allows them to celebrate together the successes achieved by all the members of the team.

To be more specific and give a vision that lead to practice, the characteristic features of a cooperative team can be proposed. Based on the principles of cooperative action (Suárez, 2011; Johnson, Johnson & Holubec, 1999), it is

possible to identify up to 5 basic dimensions that form a cooperative team. Consequently, a cooperative team acts as a basic unit of intersubjectivity provided that the following 5 dimensions are structured.

1. *Positive interdependence.* Individuals identify that the achievement of the objective depends on the efforts of all the members of the team to achieve the goal shared, since the improvement of work of all members also means the improvement of one's own work. This happens when focusing, as an equivocal purpose of the educational relationship, the awareness of the fact that personal success depends on the success of the team. If one fails, everybody fails, too
2. *Individual and Team Responsibility.* Each member of the team assumes their responsibility, but at the same time they make others responsible for the work they must performed to achieve the common goals. In this case, the sense of responsibility for personal task and collective task, is a factor that helps not to neglect the part and the whole.
3. *Stimulating Interaction.* The members of the team promote and support the optimal achievement of all of them through a group of attitudes encouraging personal and collective motivation. Assistance, incentives, recognitions, encouragement and distribution of resources contribute to creating this environment of fraternity based on the common objective.
4. *Internal management of the team.* The members of the team plan and coordinate their activities in an organized and consensual way through plans and routines, as well as by distributing functions to achieve the common goal of the team. This implies that each member takes actions to stimulate that the team works effectively, as for instance, decision-making, time management, problem overcoming, leadership or control of work shifts.

5. *Internal assessment of the team.* The team constantly assess its functioning based on the joint goal, as well as the level of effectivity of personal participation in the cooperative dynamics. This requires analyzing and assessing to which extent shared learning goals would be achieved but also how all and every member have acted cooperatively.

Each team has different senses and intensities, although the five dimensions can contribute to designing, developing and assessing work activities between school and families. It is about representing a team as the opportunity of cooperation. Therefore, to improve school through cooperation, it is not enough to be together, or share the same educational space, but to understand it as a unit of intersubjectivity putting in practice these cooperative dimensions.

Putting in Practice Cooperation.

Cooperation between school and family has been mostly formalized through the representation in the participation structures or the participation in associations and even with an informal nature. All the possibilities are real, not exclusive, but it would be appropriate that they share realities, policies and proposals (Gairín, 2004a).

The school located in a truly democratic social and political scenario needs to have ways of cooperation with its environment, of participatory control, collaborative assessment and joint and common governance (McDonald, 1995; Martínez, 1998; Martín, 2000; Páez, 2015). According to Epstein (1990), cooperation between school and families could be made in practice around the following work areas: the school as a source of support to families so they can fulfill with their basic educational obligations; families as a source of support to schools so it achieves a better and more effective educational intervention; cooperation of families in schools to develop complementary support activities; participation of families in learning activities with their children and in the organization through the management

bodies; and the relationship of the school families with other education communities and social institutions.

In fact, in case of the cooperation of families in the school organization and management, it is required to assume the diversity structures and the variety of existing contexts. Besides, it is necessary that the school analyzes the changes in socializing and educational functions present in the different family structures (nuclear family, stepfamily, extended, monoparental, homoparental and common-law families) to adjust their plans, programs and projects to them, as well as to clarify the functions that correspond to each group and to make a coordinated action effective (Ordóñez, 2015).

It is important cooperation between social sectors that influence the educational processes, beginning with the active co-responsibility of families since they are the first and most genuine educational level as stated in the conclusions of the recent “23rd Meeting of Autonomous and State School Councils”, held in Santander (Spain), This meeting focused on the relationships between families and school (MECD, 2015). Strengthening this cooperation is a socio-educational responsibility but it is also a requirement for educational management models. In this regard, we can highlight two relevant experiences in the Spanish context due to their originality.

The first experience is the socio-educational and family intervention project included in the “*Polígono Sur Comprehensive Plan*” (Sevilla), approved by the Government Council of the Board of Andalucía on December 20, 2005¹. There are around 50.000 people in this area of Sevilla who live in 7.000 houses on a surface of 145 ha. People who have arrived in this area since the 60’s of the last century are from different nations, cultures, have different languages, occupations. Consequently, the Polígono Sur neighboring movement arose and their initiatives were based on three pillars: integrality, to face problems jointly and not on a sectorial basis; territorial adaptation, to understand the problems and solutions as typical to

1 http://www.poligonosursevilla.es/opencms/opencms/poligono_sur.html

the environment; and participation, to take into account and involve all the possible visions of reality.

The “*Polígono Sur Comprehensive Plan*” implies a model of participation, governance and citizenship with two clear objectives. On one hand, it is to develop a new model of management of public policies for Polígono Sur based on high levels of coordination of public action and active citizen participation and, on the other hand, it is to improve life conditions in Polígono Sur based on 4 basic scopes of comprehensive action: urbanism and coexistence with neighbors, social and labor insertion and promotion of the economic initiative, socio-educational and family intervention and community health. Here is where the educational idea of cooperation between school and families is established, in a place where the educational answer is part of a broader and global vision of society.

The educational idea (Polígono Sur Commissioner, 2010) is to give a comprehensive and community educational response. It is materialized in four action programs to reduce the school failure, improve school organization, optimize the educational infrastructure and promote permanent education. In all the programs there are specific actions of coordination between school and families which are shown in a singular management model (Figure 1).

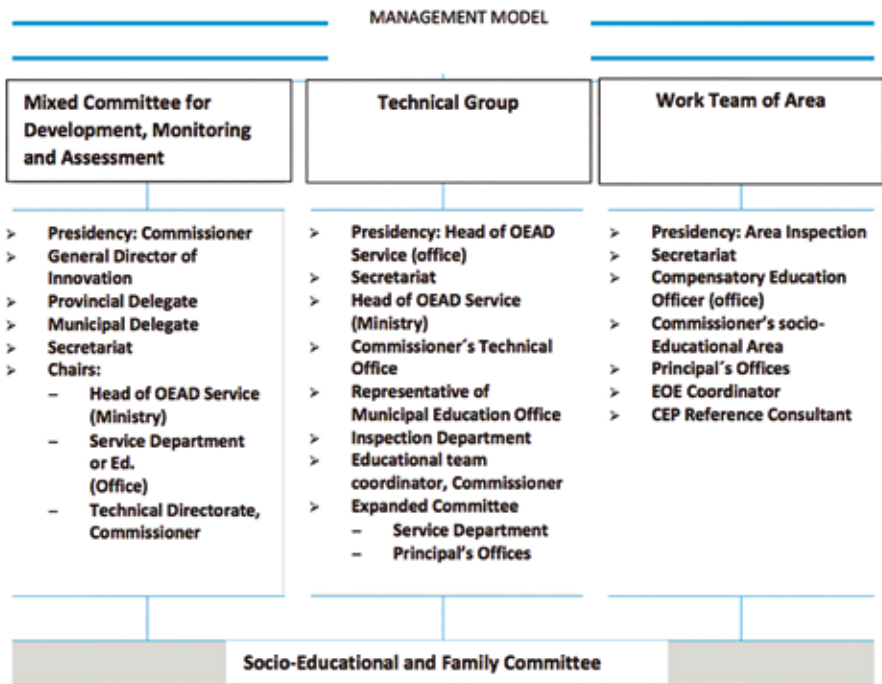


Figure 1. Management Model of the “Polígono Sur Educational Plan” (Polígono Sur Commissioner, 2010, p. 55).

The “Socio-educational and Family Committee” is the most formal educational management mechanism of the school-family relationship of Polígono Sur. This area is understood as a territorial body of educational management and participation to “*establish a work space where there are public services, Parents Association (AMPAS, by its Spanish initials) and socio-educational action entities, that will be used to increase coordination between governments to improve their acts and achieve the active participation of neighbors*” (Polígono Sur Commissioner, 2010, p. 53). This can guarantee the participation of families not only in the educational monitoring, but also in the decision making of the education community. To that end, subcommittees, where families have presence in scopes such as schooling, coexistence, training, education in public spaces and infrastructures, are established.

The second experience is “*Sport and School*” (Ajuntament de Ripollet, 2016), created and developed by the Municipal Board for Sports of the Municipality of Ripollet² (province of Barcelona), shows a school sport model that works on the more playful part of sport, promoting socio-educational values, putting emphasis on fun and not on competition with the participation of schools and families, as well as of other departments of the local administration (Figure 2).

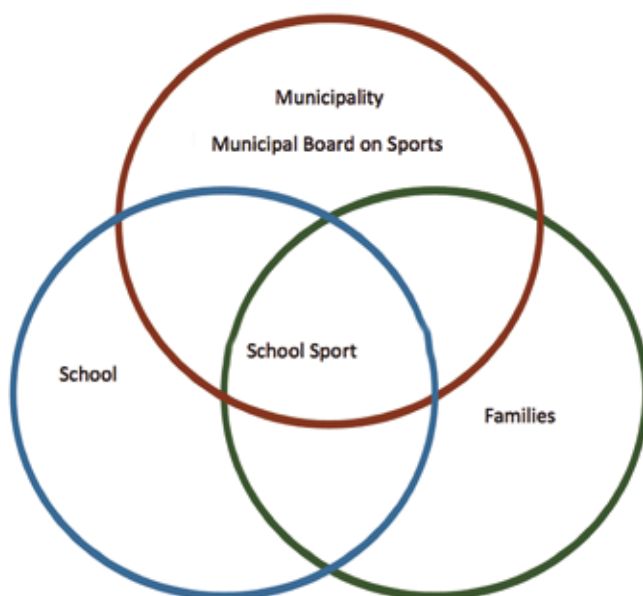


Figure 2. Agents for Cooperation in School Sport (Ajuntament de Ripollet, 2016).

The common objective of all agents is that all boys and girls from the municipality can practice sport out of school time, on a regular basis and with quality, increasing their sport knowledge and experiencing different types of sports. Experience incorporates changes in the competition systems of team sports: A protocol for greeting rivals is added; matches is composed

² 38.102 inhabitants (Source: www.ripollet.cat).

of 4 games and each one has one point in the final result, avoiding scores higher than 4 - 0; a fifth friendly game is incorporated which is played with mixed teams and where rivals become team mates; and individual actions are not taken into account in the records. In case of individual sports, league tables are eliminated; elimination game system are removed so that sporty students play the same time; and boys and girls compete together.

For this to have success, which implies around 1200 students, it is necessary the cooperation between schools, families and the municipality in inspiring aspects such as (based on Gairín, Castro, Díaz & Muñoz, 2012):

- Promoting sports. The students participate in the competition for satisfaction. Recognize and value the acts of participants, do not oblige them to practice a sport they do not want, teach them to accept the results without feeling disappointed or condemn the use of violence in all its forms.
- Do not discredit students who make a mistake or loses. Avoid fostering competition violating the sportsmanship code, encourage them and do not cause them excessive stress, do not focus on if they win or lose but on the effort and participation or teach them the difference between school sport and professional sport.
- Respect rivals, do not intimidate and make fun of rivals, stand up to provocations with indifference, do not solve any disagreement with violence, do not make gestures or do not use inappropriate language.
- Do not complain to referee, respect the refereeing decisions, encourage the students to compete according to regulations, show gratitude to the referee or do not question the referee's honesty.
- Respect technical decisions and do not criticize them, do not complain to and argue with the technical body and coaches, express gratitude to the coach or do not pressure the coach.

- Respect rights, dignity and values of all participants of the sport competition without treating them differently; and respect sport facilities making proper use of them.

It is about, cooperating with each other, assuming responsibilities for fair play, good behavior and beyond the simple respect for the rules: friendship, respect for rivals and sport spirit as factors facilitating social cohesion and coexistence, but also of ethics.

In fact, the previous experience as well as the this one are only possible through open attitudes of the school, inclusiveness with environment and a framework of relationships for networking where families are more than present. What is pursued is just to share purposes and make a reality the willingness to cooperate in a common project in order to share knowledge and operate through the interdependence between actors, interaction and sovereign autonomy (Muñoz, 2012; Muñoz, 2009).

Conclusions

The education as a right and based on the cooperation between school and families must be understood from a notion of social and learning participation throughout life. According to Esteban (2015), education must be defined within a participatory culture that will be progressively established by taking small but firm and continuous steps. Cooperation between school and families cannot be understood as a marginal alternative or a new test; it is first and foremost an educational practice itself, a basis without which is not possible to talk about educability. Schools cannot think about the purpose of education and learning success or failure without giving voice to families and trying to seek a mechanism of joint participation.

Considering the challenge of co-responsibility, education management must be based on the cooperation between school and families in favor of equal opportunities, equity, inclusiveness and, definitively, social justice. Upon achieving this progress, the school learns and considers cooperation and networking to be key and enablers of new forms of citizen participation

in collective decision-making processes on the complexity of education as a public issue. Putting in practice cooperation in daily routine demands schools and families to consider everybody's interests, without infringing upon them and successfully fulfilling their responsibilities attributed. Intervention is focused on the achievement of better conditions for everybody and in several levels and spheres.

Although traditional cooperation between school and families is performed through open formulas of participation or spontaneous associations, it is important that both of them share policies and design joint projects. To that end, it is necessary a vision of education management broader than the strict school management. The "*Polígono Sur Educational Plan*" and "*Sport and School*" shows the experiences that really allow talking about the challenges, problems and possibilities faced by the educational coordination models between school and families. Both of them use the cooperative and network coordination between school and families, but not only as a synonym of a better academic achievement, but also as management of significant phenomena, organized with educational intention, that promote the participation and coordination of educational agents to the benefit of broader educational experiences. This would be on the path stated by Egido (2015) when he highlights that the success of the relationship between school and families and impacts on the intervention practices have much to do with the presence of these features: Assume the idea that parents and teachers are equals, an environment of dialog and mutual trust; the school adopts a proactive role with respect to cooperation; develop actions to achieve participation of all families, design formulas of cooperation adapted to different educational stages; devote time and effort to motivate and train all sectors involved; and prepare a strategic planning analyzing realistic, flexible and lasting forms of cooperation.

They represent timely responses to the educational needs of each environment. Consequently, advisable criteria and trends can be derived from them, considering that they are not closed formulas. Both experiences have

not been the fruit of chance or product of the administrative contingency, but they are part of the plans prepared based on a holistic vision of education in which schools and families are essential.

Cooperation and participation give sense and meaning to networking. Cooperation between school and families can occur as cooperative work and networking teams, that among other aspects of educational organization, does not ignore the positive interdependence based on the shared goal, individual and collective responsibility that does not allow forgetting part and whole, stimulating interaction between members regarded as dialog and interpersonal motivation, internal management of the team based on effective stimulating actions and the practice of an internal assessment of the team that values the work products and processes. Opening these bridges of cooperation with families would allow talking about the quality of education, not only as an academic achievement indicator that might be only the tip of the iceberg, but also as an access to the educational roots that school sometimes forgets when thinking about educational success.

Therefore, coordination between school and families is not a current and incidental practice that can put on the backburner. It is part of an effective vision of current educational work (Vigo, Dieste & Julve, 2016) and defines an increasingly important educational line of research when assuming the idea that the school is not the only educational environment (Páez, 2015; Fernández Enguita & Terrén, 2008). But, in addition to the concepts of networking, cooperation and educational management addressed herein, it is necessary to see in this line of research new objects of study about this type of coordination between school and families in virtual environments and communities (Sotomayor, 2014), regarding knowledge management (Rodríguez-Gómez, 2015), as well as the teacher's relationship (Contreras, 2016) or the role that can be played by the Municipalities (Muñoz & Tolosana, 2010) in the construction of education from school and families and with them.

Finally, we state that the most noticeable limitations of the contribution are associated with the possibility to generalize experiences. Consequently, it should be adapted according to each situation, context and agents involved if applied to other realities. These limitations can be used as guide to design and develop others actions of networking and cooperation between school and families in order to improve education.

References

- Ajuntament de Ripollet. (2016). *Esport i Escola: Un nou model d'esport escolar*. Ripollet: Patronat Municipal d'Esports.
- Apple, M., & Beane, J. A. (Coords.). (2005). *Escuelas democráticas*. Madrid: Morata.
- Bassedas, E. (2007). La colaboración entre profesionales y el trabajo en red. En J. Bonals & M. Sánchez (Coords.), *Manual de asesoramiento psicopedagógico* (pp. 43-66). Barcelona: Graó.
- Blázquez, A. (2013). La información y comunicación: claves para la gestión del conocimiento empresarial. *Dimens Empres*, 1(11), 23-32.
- Bolívar, A. (2005). *La ciudadanía a través de la educación. Seminario 2005 año europeo de la ciudadanía a través de la educación*. Madrid: Ministerio de Educación y Ciencia.
- Comisionado para el Polígono Sur. (2010). *Plan Educativo de Zona para el Polígono Sur 2010*. Sevilla: Delegación del Gobierno en Andalucía, Junta de Andalucía y Ayuntamiento de Sevilla.
- Contreras, T. (2016). Liderazgo pedagógico, liderazgo docente y su papel en la mejora de la escuela: una aproximación teórica. *Propósitos y Representaciones*, 4(2), 231-284. doi: 10.20511/pyr2016.v4n2.123
- Egido, I. (2015). Las relaciones entre familia y escuela. Una vision general. *Participación Educativa*, 4(7), 11-18.
- Epstein, J. L. (1990). School and family connections: Theory, research and implications for integrating sociologies of education and family. *Marriage & Family Review*, 1-2(15), 99-126. doi: 10.1300/J002v15n01_06

- Esteban, A. (2015). *Relación familia–escuela: estudio descriptivo derivado de una experiencia de investigación-acción en el aula* (Tesis Doctoral). Valladolid: Universidad de Valladolid.
- Fernández Enguita, M. (2012). ¿Qué hay de nuevo bajo el sol? De las organizaciones y los grupos a las redes. *Cuadernos de pedagogía*, 385, 12-19.
- Fernández Enguita, M., & Terrén, E. (Coords.). (2008). *Repensando la organización escolar. Crisis de legitimidad y nuevos desarrollos*. Madrid: AKAL.
- Fernández, J. (1997). La participación en la comunidad educativa. *Escuela Española*, 3315(405), 17-19.
- Gairín, J. (2004). Redes institucionales y de aprendizaje en la educación no formal. En *Libro de Actas de las IX Jornadas Andaluzas de Organización y Dirección de Instituciones Educativas* (pp. 23-46). Granada: Grupo Editorial Universitario.
- Gairín, J. (2004a). Familia y escuela, un binomio inseparable. En *XX Congreso Interamericano de Educación Católica: Al reencuentro con la familia* (pp. 89-147). Santiago de Chile: CIEC.
- Gairín, J. (1998). *L'escola. 1r Congreso de la Ciudad*. Sant Cugat del Vallès: Fundació Sant Cugat del Vallès.
- Gairín, J., Castro, D., Díaz, A., & Muñoz, J. L. (2012). *Codi de conducta per a competicions esportives escolars*. Bellaterra: EDO-UAB y Consejo Superior de Deportes.
- Gairín, J., & San Fabián, J. L. (2005). La participación social en educación. En B. Jiménez (Coord.), *Formación profesional* (pp. 157-188). Barcelona: Praxis.
- García, J., & García, Á. (2001). *Teoría de la Educación II. Procesos primarios de formación del pensamiento y la acción*. Salamanca: Ediciones Universidad de Salamanca.
- Hargreaves, A., (2003). *Enseñar en la sociedad del conocimiento*. Barcelona: Octaedro.
- Johnson, D., Johnson, R., & Holubec, E. (1999). *El aprendizaje cooperativo en el aula*. Argentina: Paidós.

- Joyce, B., & Weil, M. (2002). *Modelos de enseñanza*. Barcelona: Gedisa.
- Koper, R. (Ed.). (2009). *Learning network services for professional development*. Berlín: Heidelberg Springer.
- Lozano, J., Castillo, I. S., Cerezo, M^a. C., Angosto, R. & Alcaraz, S. (2014). La participación de las familias en contextos educativos multiculturales: hacia una escuela intercultural e inclusiva. En R. Nortes & J. I. Alonso (Eds.), *Investigación educativa en educación primaria* (pp. 218-229). Murcia: Edit.um.
- Llevot, N. & Bernad, O. (2015). La participación de las familias en la escuela: factores clave. *Revista de la Asociación de Sociología de la Educación*, 8(1), 57-70.
- Martín, Q. (2000). *Bancos de talento. Participación de la comunidad en los centros docentes*. Madrid: Sanz y Torres.
- Martín, M., & Gairín, J. (Coords.). (2006). *La participación en educación: los consejos escolares, una vía de participación*. Santiago de Chile: Fundación Creando Futuro.
- Martínez, J. B. (Coord.). (1998). *Evaluar la participación en los centros educativos*. Madrid: Escuela Española.
- Mayordomo, A. (Coord.). (1999). *Estudios sobre participación social en la enseñanza*. Castelló: Diputació de Castelló.
- McDonald, B. (1995). La evaluación como servicio público: perspectivas de futuro. En M^a. J. Sáez (Ed.), *Conceptualizando la evaluación en España* (pp. 15-23). Alcalá de Henares: Servicio de Publicaciones de la Universidad de Alcalá.
- MECD. (2015). *Las relaciones entre familia y escuela. Experiencias y buenas prácticas*. Madrid: Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte.
- Mir, C. (Coord.). (1998). *Cooperar en la escuela. La responsabilidad de educar para la democracia*. Barcelona: Graó.
- Morin, E. (2001). *Tenir el cap clar*. Barcelona: La campana.
- Muñoz, J. L. (2014). La colaboración de la ciudadanía en la mejora de los centros educativos. *International Journal of Educational Research and Innovation*, 2(1), 98-106.

- Muñoz, J. L. (2012). *Ayuntamientos y desarrollo educativo*. Madrid: Editorial Popular.
- Muñoz, J. L. (2009). *La participación de los municipios en la educación*. Madrid: Editorial Popular.
- Muñoz, J. L. & Tolosana, C. (2010). El liderazgo de los municipios en la educación. En J. Gairín & D. Castro (Eds.), *Desarrollo educativo al servicio del desarrollo social* (pp. 15-30). Santiago de Chile: FIDECAP – AECID.
- Muñoz, J. L., Rodríguez, D., & Barrera, A. (2013). Herramientas para la mejora de las organizaciones educativas y su relación con el entorno. *Perspectiva Educacional*, 25(1), 97-123.
- Nagles, N. (2007). La gestión del conocimiento como fuente de innovación. *Revista EAN*, 61, 77-88.
- Ordóñez, R. (2015). La familia y la escuela ante los nuevos estilos de vida familiar. *Kikiriki*, 38, 14-15.
- Páez, R. M. (2015). Familia y escuela: una alianza necesaria en la gestión escolar. *Revista Iberoamericana de Educación*, 67, 159-180.
- Pujolàs, P. (2004). *Aprender juntos alumnos diferentes. Los equipos de aprendizaje cooperativo en el aula*. Barcelona: EUMO-Octaedro.
- Revilla, E. & Pérez, P. (1988). De la organización que aprende hacia la gestión del conocimiento. En *VIII Congreso Nacional de ACEDE*. Las Palmas de Gran Canaria.
- Rodríguez-Gómez, D. (2015). *Gestión del conocimiento y mejora de las organizaciones educativas*. Madrid: La Muralla.
- Rudduck, J. & Flutter, J. (2007). *Cómo mejorar tu centro escolar dando la voz al alumnado*. Madrid: Morata.
- Santos Guerra, M. Á. (2009). *Escuelas para la democracia. Cultura, organización y dirección de instituciones educativas*. Barcelona: Wolters Kluwer.
- Senge, P. (1990). *The fifth discipline, the art and practice of the learning organisation*. New York: Doubleday.

- Slavin, R. (1999). *Aprendizaje cooperativo. Teoría, investigación y práctica*. Argentina: Aique.
- Soler, A. (2006). La escuela, núcleo de la red educativa territorial. *Aula de Innovación Educativa*, 152, 29-31.
- Sotomayor, G. (2014). Comunidades virtuales de aprendizaje colaborativo para la educación superior. *Propósitos y Representaciones*, 2(2), 231-303. doi: 10.20511/pyr2014.v2n2.64
- Suárez, C. (2011). Asincronía, textualidad y cooperación en la formación virtual. *Revista Española de Pedagogía*, 249(69), 339-355.
- Suárez, C. (2010). *El aprendizaje cooperativo como condición social de aprendizaje*. Barcelona: UOC.
- Suárez, C. (2007). El potencial educativo de la interacción cooperativa. *Investigación Educativa*, 11(20), 61-78.
- Suárez, C., & Gros, B. (2013). *Aprender en red: de la interacción a la colaboración*. Barcelona: UOC.
- Ubieto, J. R. (2009). *El trabajo en red: usos posibles en educación, salud mental y servicios sociales*. Barcelona: Gedisa.
- Vicent, C. (2014). Padres y maestros hacia el diálogo. Una perspectiva inglesa. *Profesorado. Revista de Currículum y Formación del Profesorado*, 2(18), 35-50.
- Vigo, B., Dieste, B., & Julve, C. (2016). Voces sobre participación de las familias en la escuela y éxito escolar. *Revista de la Asociación de Sociología de la Educación*, 3(9), 320-333.
- Vigo, B., & Julve, C. (2016). La participación de las familias en la escuela. *Revista Electrónica Interuniversitaria de Formación del Profesorado*, 53(19,1).
- Vigotsky, L. (2000). *El desarrollo de los procesos psicológicos superiores*. Barcelona: Crítica.