

**Measures to increase teachers' competence have a positive effect on the climate in the class room and students' results**

Measures to increase teachers' competence have a positive effect on the situation in the classroom and students' grades. This is shown in a new report from IFAU.

The Swedish National Agency for Education did, in 2010-2014, due to a government request, implement measures that increased the competence in ten schools that had low knowledge results and were located in urban development areas. This support, which primarily consisted of measures that increased the teachers' competence, has had positive effects. Among other things, the support has led to students considering that the teachers' instruction has improved and that the atmosphere in the classroom is better.

– We have compared schools that did and did not receive the extra support and find that at those schools where measures have been taken to increase the teachers' competence, the students are more positive and say that there is more often peace and quiet, a nice positive atmosphere and it is easy to participate in discussions, according to Martin Lundin who is one of the authors of the report.

Due to the project, the students have obtained higher grades in English and Swedish as a second language in grade 9. The corresponding increase in knowledge was also found for the yearly national test in English which is offered nation-wide. For those students who were born in Sweden or immigrated more than four years ago, there are also positive effects on the total grade, the merit rating

– The results in English and Swedish as a second language are considerable. In English, this amounts to an improvement by about 20 per cent and in Swedish, by about 13 per cent, according to Caroline Hall.

Group supervision and courses for further education

All teachers at the target schools have participated in group supervision and a course on work methods for linguistic development. Group supervision has constituted the main focus of the project. Certain teachers have also received individual coaching and have participated in other measures for further education. The objective of certain parts of the project has also been to develop assistance with homework and holiday schools, and to reinforce the study support in the students' mother tongue.

– We do not know the exact reason for the students' good study results, says Kristina Sibbmark. A battery of measures was implemented at the same time. We cannot say with any certainty if it is the further education or the discussions during the supervision that have made this group of teachers stronger.

However, the evaluation shows that the teachers are positive to the course on work methods for linguistic development. The teachers consider that it has provided concrete tips and pedagogical tools. In contrast, there is a large variation in the views on group supervision. Certain teachers are positive while others are clearly negative. Many of those who are critical to group supervision think that the conversations did not contribute to any considerable extent, while the measure took time from other things. There is also criticism against the specific supervisory model that was used.

Evaluations of measures at schools with low knowledge results

The project evaluates The Swedish National Agency for Education project "Handledning för lärande" (Supervision with the Objective of Learning) that was carried out in 2012–2014 at the cost of slightly less than SEK 50 million. The ten schools that were included in the project are located in so-called "urban development areas" in Stockholm, Gothenburg, Malmö, Södertälje, Borås, Kristianstad and Trollhättan. The authors of the report have interviewed teachers and headmasters, they have carried out surveys with students and studied student results using register-based statistics. Survey- and register data are analysed against a control group of similar schools that did not participate in the project.

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