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Press Release

Joint KMK and HRK press release

Inclusion in teacher education: Recommendation to teacher education on embracing diversity

The Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder in the Federal Republic of Germany (KMK) and the German Rectors' Conference (HRK) have concluded a joint recommendation for "educating teachers to embrace diversity". Teacher education should be developed so that future teachers are better prepared for the challenges arising from diversity in the classroom.

"The demands on teachers today have changed. We have to deal carefully with the differences that exist between children and young people. So that teachers can fully exploit the potential for joint learning in lessons, schools need teachers who are trained and prepared to deal with diversity," said KMK president and education minister for Saxony Brunhild Kurth.

Inclusion, i.e. teaching children and young people with different learning needs in mainstream schools, is an essential component of all teacher education. The KMK-HRK recommendation is that educational sciences, subject-specific didactics and academic disciplines must be aligned to this goal for all types of teaching.

"We know that dealing with diversity in the classroom places demands on teachers. Higher education institutions believe it is their responsibility to prepare teachers for this. This is their contribution to the success of inclusion in society as a whole," explains HRK president Prof. Dr Horst Hippler.

KMK and HRK recommend an overall design for inclusion in teacher education. Comprehensive concepts for modules and classes in educational sciences, subject-specific didactics and academic disciplines should complement the basic qualification modules so that inclusion-specific subjects form part of the curricula. Curricular coordination and networking between course components in educational sciences, subject-specific didactics and academic disciplines and practical studies are particularly important. They enable students to gain specialist knowledge in educational sciences and academic disciplines, transfer this knowledge to subject-specific didactics and apply it in practice.

The recommendation also proposes developing formats for competence-led and cooperative assessment in all teacher education institutions during and at the end of teacher education.

Implementing this competence orientation within the institutions requires adequate time and resources for designing the teaching and examinations, and also ongoing training for and an exchange of information between lecturers. Teachers on the job and school administrations should be provided with more ongoing training on the subject of inclusion.

HRK and KMK are aware that the implementation of these recommendations will entail fundamental changes to teacher education. They recommend designing the necessary changes in a dialogue between schools, teacher training institutions, higher education institutions and ministries in order to fully exploit the available possibilities, as Kurth and Hippler both underlined.

Text of the recommendation (in German)