BETTER POLICIES FOR BETTER LIVES

CREATING INNOVATIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS TO IMPROVE LEARNING

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Education at OECD and CERI

- OECD: inter-governmental, multi-sectoral organisation. Focused on education since the early 1960s (early days - planning, equity, economics of education, science)

- CERI founded in 1968, aims to inform long-term policy development

  – generating forward-looking research analyses and syntheses;

  – identifying and stimulating educational innovation;

  – promoting international exchange of knowledge and experience

- Schooling for Tomorrow (finished 2008), Innovative Learning Environments (on-going)

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WHY LEARNING? WHY INNOVATION? WHY LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS?

Why learning?

- **Knowledge central** to our societies - therefore, learning also central. But what kind of learning?

- Strong focus on measuring learning outcomes but **how to change outcomes?** Needs focus on learning environments

- The difficulties of **changing education** invites a fresh focus on learning itself

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Why innovation?

- Systems and existing models are not performing well enough - on PISA, nearly 20% of 15-year-olds failed to reach level 2 in reading in 2009 across OECD

- Even more, if we aim to promote deep learning, 21st century competences, foundations for lifelong learning, vibrant culture

- The evidence-based principles of learning we have identified themselves call for a significant innovation drive

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Why learning environments?

- Learning is cumulative and contextualised – from the learner's perspective, need to consider the **whole collective learning experience**

- **Technology** invites rethinking of learning and teaching possibilities – in general the potential still not being fully realised

- **Not necessarily school**, but a wide range of settings and forms of learning

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SYSTEM

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SCHOOL

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CLASS

|

TEACHER

|

LEARNER
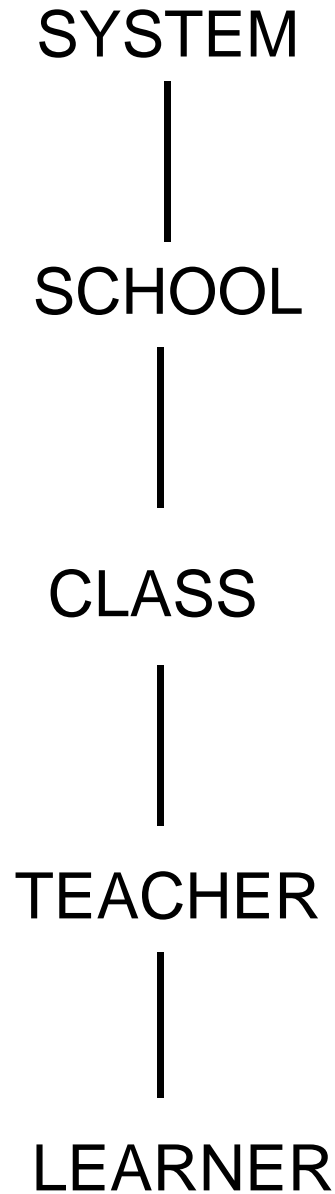
Why look beyond this framework when our focus is on learning?

- Expressed in terms of institutional structures not configurations of learning – **not sufficiently learning-focused**

  Assumes existing institutions, discouraging consideration of innovations, hybrid or non-formal learning – **not innovation-focused**

  <u>Single</u> schools, <u>single</u> classes, <u>single</u> teachers suggesting individualistic solutions – **not holistic enough**

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ILE AND THE 'PRINCIPLES' OF LEARNING

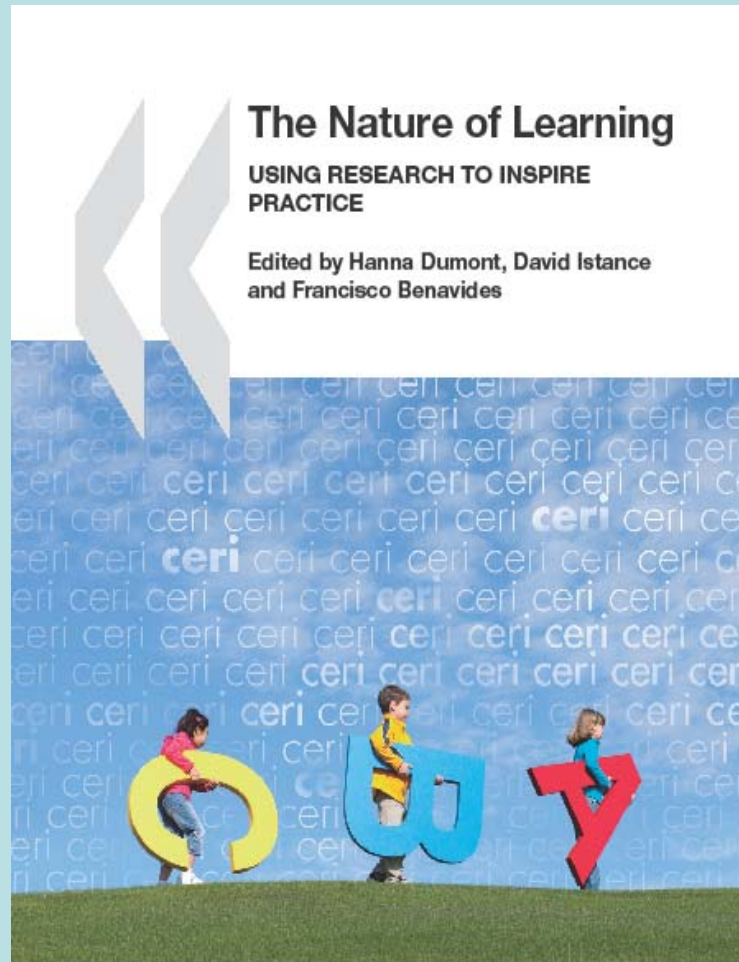# OECD/CERI's "Innovative Learning Environments" (ILE)

Aims to inform practice, leadership and reform through analysis & exchange on configurations of learning for young people, by:

1. Understanding the lessons of **"Learning Research"**
2. Compiling & analysing inspiring **"Innovative Cases"**
3. Analysing and exchanging strategies for growing and sustaining innovative learning - **"Implementation and Change"**

To date, around 125 cases, 40 in-depth case studies, 25 countries, states & organisations (and growing).

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"*The Nature of Learning: Using Research to Inspire Practice*" OECD Publications, Sept. 2010, 338pp.

"*The Nature of Learning: Using Research to Inspire Practice*" - Contents

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Powerful learning environments should:

- Make learning central, encourage engagement, and be where learners come to understand themselves as learners

- Ensure that learning is social and often collaborative

- Be highly attuned to learners' motivations and the importance of emotions

- Be acutely sensitive to individual differences including in prior knowledge

- Be demanding for each learner but without excessive overload

- Use assessments consistent with its aims, with strong emphasis on formative feedback

- Promote horizontal connectedness across activities and subjects, in-and out-of-school

Do all of these, not one or two – demanding agenda

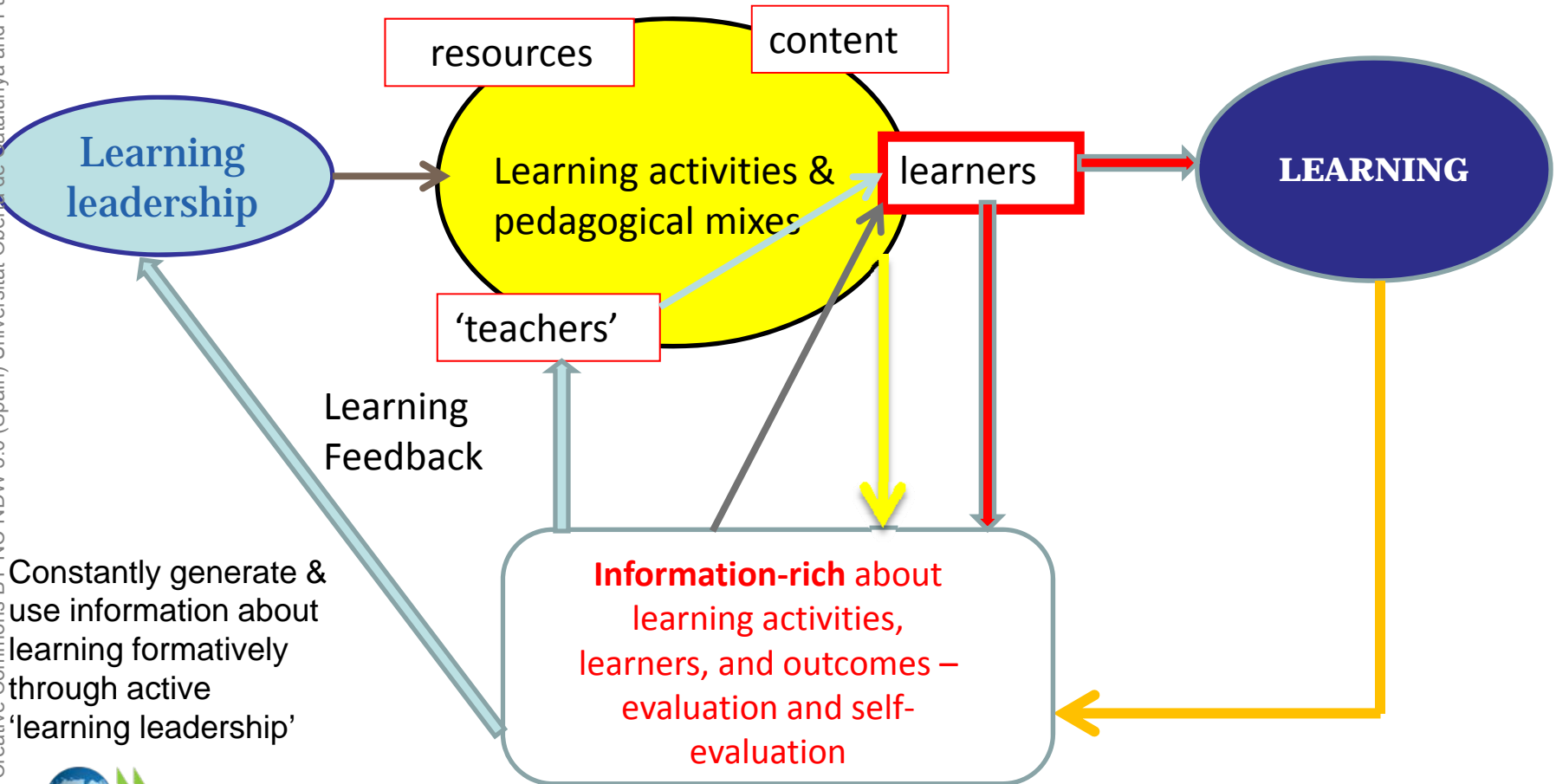OECD

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Re-expressed in educational terms

Learning environments should be:

- **Learner-centred**: highly focused on learning but not as an alternative to the key role for teachers

- **Structured and well-designed:** needs careful design and high professionalism alongside inquiry & autonomous learning

- **Profoundly personalised**: acutely sensitive to individual and group differences and offering tailored feedback

- **Inclusive:** such sensitivity to individual and group differences means they are fundamentally inclusive

- **Social:** learning is effective in group settings, when learners collaborate, and when there is a connection to community.
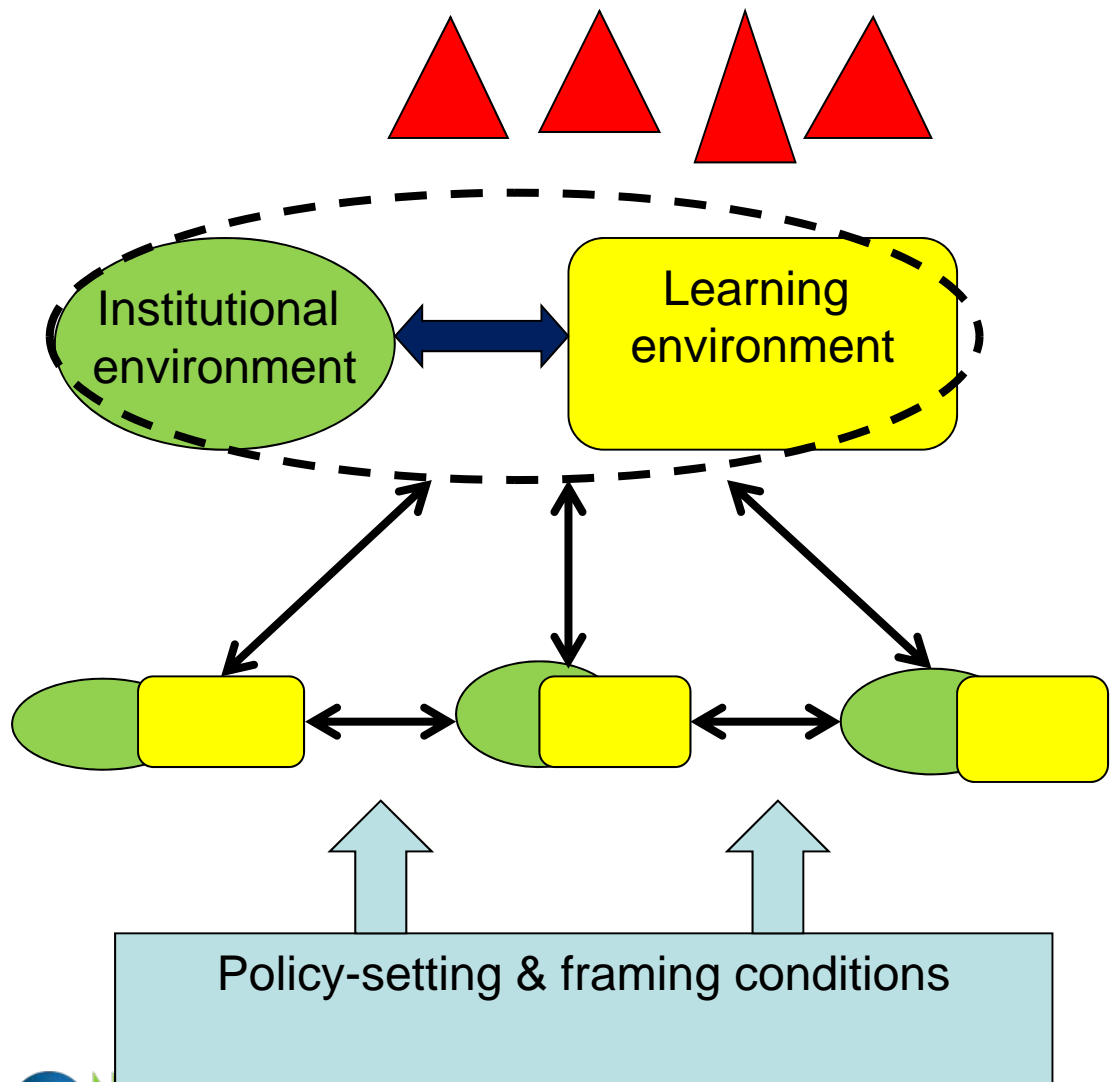
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Dynamic 'Formative' Learning Environments

Powerful LEs apply the 7 principles

Innovate by rethinking core components and processes

resources

content

Learning leadership

Learning activities & pedagogical mixes

learners

LEARNING

'teachers'

Learning Feedback

Constantly generate & use information about learning formatively through active 'learning leadership'

Information-rich about learning activities, learners, and outcomes – evaluation and self-evaluation

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Learning environments embedded in a wider systemic framework

'Atomic' level – individual classes & learning episodes

Micro level

Environments – learning & institutional

Meso level Networks of environments & of practice

Macro level -System & ed. authorities

Institutional environment

Learning environment

Policy-setting & framing conditions

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To sum up….

- Rethink learning and be ready to innovate
- Draw on research and practice to create & sustain powerful learning environments (the 'principles') – put learning first
- Ensure that the technical core (the learning environment) is not at odds with the organisational environment
- Go to scale by developing the 'meso' level: learning-focused networks and communities of practice
- System-level leadership to create favourable conditions and capacities for micro and meso change

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Thank you!

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