



The tenth consecutive round of the KED Teacher Exchange Program is about to begin.

# KED

Newsletter Issue 5\_23



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# A Good Sign

It is the time of year when teachers apply to the KED Teacher Exchange Program (TEP). Teachers from various countries in the KED Network submit applications to work together with a colleague from a KED school abroad. Together as a team, participants explore research questions affecting their daily practice of the KED Program. They spend a week at each other's schools, teaching each other's students and sorting out question marks in a school laboratory with authentic KED features.

KED TEP has been offered to team members for ten consecutive years. Every year, there are some teachers who already completed the program who return with a new application. And the fact that teachers return to KED TEP is good validation of the program's quality and merits, according to any consumer marketing expert you ask.

Perhaps it is time for you to try it too? So many good KED teachers can't be wrong. Right? And if you want further

proof, you can read Rachita's own story about her exchange project with Katja on the next page. Then you can dive into the collection of postcards received from Saudi Arabia, India and the Netherlands to complete the research about your dream destination in the KED Network. ■

**Cecilia Aronsson**  
Network Director  
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A young woman with long dark hair, wearing a black turtleneck and a black cardigan, stands in front of a large, ornate classical building with a Swedish flag flying. She is smiling and holding a light blue bag and a brochure. The building has many windows and a central entrance with a statue on top. There are green trees and a lawn in front of the building.

# India meets Sweden

I landed at Stockholm Arlanda airport and looked forward to my onward journey to Katja, my teacher exchange partner at Kunskaps gymnasiet Malmö. From the warm state of India, New Delhi, Stockholm was a welcome change with temperatures ranging between 8 to 16 degrees C°. I got the opportunity to visit Gamla Stan which is the old city of Stockholm, the Royal Palace and witnessed the Royal Parade. I also took the archipelago vessel tour. Sweden, known for its breathtaking natural landscapes, burgeoning foodie culture and picturesque Medieval towns was a sight to behold.



**From Stockholm**, I took the train to Malmö. The journey was a 5-hour ride which revealed the beauty of Sweden. Katja met me at the train station, and we managed to stuff my heavy luggage into her car. Over the period of five days, I received heartwarming hospitality from Katja, who became my friend in the true sense.

In Sweden, people generally use public transport or bike/walk to their respective workplace, and we chose the latter, as Kunskapsgymnasiet Malmö is just 15 minutes' walk from Katja's home. The school was welcoming and well organized. I found the students independent and responsible for their own learning. They also, occasionally, organize breakfast for the teachers. The students were curious about me and asked questions about my country and the Taj Mahal, one of the wonders of the world.

Kunskapsgymnasiet Malmö has students of different nationalities, and they were curious about my teacher



exchange. It was a pleasure to be part of many sessions, fun to interact with students in upper secondary school and even more fun to teach a few classes myself. There were block sessions for

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as long as 120 minutes, which made me wonder about the students' motivation. However, the lessons were structured in a way that did not make the learning boring and monotonous, but interactive and interesting.

In the evenings, we usually had home cooked supper at the jetty next to Katja's home, which was unique, beside the calm and serene sea. Another day, we visited the island of Ven as part of the students' excursion. I admired how all students were eager to explore this lovely island with only 371 inhabitants.



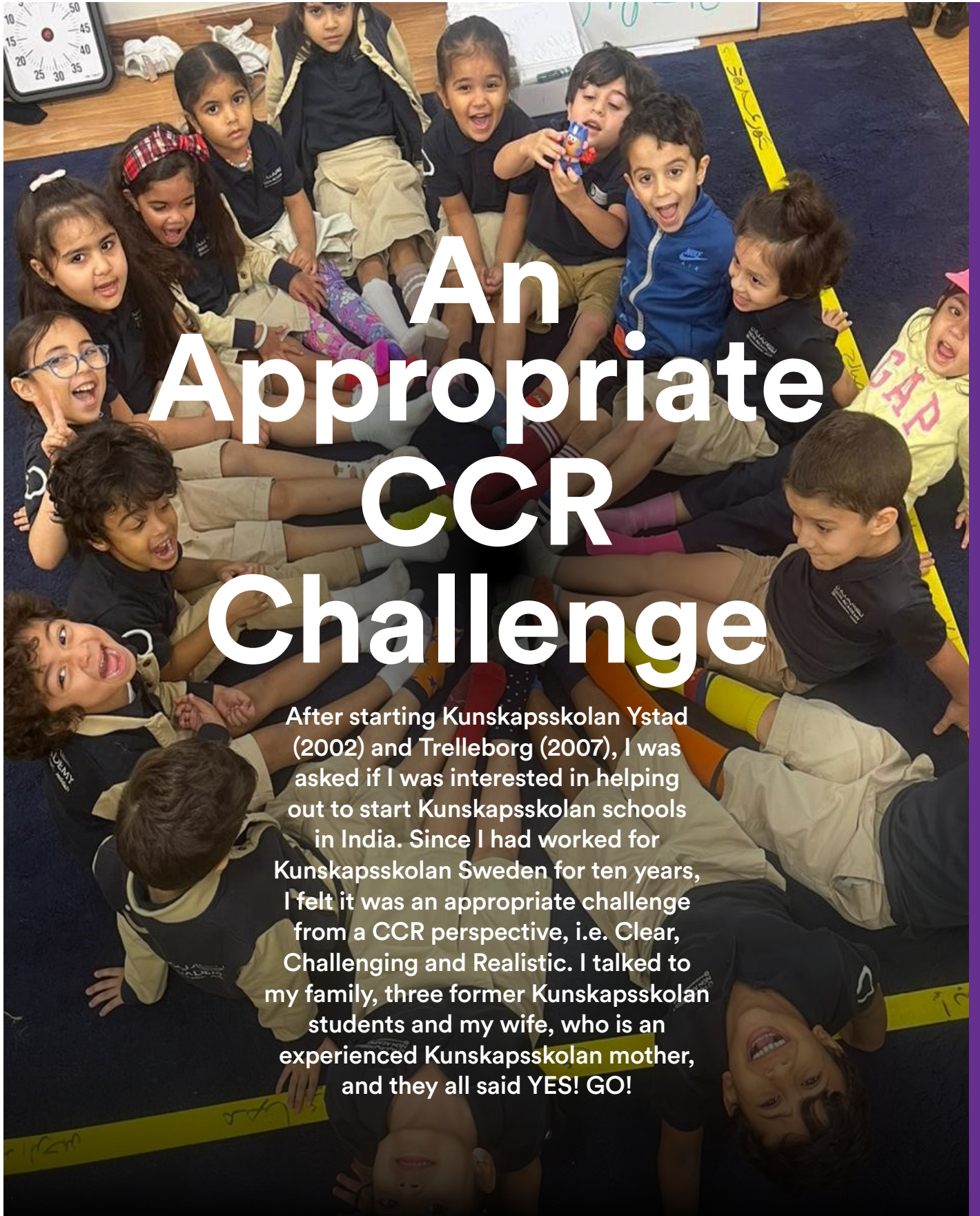
It was a pleasure to attend sessions at Kunskapsskolan Lund, which has got primary and middle grades. Students here utilized their workshop time effectively, taking ownership of their own learning goals. What I really liked here was that they had different life skills integrated in their curriculum, like woodworking and fashion studies to name a few.

Whosoever I met in Sweden was full of warmth and love. Attending FIKA became a ritual with Katja and her friends, and I felt close to them. I even met her loving parents who prepared a hearty meal for me.

I have many wonderful and pleasant memories from my Scandinavian visit. Like Katja (read her story in KED Newsletter Issue 4, 2023) I will also not forget a taxi driver. This time in Stockholm, charging me an exorbitantly high price for a 15-minute drive. I think we ought to experience one such memory. And I still hope to visit Sweden again. ■

**Rachita Sehgal**

Team Lead Grades 9-12 and Business Studies facilitator, Kunskapsskolan Gurgaon



# An Appropriate CCR Challenge

After starting Kunskapsskolan Ystad (2002) and Trelleborg (2007), I was asked if I was interested in helping out to start Kunskapsskolan schools in India. Since I had worked for Kunskapsskolan Sweden for ten years, I felt it was an appropriate challenge from a CCR perspective, i.e. Clear, Challenging and Realistic. I talked to my family, three former Kunskapsskolan students and my wife, who is an experienced Kunskapsskolan mother, and they all said YES! GO!



Mats and Sanna Rosén have just completed their KED mission in Saudi Arabia and returned to Sweden.

So on Independence day, August 15, 2012, I arrived in Gurgaon, India and my international journey with KED started.

To be able to live and work in another country and learn to understand students, parents and colleagues has been a life changing experience for me and my wife. Some things that we took for granted in

Sweden before, are much more appreciated today, and things that seemed peculiar are now easier to understand. Most important are all the wonderful people we met, learned to know and became really good friends with. Being part of starting and creating a new school in a new country is the most exciting, but also the most challenging thing I have done.

During my time in Gurgaon, I met Mrs Nirmeen Alireza for the first time. She came to visit and witness how the KED Program works in an international environment. She had a vision about creating a school in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, where Arabic students could get a high quality international education, without losing their foundation in their language and culture. Through the KED Program, the students would develop life skills, learn to take responsibility and ownership, set goals, plan, use strategies and reflect. It was and is a fascinating vision.

After visiting a number of times and having my move delayed a few times, I finally came to Nün Academy in Jeddah in September 2021 to work at Nirmeen Alireza's school operated in partnership with Kunskapsskolan. Covid still restricted us and the students were having online classes. I was amazed by the level of quality and interaction created by the teachers during their sessions, but not having the students in school is not the



Base group time at Nün Academy Kunskapsskolan, Jeddah.

same. When the students finally came back to school in February 2022, after almost two years of very limited interaction with friends, we faced another challenge. The level of energy stored up in their bodies and minds was huge. It took some weeks until the school routines were back to normal again.

The school was five years old and had developed a lot since the start. Usually, we feel that implementing the KED Program in a new school is a big enough challenge. And Nün Academy has many more challenges. It is an Arabic school following the Saudi Arabian curriculum for three subjects, but also an international school aiming for the IGCSE exam in Year 11 and the IB exam at the end of Year 13. Finding balance and time for everything is hard.

Most of the staff is Arabic-speaking and most of the teachers in this group do not speak English. There is also a big group of English-speaking expat teachers, most not understanding Arabic. Most expat teachers have a two-year contract, so there is a quite big turnover of teachers. The school is growing with about 100-200 students every year, so there is a high number of new teachers who need to learn the KED Program every year.

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The school is separated in two different parts: The Main School, where male teachers and boys older than ten should not be during school hours, and The Boys School for older boys and male teachers.

To enhance the quality of the school we trained every teacher in Positive Discipline and applied for international school certifications.

To develop the KED Program, we focused on CCR goals for the students. We introduced a goal-setting/development discussion at the beginning of every academic year. We trained teachers to have a more coaching mindset and develop the personal coaching sessions using the KED tools, and refer to the CCR goals as often as possible during lessons, feedback, communication with students and parents, and of course during the coaching sessions.

Coming back to Sweden, I miss a lot of people; my colleagues, the team of teachers and of course the students.

I also miss scuba diving in the wonderful Red Sea, which was our main activity during the weekends.

Three things I will not miss are the heat, the traffic and the Ministry of Education closing all schools when there was a risk of rain showers.

I want to thank everyone involved in giving me a life changing experience. These are eleven years of my life I will always remember.

The first two weeks of October, the new Head of Boys School, Simon Wystawnoha, and Jennifer Wystawnoha, the Head of Teaching and Learning at Nün Academy Kunskapsskolan, Jeddah will visit Sweden. If there is anyone who is interested in Nün Academy for work, exchange or connection, you might have a chance to meet them. ■

**Mats Rosén**

Former Head of Boys School,  
Nün Academy Kunskapsskolan, Jeddah



# Elevating Skills and Careers in India

**Kedman SkillEd India Foundation** has set up a multi-skills center at Naurangpur in Gurugram, not far from Kunsapsskolan Gurgaon. Kedman, owned partially by Kunsapsskolan Education, is now using this space to deliver training programs to people in need.

This multi-skills center has been established in the facility of Honda Samajik

The aim is to make them not only certified but also employable and to enhance and hone entrepreneurship skills.

Vikas Kendra. The training programs cover the sectors healthcare, apparel, beauty and wellness, logistics, automotive, and retail. Unskilled and uncertified individuals from the Naurangpur region are being up-skilled and equipped in these sectors in a 60-days period. The aim is to make them not only certified but also employable and to enhance and hone entrepreneurship skills.



**Kedman SkillEd's trainees have their own Learning Portal.**

Honda Samajik Vikas Kendra and Kedman SkillEd India Foundation aim to train and generate employment opportunities for 600 trainees within one year.

The educational content is delivered through a Learning Portal, just like in ordinary KED schools. The content is thoughtfully designed for easy comprehension and is available in both Hindi and English languages.



**Biometric scanning is used to promote zero absence.**

The first step in this project is to identify the people who could benefit from the training. A team of mobilizers take up this task and reach out to masses in the vicinity, informing about the free training in the Honda premises. Local connections, village heads and influencers support the same. A cohort of 20-30 enthusiastic trainees per batch, driven by a strong passion for career growth, is identified.

Before leaving the training center, candidates are informed about job opportunities and possibilities to finance the start of a new business through a local bank.

The registered trainees are introduced to the Learning Portal, and undergo orientation for diverse job roles, facilitating their training and certification in their chosen fields of interest. Potential future opportunities and career paths are discussed within their certified job roles.

The Portal is the platform for instructing the trainees. Trainers are equipped with the skills to not only deliver the core curriculum but also to maintain trainees' motivation throughout the training. The program encompasses a blend of classroom-based learning and hands-on practical training, ensuring a holistic understanding of their respective job roles.

To track the regularity of both trainees and trainers, a biometric attendance system is used. The goal is zero absence, while fostering a culture of responsibility.

In addition to regular classes, trainees actively participate in extracurricular activities designed to bolster their confidence for future job-related challenges. These activities encompass various aspects of skill development, including team building and navigating complex situations, equipping them with valuable insights to carry forward in their careers. And be prepared for the journey ahead.

Followed by successful completion of the training, trainees take a week or ten days' time to recapitulate and reinforce their learning. This is followed by final theoretical and practical assessments. Meeting satisfactory performance is a prerequisite for certification.

Before leaving the training center, candidates are informed about job opportunities and possibilities to finance the start of a new business through a local bank.

Calle Emilsson, Chairman of the Board Kunskapsskolan India, and Anders Bauer, Executive Vice President Kunskapsskolan Education, recently visited the multi-skills center. Kunskapsskolan's business unit Kedman continues supporting this mission, paving the way for elevated capabilities and empowering career trajectories beyond the KED schools themselves.

**Stuti Tiwari**

Deputy General Manager, Training & Operations, SkillEd India



# Early Determination is Impossible



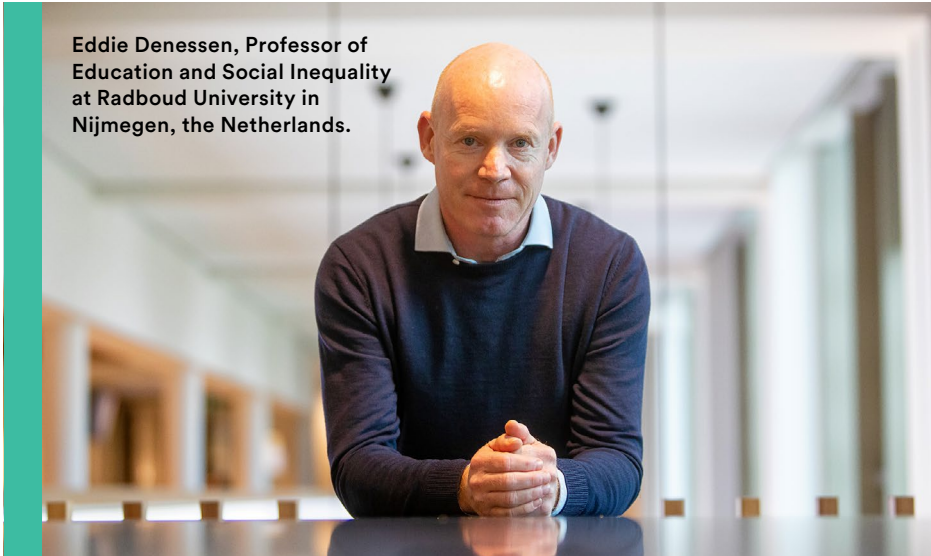
**Equality of opportunity** is a hot topic around the world. That goes for the Netherlands too. And it is not surprising, because in the Netherlands, it is decided at the age of 12 which level of further education a child should attend.

Critics of this policy cynically point out that in the Netherlands you are told

when you are 12 where you will work when you are 30. And research seems to prove them right: early determination creates inequality of opportunity. So, you might say: this practice is going to be scrapped right away. But it is not that simple, although a series of developments are now underway in the Netherlands to bring about change.

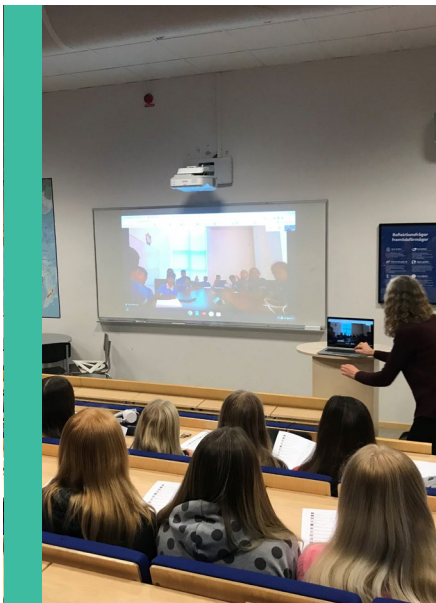
Kunskapskolan Nederland - unsurprisingly - is a proponent of later determination, and invited Eddie Denessen, Professor of Education and Social Inequality at Radboud University in Nijmegen, and a leading figure in the Dutch debate on determination and equality of opportunity, to speak about this.

**Eddie Denessen, Professor of Education and Social Inequality at Radboud University in Nijmegen, the Netherlands.**



secondary education. We look at the student's work, we talk to the student, we test the student and based on this the teacher concerned determines which education is best for that student. But there are other factors that can be major influences. Consider a teacher who asks a question in class: often he or she then also determines who gets to answer that question."

"Then it is about overestimating or underestimating students. At the risk of referring students to education that does not match what they want and can do. For example, it often happens that children with less educated parents, or



"I come from a working-class family and already then saw the differences between the opportunities children got in education. In my first year at the university, I took an education course that included sociology of education. And through that I saw how education reduces differences between groups in society, but also increases them."



**Eddie Denessen's interest in the topic stems from the family in which he grew up:**

"I come from a working-class family and already then saw the differences between the opportunities children got in education. In my first year at the university, I took an education course that included sociology of education. And through that I saw how education reduces differences between groups in

society, but also increases them. And how education can contribute to more and less opportunities for groups. That eventually made me turn this subject into my work," Denessen explains.

**So, how exactly does determination work in the Netherlands?**

"We assess students in the Netherlands on the basis of a series of factors, linked to the transition from primary to

children with an immigrant background, are underestimated because they have not yet been able to show in primary education what they are capable of. And so, early selection translates into social inequality and inequality of opportunity," says Eddie Denessen.

**How often does it go wrong in practice?**

"Let me start by saying that teachers in Dutch primary education put a lot of

work into their determination. But in the end you are still talking about a predominantly subjective process, even if the parents are involved. Practice shows that in three-quarters of the cases, the determination was right. But in 25 percent of the cases, it was not. And I find that margin of error quite large. Moreover, when I ask teachers whether a student's development is linear, everyone says it is not. But in early determination we pretend that it is. So you can tell yourself that - no matter how good teachers are at assessing potential - reliable determination at the age of 12 is an impossible task."

"Moreover, if you put international research alongside this, you have to conclude that the later the determination takes place, the less decisive the social background of students is in estimating their potential," Denessen continues.

In that context, there was an incident where a Dutch school made a mistake in the registration of the determination advice and entered a higher score than the actual assessment for half of the students after their primary education.

"So, I am working in lots of different ways to analyze that whole complex problem of unequal opportunities in different places. And I see more and more attention to this issue in Dutch politics."



When they discovered that mistake after a year, it turned out that all these students had simply lived up to the higher expectation.

#### **You are researching ways to improve this practice, right?**

"That is right. I am working with a number of schools to think about widening the bridging period, that is, the first years after primary education. Based on the central question 'does this help reduce inequality of opportunity?' Furthermore, we have just started a project in which we are researching how teachers in grade two in primary school view their students. And whether at that young age there can already be expectations that will play a role later," says Denessen.

"In addition, we are working in a number of municipalities with policy makers, school boards, school management, teachers and parents to think together about policies to encourage equal opportunity. Starting from the question 'what can we do to make education

fairer for everyone?' And that can be all kinds of things, such as strengthening parent involvement, dealing consciously with homework support, thinking about segregation between schools, and the organization of education as a whole."

"So, I am working in lots of different ways to analyze that whole complex problem of unequal opportunities in different places. And I see more and more attention to this issue in Dutch politics," Eddie Denessen concludes.

Note: Kunskapsskolan Nederland started a new series of its podcast 'Schoolpraat' in which we talk to relevant educational researchers and experts on topics related to the practice of Kunskapsskolan Partner Schools. This is a summary of the first episode in this series. You can find 'Schoolpraat' on Spotify and other podcast platforms.

#### **Koos Woltjes**

Communication Manager,  
Kunskapsskolan Nederland

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