

KUNNSKAPSLØFTET KNOWLEDGE PROMOTION

Information for pupils and parents/guardians:
What is new in the 10-year compulsory school and upper secondary schools
from the autumn of 2006?



DEAR PARENTS

- You are your child's first and most important teacher!
- If you become actively involved, your child will do better at school.
- Your involvement is just as important at the lower secondary level as it is at the primary school level.
- When you talk things over with your children, you stimulate their thinking and development.
- It is important that you take part in evaluating your child's work.
- When you show that you care, your child will be motivated and feel comfortable about being at school.
- It is important for your child that you believe in your own role, that you believe you can make a difference.
- If your relationship with the school is good, it will affect your child's performance.
- Knowing the other parents will lead to better cooperation and follow-up.
- Parents are an important resource for their child's schooling!

Best wishes from the National Parents' Committee for
Primary and Lower Secondary Education (FUG)

WHAT IS "THE KNOWLEDGE PROMOTION"?

The Knowledge Promotion is the latest reform in the 10-year compulsory school and in upper secondary education and training. It introduces certain changes in substance, structure and organization from the first grade in the 10-year compulsory school to the last grade in upper secondary education and training.

The goal of the Knowledge Promotion is to help all pupils to develop fundamental skills that will enable them to participate actively in our society of knowledge. The Norwegian school system is inclusive; there must be room for all. Everyone is to be given the same opportunities to develop their abilities. The Knowledge Promotion, with its special emphasis on learning, is meant to help ensure that all pupils receive a differentiated education.

The reform takes effect in autumn 2006 for pupils in grades 1-9 in 10-year compulsory school and for pupils in their first year of upper secondary education and training (i.e. the 11th grade).

The following are the most important changes in the Norwegian school system that stem from the Knowledge Promotion:

- Basic skills are to be strengthened (see pg. 7)
- Reading and writing are emphasized from the first grade
- New subject syllabuses in all subjects, clearly indicating what pupils and apprentices are expected to learn
- New distribution of teaching hours per subject
- New structure of available choices within education programmes
- Freedom at the local level with respect to work methods, teaching materials and the organization of classroom instruction

THE KNOWLEDGE PROMOTION WILL BE INTRODUCED AS FOLLOWS:

The 2006–2007 school year

Grades 1–9 of the 10-year compulsory school and grade 11 in upper secondary education and training will adopt new subject syllabuses and a new distribution of teaching hours per subject. Foreign language/language specialization is to be introduced gradually, starting in the eighth grade. Schools may offer new programme subjects as electives at the lower secondary level.

The 2007–2008 school year

New subject syllabuses will apply for the 10th grade and the second stage of upper secondary education and training (grade 12).

The 2008–2009 school year

The Knowledge Promotion will be introduced at the third stage of upper secondary education and training (grade 13). All schools must offer programme subjects as electives at the lower secondary level.

Parents and guardians – their contribution is all-important

Parents and guardians ...

- are also responsible for pupils' learning
- shall cooperate with their school or the educational institutions
- shall help foster mutual communication concerning pupils' well-being as well as their academic and social development

The schools and training establishments are to pave the way for cooperation with the home and ensure that parents and guardians share responsibility with the schools. The home is to receive information about the goals for classroom teaching in each subject, about how the instruction is organized, about the work methods used, and about the assessments of pupils' academic development. Parents and guardians shall also be enabled to participate in meaningful discussions about how the schools should develop. Parental involvement is organized at the local level through parent-teacher associations and local parents' councils, and at the national level through the National Parents' Committee for Primary and Lower Secondary Education (FUG).



NEW CURRICULUM FOR ALL GRADES

The curriculum for the Knowledge Promotion encompasses the 10-year compulsory school and upper secondary education and training as a whole. A separate curriculum is being designed for the Sámi Knowledge Promotion that will be used in Sámi administrative districts.

The new curriculum includes the following:

- **Core curriculum**

The core curriculum deepens appreciation for basic values and the view of humanity underlying the instruction. The core curriculum is continued in the Knowledge Promotion for the 10-year compulsory school and upper secondary education and training.

- **Principles of education**

The principles clarify the school owners' (municipalities' and county authorities') responsibility for an all-round education in accordance with established regulations and guidelines and adapted to local and individual needs and qualifications. These principles apply for all subjects at all stages of the 10-year compulsory education and for upper secondary education and training. The schools are responsible for developing pupils' and apprentices' basic competence: social and cultural skills, motivation for learning, and learning strategies. Pupil participation and cooperation with the home are also important educational principles.

The Learning Poster is included in these principles; it is a summary of the schools' fundamental obligations.

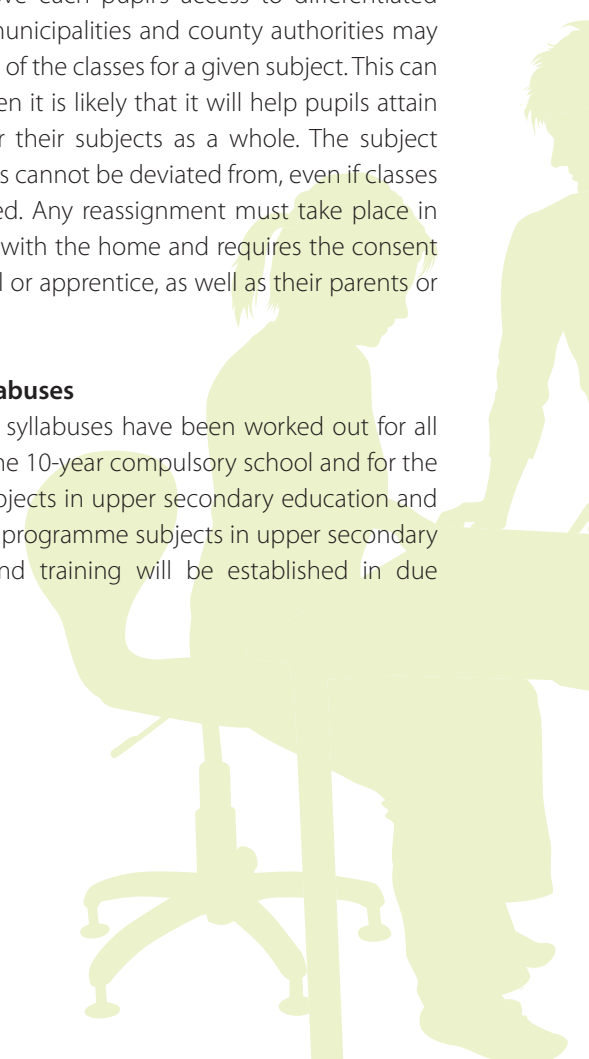
- **Distribution of teaching hours per subject**

The distribution of teaching hours per subject for the 10-year compulsory school is established for primary schooling as a whole (grades 1-7) and for lower secondary schooling (grades 8-10). The school owner (municipality or county authority) is responsible for the distribution of teaching hours at each level. The distribution of teaching hours per subject for upper secondary education and training is established for each specific level.

To improve each pupil's access to differentiated education, municipalities and county authorities may reassign 25% of the classes for a given subject. This can be done when it is likely that it will help pupils attain the goals for their subjects as a whole. The subject syllabus goals cannot be deviated from, even if classes are reassigned. Any reassignment must take place in cooperation with the home and requires the consent of each pupil or apprentice, as well as their parents or guardians.

- **Subject syllabuses**

New subject syllabuses have been worked out for all subjects in the 10-year compulsory school and for the common subjects in upper secondary education and training. The programme subjects in upper secondary education and training will be established in due order.



NEW ELEMENTS IN THE SUBJECT SYLLABUSES

Basic skills

Under the Knowledge Promotion, schools are to prioritize the cultivation of basic skills in all subjects. This is an important foundation for all other learning. These basic skills are as follows:

- **the ability to express oneself orally**
- **the ability to read**
- **the ability to do arithmetic**
- **the ability to express oneself in writing**
- **the ability to make use of information and communication technology**

These basic skills have been incorporated into the subject syllabuses for all subjects. All teachers are therefore responsible for enabling pupils and apprentices/trainee teachers to develop basic skills through their work in various subjects. An emphasis on reading and writing from the first grade in the 10-year compulsory school is an integral part of the Knowledge Promotion.

The new subject syllabuses contain clear goals for what pupils should know in each grade. In assigning such skills targets, the subject syllabuses are expressing high academic ambitions for all pupils, who in varying degrees should be able to reach the targets that have been set. Each pupil shall be stimulated to the best realization of his or her goals through differentiated education. If a pupil is not benefiting properly from ordinary lessons, he or she is entitled to special tuition.

Foreign language or language specialization

Starting with the 2006–2007 school year, all pupils in the eighth grade must either take a second foreign language in addition to English or do further study in Sámi, Norwegian or English.

Programme subjects as electives

To give the 10-year compulsory school pupils a foretaste of subjects in upper secondary education and training, elective programme subjects are introduced at the lower secondary level. These programme subjects should reflect local conditions, preferably in collaboration with local upper secondary schools and businesses in the region. Training can be arranged off school premises, which will allow pupils to choose in line with their abilities and interests; it will also give them a better foundation for selecting upper secondary education and training based on their own experience.

All new subject syllabuses are available online from the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training at their website: www.utdanningsdirektoratet.no/lk06

NEW STRUCTURE FOR AVAILABLE CHOICES IN UPPER SECONDARY EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Changes will also be implemented in upper secondary education and training starting in 2006. These will include changes in the names of certain subjects, subject combinations and areas of study. Former areas of study will be referred to as “education programmes,” and specialized subjects will henceforth be called “programme subjects.” Pupils apply for a specific education programme, where they go on to choose programme subjects.

Project for specialization in vocational training

In connection with the Knowledge Promotion and the preparation of new subject syllabuses, a project for specialization has been introduced for vocational education programmes in upper secondary education and training, where pupils can specialize in a subject area of special interest to them. This project in specialization can be implemented in collaboration with local businesses, so that at an early stage in their education pupils will become familiar with various occupations and the relevant in-service training establishments.

Starting in the autumn of 2006, 12 education programmes in upper secondary education and training will be offered.

Academic specialization education programmes

(provide university admission certification, i.e. they qualify candidates for admission to colleges and universities):

- Study specialization (previously the following area of study: General and Business studies), with programme areas for maths and natural science, language, art and design, social studies and economics).
- Sports subjects
- Music, dance and drama

Vocational education programmes

(can provide university admission certification after one additional year at upper secondary stage 3):

- Building and construction technology
- Design and crafts subjects
- Electrical and electronic subjects
- Health and social subjects
- Media and communication
- Utilization of natural resources
- Restaurant trades and nutritional subjects
- Service and travel
- Technical skills and industrial production



PUPIL ASSESSMENT

There are general provisions in the regulations of the Education Act for both the 10-year compulsory school and upper secondary education and training. These stipulate when assessments are to be made with and without grades. The former includes both average marks (assessment grades) and examination grades. In the subject syllabuses, there are provisions for average marks and for determining which rules apply for examinations in any given subject.

National tests and mapping tests

The aim of the national tests is to determine whether the schools are succeeding in developing pupils' basic skills. The tests that are carried out must maintain a high professional standard, and the results should serve as a platform for qualitative development on the part of the schools and the school owners, also at the regional and national level.

Starting in the autumn of 2007, national reading tests in Norwegian and English, as well as tests in maths, are to be held for fifth and eighth graders. The test results will determine whether pupils' skills are consistent with the subject syllabus goals for basic skills after the fourth and seventh grade. Results are to be made available to those who are involved with qualitative development in the schools, but there is to be no ranking of schools.

Starting with the 2006–2007 school year, a compulsory mapping test in reading for the second grade is to be given. Later on, mapping tests will be given for maths and numeracy.

WHOM TO CONTACT IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS

Questions about classroom instruction, differentiated education or the way a given school is organized may be directed to the headmaster or to teachers, or alternatively to the municipality or county authority that is the school owner. The county governor, who has supervisory authority and handles complaints about the 10-year compulsory school education and upper secondary education and training, may also be contacted.

Information available online:

Updated information about the Knowledge Promotion is available online at:

www.kunnskapsloeftet.no

Information about basic education in Sámi is available online at:

www.oahpponeahтта.no

The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training's Internet portal for pupils, teachers and school managers, parents and guardians, and others interested in the schools and in learning:

www.skolenettet.no

Information from FUG:
www.foreldrenettet.no





Published by:
Ministry of Education and Research

Additional copies may be ordered from:
Government Administration Services
Kopi- og distribusjonsservice
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E-mail: publikasjonsbestilling@dss.dep.no
Fax: + 47 22 24 27 86

Publication number: F-4209 E
Design: Tank
Printed by: Kursiv Media AS - 09/2006
Impression 1000