

Education System in Finland

Finland is known all over the world for its top notch Education System, and it is one of the key reasons why I went to Finland in the first place so I could get to learn a little bit more about the Education System there. It's really interesting some of the innovative things they are doing there.

Let's start with on the university level. Though my exposure to that is limited to Aalto University, since that is where I did my exchange. One of the things I really liked about Aalto was that they had cross disciplined courses such as the ADD Basics course that I took. It allowed for collaboration amongst students from different backgrounds, which is something that happens in the real world when students get into the working environment. Also the resources at Aalto are available to all students no matter their major. Such as the Design Factory, Fablab, A Grid, etc. I really liked that because I wasn't an engineering/art student but I still got the opportunity to play with the 3D printers at the Design Factory and Fablab. Also at Aalto they were very encouraging to entrepreneurs and had many resources and places available for that.

On the K-12 level for education, Finland has done some innovative things. For example, in some schools they have taken away subjects and are teaching students different topics where they focus on a window of a topic such as forestry and then they bring in the different subjects like math, history, science, biology into the subject of forestry and make it so that the knowledge is applicable.

They also have many resources for students with special needs or learning disabilities. Sometimes there is even a separate teacher in each class specifically for those students. And in the states they have an IEP(individualized education plan) for special needs or problematic students, but in Finland in some schools they have IEPs for each student so that they can have individualized education plans specifically catered to each student to fit their learning needs.

Also in Finland the amount of homework they do is very little compared to most countries. Especially compared to Taiwan. My friend told me a funny story where her friend's Taiwanese family went to visit her in Finland. And her friend's son was waiting for her son to finish his homework, so he asked her what he could do in the meantime while he waited. She told him he could probably go to the corner store for some ice cream and he would be done soon. Which left him flabbergasted because he was expecting her son to do homework for a few hours, but instead he found out that his homework usually takes just a few minutes instead. In fact, from what I have heard in Finland sometimes they have no homework or maybe just 10-30 minutes worth of homework in a day. Which coming from students in Taiwan that seems amazing. And even with such short school hours and small amounts of homework they still outperform other countries on standardized tests.