Main Policy Lines in Education and Training

(March - April 2016)

**OECD**

# Governing education in a complex world

12 April 2016

This publication brings together research and insights from country experience to identify the elements necessary for effective education governance. It tries to find an answer to the following questions: What models of governance are effective in complex education systems? How can governments set priorities and design policies that balance responsiveness to local diversity with national education goals? How do we ensure that there is trust, cooperation and communication between the multiple levels and actors in the system? Modern education governance must be flexible and at the same time steer a clear course towards established goals; it must also be efficient, limited by funds and time.

Some key elements are identified:

* Engage with stakeholders at all levels in the governance process to strengthen participatory decision-making; be careful with new technologies that allow to engage more actors, but, at the same time, bring new challenges: instant feedback can mean that expectations rise faster than performance, and lead to short-term solutions rather than to long-term vision.
* Try to find the balance (or, better, the right combination of mutual reinforcing dynamics) between constructive accountability (tends to minimise risks to improve efficiency) and dynamic innovation processes (where trial and error are fundamental).
* Think about the individuals involved (the teacher, the principal, the student, the parent): without the right capacity and support, any policy risks being derailed at the level where it counts most: the classroom.

Effective governance

* Focuses on processes, not on structures;
* Is flexible and can adapt to unexpected events;
* Works through building capacity, stakeholder involvement and open dialogue;
* Requires a whole system approach;
* Harnesses evidence and research;
* Is built on trust.

[Read more online](http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/governing-education-in-a-complex-world_9789264255364-en)