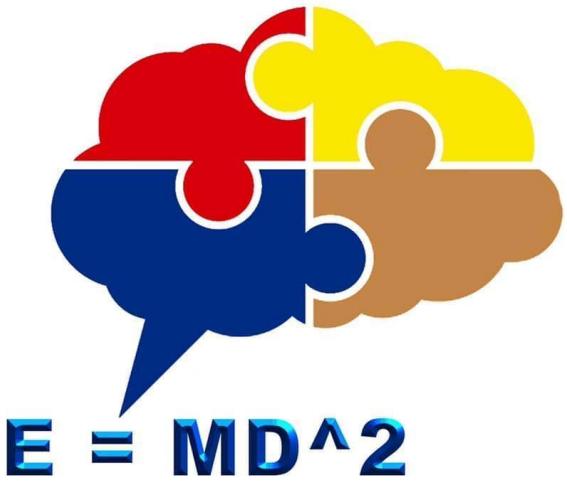

E = MD^2: Excellence in Maths Education through (e-)Debate and Diversity

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Content

Conclusion of discussion groups in North Macedonia and Romania

North Macedonia

Meeting in **North Macedonia** took place online on 3rd of November 2022. Participants were 10 parents and 10 teachers. The focus of discussion group in Macedonia was on ideas for platform for math learning that is to be developed.

Parents feel that students love mathematics because teachers apply different techniques, methods and resources in the work and that tudents love math at the beginning, but when they reach higher levels and encounter problems, sometimes they are demotivated and need to ask the teacher for help so that the parent does not misdirect them.

They would like to have short short tutorials on the procedure for solving tasks, and then to have examples that the students themselves would solve on the platform. Activities on the platform should have difficulty levels from easier to more complex tasks.

Teachers love when each student can help the other student to cooperate with each other. They would like the platform should have interactive exercises and to give an opportunity for students to explore on their own to find the solutions, and activities should be related to everyday life.

The platform should contain a template according to which the activities would follow

- A challenge that would arouse the student's curiosity
- A short video
- Exercises
- Games
- Quiz

Romania

Romanian discussion group (10 math teachers and 10 parents) was focused on the problems of mathematics followed, which started from some questions suggested by

teacher Camelia Bărbatu: "In what way can the study of mathematics connect us to reality?, How does the school prepare a student for the exams he has to pass in his career?, How do you know as a parent that you have a mathematically gifted student?, How can you support such a child?, How can the school help such a student?, In case we have children who have difficulties in learning mathematics, how can we support them and how can we motivate them to improve their performance?, How do we as teachers manage when we have integrated students with special needs in our classes?, How do we communicate with parents? etc."

Conclusions

The conclusions drawn following this debate would be the following:

- The knowledge / skills obtained by children that they acquire by studying mathematics help them in life, are useful for their later experience, but the extremely dense curriculum in Romania does not allow teachers to make connections with everyday life, the practical examples missing;
- Unfortunately, in our country, theoretical mathematics is taught, so it would be ideal to have practical classes, and reluctant children could even start to love this subject;
- At school, the four classes of mathematics per week does not allow teachers to work extra with students who have higher abilities but also with students with special educational requirements; In order to support children with special needs, in our schoolthere is a support teacher who works weekly with these children (two classes of mathematics and two classes of Romanian language). High-ability students have the opportunity to work extra by attending the Center of Excellence every Saturday, wherethey solve advanced math problems.
- Mathematics primarily teaches students to think, gives them confidence in themselves and opens up many opportunities for the future;
- The platform should contain applied lessons in such a way that students understand the usefulness of studying mathematics and see it as a simpler discipline;
- Mathematics is very necessary in everyday life, but students fail to understand its usefulness due to the abstract nature of teaching mathematics;
- The basic role of mathematics is to create critical thinking, to develop logical reasoning and to create disciplined characters;
- There are many other adjacent disciplines (e.g. physics, chemistry) that use mathematics.

It is to believe that, even though discussion groups were held in different countries, most of math students and teachers have difficulties connecting math with everyday

life and finding examples where we can learn math with real life examples.

North Macedonian team of teachers who implemented the online meeting: DobriJovevski, Loreta Dimitrovska and Dragana Trojanovska.

Romanian team of teachers who implemented the online meeting: Camelia Bărbatu and Alexandra Lazar.