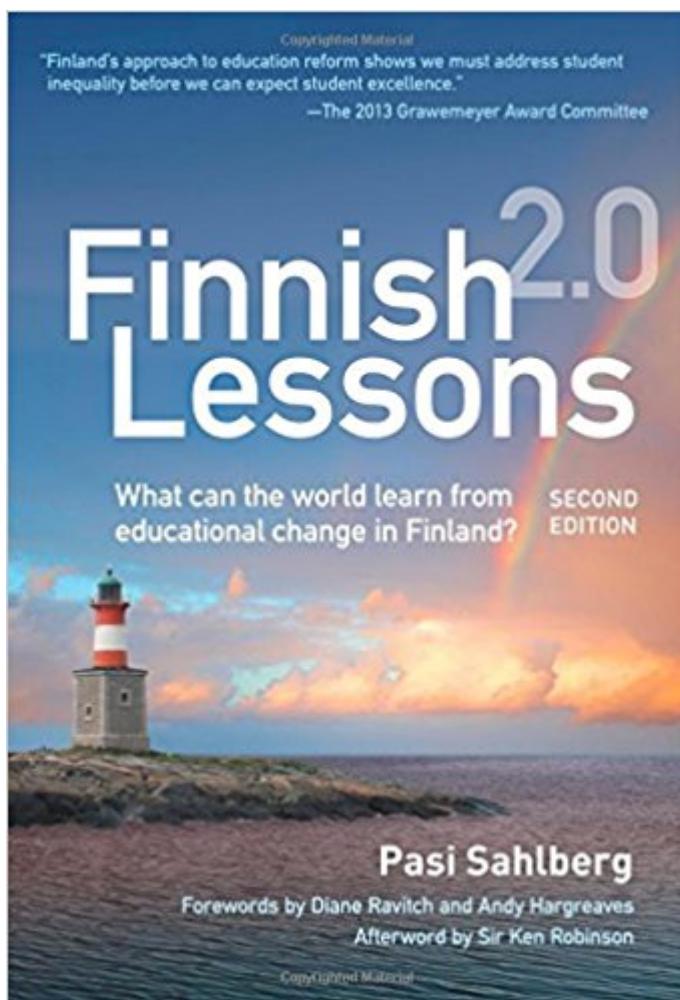


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# Finnish Lessons 2.0: What Can The World Learn From Educational Change In Finland? (Series On School Reform)



## **Synopsis**

Pasi Sahlberg has thoroughly updated his groundbreaking account of how Finland built a world-class education system during the past four decades. In this international bestseller, Sahlberg traces the evolution of Finnish education policies and highlights how they differ from the United States and much of the rest of the world. Featuring substantial additions throughout the text, *Finnish Lessons 2.0* demonstrates how systematically focusing on teacher and leader professionalism, building trust between the society and its schools, and investing in educational equity rather than competition, choice, and other market-based reforms make Finnish schools an international model of success. This second edition details the complexity of meaningful change by examining Finland's educational performance in light of the most recent international assessment data and domestic changes.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

"A fascinating read." - Juno Magazine, Issue 43 --1

Pasi Sahlberg is a visiting professor at Harvard Graduate School of Education and former Director General of CIMO (Centre for International Mobility and Cooperation) at the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture.

A good addition to my teaching tools this year.

As always, Pasi Sahlberg calls into question the best ways to educate youth. This book provides some interesting strategies to think about school structures and systems, and the part about the importance of teacher collaboration and an investment in equity resonates with everything else I am reading. At times, though, I was not sure where the idea in one chapter ended and the next chapter began. That might have been part of his argument, though.

Provoking and sharp, a great debate by Sahlberg.

Finnish Lessons 2.0 was an excellent read and the author provided great insight into how the Finnish education system works. For those of us that are interested in education systems around the world, I highly recommend reading this book to gather a better understanding about certain education systems.

The U.S., UK and Germany should be humbled by the Finnish accomplishment!

Over the past quarter-century, the standards and performance of American teachers and schools have steadily declined relative to international benchmarks. 'Finnish Lessons 2.0' is primarily written to counter what Sahlberg calls the Global Education Reform Movement (GERM - the implementation of corporate models in education administration, standardized testing, competition between and within schools, and the use of accountability measures aimed at policing/encouraging teacher quality. Sahlberg contends that the best-performing education systems in the world are built on social justice, collaboration and trust. The proportion of foreign-born citizens in Finland has tripled since 2000. Teachers receive slightly more than the national average salary - teachers must have a three-year bachelor's and a two years ' master's degree. Only 8 universities are permitted to prepare teachers, and admission to these programs is highly competitive - only about 10% are accepted. Those who are accepted must also have taken required high school courses in physics, chemistry, philosophy, music, and at least two foreign languages. Subject-matter teachers earn their master's degree from the university's academic departments, not departments of education. The total public cost of Finish education is 5.6% of GDP, vs. 7.6% for the U.S. and only 2.5% of education expenditures come from private sources. Detractors say Finland performs well academically because it is ethnically homogeneous - this also holds true for high-scoring Japan,

Shanghai, and Korea, nations known for their emphasis on testing. In Helsinki, the non-Finnish population is about 10%, in other schools it is around 40%. Finland has high international test scores, without doing anything that American reformers demand. It has a strong public school system, high standards for entry into teaching (5-year teacher preparation program required to teach in Finnish schools - no 'Teach for America'), no charters or vouchers, teachers and principals belong to the same union, a national curriculum - with wide latitude allowed teachers to shape it to their own needs and strengths, and does not use standardized tests until the end of high school years. Nearly half the country's students receive some special education at some time before completing 9-year basic school. On the other hand, the relative homogeneity of its society makes many education aspects easier than they otherwise would be. And, its PISA scores have been dropping since about 2008, and fewer students are selecting physics, chemistry, and some of the more intensive math courses. In 2012, about 94% of those completing compulsory basic education immediately continued into the upper-secondary level or to an additional 10th grade. That year also marked the first time more young people enrolled in vocational upper-secondary schools than general upper-secondary schools. Compulsory education in Finland ends at age 16. The graduation rate is 93%, compared to about 80% in the U.S. Within-school ability grouping remains widespread in Finland. Finnish students spend no more than 30 minutes/night on homework. Finnish teachers teach 4 lessons/day compared to 6 or more in the U.S. The real question - Does Finland test its vocational students as part of PISA? Unclear from the book, though that would explain the 'Finnish miracle.' So I emailed an expert within Finland - turns out they are! Wow!

Useful Book. Before the year 2000, there were no international data on education to know how education systems are performing like what is available now in the 21st century: PISA test, TIMSS, and PIRLS. The main secret of the Finland education system is that in the 20th century the Finns had undertaken some education policies for the purpose of accomplishing a high quality of learning and widespread equity in learning opportunities and outcomes at the same time. Finland started their reform policies by developing the early childhood education. In fact, Finland undertook different approaches to reform the education system widespread the country, Finnish students do not take standardized tests or data in order to compare teachers or schools to each other; however, it created an inspiring and trustful environment in which teachers work. All teachers are required to have higher academic degrees that guarantee both high-level pedagogical skills and subject knowledge in order to do their jobs well. Moreover, teachers in Finland work as autonomous professionals and play a key role in curriculum planning and assessing student learning attracts

some of the most able and talented young Finns into teaching careers year after year. In actuality, teachers, students and parents are all involved in assessing schools, and how well it performs. Educational leadership is totally different in Finland as principals, district education leaders and superintendents are, without exceptions, former teachers. Leadership is based upon professionalism. Moreover, Finnish people trust public schools rather than any other educational institutions. Education policies and reforms are framed by the principles of teaching and learning rather than the market-based reforms. In fact, the reform policies in Finland are different worldwide which focused more on equity and accordingly quality improved. And therefore we can mention that what does not work in education systems worldwide are: school competition, standardization, test-based accountability, de-professionalism, and privatization.

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