WYDAWNICTWA

Recenzje

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Alyson L. Lavigne, Thomas L. Good, *Enhancing Teacher Education, Development, and Evaluation. Lessons Learned from Educational Reform*. **New York 2019: Routlege, pp. 194**

Educational reforms around the world try to introduce a systematic change in educational theory and practice as well as in education on the basic and higher level. The reviewed publication is the third volume dedicated to this complex topic. The first two focused on the rise of contemporary accountability programs and presented best practices on how to follow the demanding evaluation guidelines. The authors of this book explore the past reforms and their after effects in the present American society. Why did most of those school reforms fail despite the time and money invested in them? The reason for this publication to be written was to present various analyses of reform movements, which with better planning could have led to more successful schools in the United States of America.

The book pays careful attention to the Race to the Top (RTTT) concept. To explain it briefly, it is a federal reform mandating high-stakes teacher evaluation, which was analysed and reviewed by the authors. They are not only classroom researchers and academic teachers but most importantly educational psychologists at Utah State University in the USA.

In the introduction authors present their motivation to write a book which is a summary of the conclusions drawn from the past reforms and their results together with what others have written about the Race to the Top. The authors' vast experience in

classrooms helped them to offer suggestions for new productive pathways. The book, apart from the introduction, consists of five noteworthy chapters.

The first one entitled „Teaching in America: A Paradox–Highly Valued but Lowly Paid" provides the context for the whole book. It reflects on the paradox which is mentioned in the title and explains it. The authors accuse policymakers and media, as they often tend to blame teachers for students' low achievements. The conclusion of these views leads to a very bold statement that the more sympathetic coverage teachers receive in the media, the greater the possibility of improving educational resources and productivity is. It is also a fundamental part of the book, which makes a perfect spotlight on the teaching in America.

Chapter two „Teacher Effects on Student Achievement: A Review of the Literature" shows the evidence that teachers around the world matter. Throughout this part writers refer to research and its impact on the policymakers' point of view on the high-stakes teacher evaluation. This chapter explores important questions dedicated to teachers' problems in the modern society. The authors draw our attention to what is known and not known about effective teaching. Second part ends with realistic expectations on what teachers can do by themselves to overcome the effects of poverty.

The third section with a compelling title „A Brief History of Educational Reform and Race to the Top" presents a brief history of the last 40 years of educational reforms in terms of RTTT. This part might be especially interesting to those who want to discover how the Race to the top emerged and which independent and dependent variables were intended? The past and present perspective is crucial to understand the background of the RTTT action taken by the government throughout years. The writers' line of thoughts is very structured and well-presented in this chapter. It successfully describes the effectiveness of the teachers and functioning of RTTT.

The next chapter, which is called „Race to the Top: Its Effects on Principal Practice, Teaching, and Learning" follows the authors' analysis of the effects of RTTT. They managed to provide the reader with specific evaluation of principal practices before and after RTTT. Have the measures used to evaluate teachers been effective until now? This part illustrates the effects of RTTT on students' achievements, teaching and learning outcomes. The authors call a question if RTTT improves teaching and learning through observation and feedback when teacher's evaluation is even more rigorous? All of that, supported by the appropriate evidence, makes this part the most compelling to me.

The last part entitled „Learning from Failure" provides suggestions for future education reforms. Another issue raised in this chapter is the policymakers' failure, which is caused by various crucial factors such as: the preparation of principals to be instructional leaders, existing knowledge on teacher effects and finally, the complexity of teaching. The authors' careful analysis of the current RTTT situation gives the reader strategies for observing and enhancing the growth and development of teachers. There is a long list of ways for classroom research to improve teaching and learning. This

chapter surely represents valuable and innovative approach, which might help schools and society to support wise changes.

Enhancing Teacher Education, Development and Evaluation has a transparent and presentable structure. The authors of this book managed to present the failure of the Race to the top idea. The reader may be impressed by writer's scientific reflectiveness and wide knowledge in the educational and sociological field. This work has led me to the conclusion that while introducing misguided reforms, policymakers ignore the school context and existing research.

On the whole, the reader will be glad to find that this publication is full of research based knowledge which provides us with authors' suggestions for improving teachers and school reality not only in the USA. We cannot forget that good teachers are incredibly important to students and to the society and the conditions of their profession should be improved over time.