

1.4 Creating networks to improve education in a district of Valladolid

The objective of this project is to explain how the different agents that participate in the education system (families, teachers, educational services, etc.) and live in a specific district can create networks to plan the actions to carry out during a long period of time in order to improve the quality of the education process in demographic areas where there is a high multi-cultural concentration that presents special socio-cultural difficulties.

The project stems from an example that responds to a very specific context. However, the way it was developed may be applied in other situations. Therefore, first of all, we describe the stages of this process and the methodology followed to carry out the work and, secondly, we offer a practical example of what was done in an area of Valladolid, Spain, known as Pajarillos-Pilarica.

This document includes the outlines with the stages of development of the project and aspects associated to those stages and examples for each of them, as well as useful graphs. All the information was obtained from the Pajarillos-Pilarica Improvement Plan that was carried out in our city. This paper also documents some of the activities that took place in order to achieve the specific objectives marked by the different stages of the project.

Participation in schools for parents

Schools for parents are a meeting point for the training and participation of families in school life. They are held in schools during the school year in evening sessions. They are coordinated by members of the Educational and Psychopedagogical Counseling Team. During their sessions, topics of interests for families are discussed. These topics are raised by parents or detected with the help of class tutors.

Frequently, the topics for discussion are:

- Prevention of school absenteeism, school rules.
- Prevention of conflicts in the classroom.
- Diversity in the classrooms.
- Health education.

These topics are presented and discussed by members of the Educational and Psychopedagogical Counselling Team or by external experts.

Establishing a climate of confidence in the relationship with families

In order to achieve an appropriate climate of confidence in the relationship between schools and families, the following principles are followed:

- Make use of the times of entrance to and departure from school to favor closeness between school and families.
- Many schools have established their own "welcome plans" to ease the integration of new students and their families in the school and in the surrounding area. These plans are made up of different activities in which both teachers and students participate.
- Distribution among families of printed versions of the "charts of services" of each school. These charts explain what families can expect from schools, their services and the quality compromises of the educational centre. These charts have versions in different languages to meet the needs of immigrant families.
- Assistance in the procedures to apply for different subsidies, financial or socio-cultural: school grants, school enrolment paperwork both at Infant or Secondary stages, evening activities for students, school canteens, social subsidies. This assistance is coordinated between the schools, Social Services of the area and local NGO's

Promotion of the participation of gypsy families in school activities

School management teams and class tutors pay special attention to the participation of gypsy families in:

- Parents' meetings, at the beginning and along the academic year.
- Parents' associations
- Schools for parents and other training and cultural activities, like excursions or school festivals
- Transition between Primary and Secondary Education. Special informative events are organised with the participation of people relevant in their culture.
- Acceptance and fostering of the role of the mediator to ease access of gypsy families to schools.
- Collaboration of mediators to solve conflicts or to avoid absenteeism
- Specific training courses for mediators, with the participation of teachers, members of the educational and psychopedagogical counselling team and members of the gypsy community. These courses have emphasised the role of students of gypsy background who act as mediators.

Analysis of the context situation at starting point

1. Description of the district

- a. Location
- b. Characteristics of the population
- c. Socio-cultural, economic and education conditions

2. Schools and services involved in the district plan

- a. All-level schools
- b. Social centers
- c. Educational training centers
- d. Educational services
- e. Organizations associated to the attention to the families

3. Centers and services of the area; background and experiences

4. Ascertaining common objectives according to the needs detected in the context analysis and the experiments carried out in the area

1. Description of the district

This project is carried out in a large area of Valladolid that includes two neighborhoods: Pajarillos and Pilarica, located in the eastern part of the city. The population is working class of lower-middle socio-cultural and economic standards. Pilarica is divided by the railway, which, in itself, is already a clear barrier that differentiates the two sections of the neighborhood. The population of this neighborhood is aging, therefore, the number of students in the schools is constantly decreasing.

The characteristics common to all the educational centers in the area are:

- High concentration of gypsy students.
- Groups with intense social, cultural and economic problems, with a high percentage of broken families and/or in a situation of disadvantage.
- Progressive increase of population with social difficulties, due to poor education and training, unemployment and other situations of exclusion. Most of the families have only had primary or middle schooling.

2. Schools and services involved in the district plan

There are about 450 teachers working at stable educational centers in the area and about 3000 students and their families. There are also other professionals from social and educational institutions, volunteers, associations, etc., whose main characteristic is their interest in constant improvement of the learning process, as well as in innovation and participatory organization.

■ **nursery schools** (Definition: Nursery schools are educational centers that take on children from 0 to 3 years old. They can be public [state managed, dependent on the Ministry of Education or similar] or private and the education at that level is considered the first cycle of a non-compulsory period. Its cost depends on the socio-economic conditions of the family.)

- Nursery School La Cigüeña (public)
- Nursery School for Boys and Girls (public)

■ **public infant and primary schools** (CEIP): (Definition: These are public schools that teach the first two educational cycles: 2nd cycle of infant education, 3-6 years old, non-compulsory; and primary cycle, 6-12 years old, six academic years, obligatory and cost-free.)

- CEIP Miguel Hernández
- CEIP Narciso Alonso Cortés
- CEIP Gabriel y Galán
- CEIP Antonio Machado
- CEIP Cristóbal Colón

■ **public secondary schools** (IES): (Definition: Public educational centers in charge of the obligatory secondary cycle, four academic years, 12-16 years old, cost-free.)

- IES Diego de Praves
- IES Galileo
- IES Leopoldo Cano

■ **concerted infant, primary and secondary schools**: (Definition: Private schools supported by public funds that teach the 2nd cycle of infant education, 3-6 years old, non-compulsory; the obligatory primary cycle, 6-12 years old; and the obligatory secondary cycle, 12-16 years old; cost-free for all cycles.)

- Reinado del Sagrado Corazón y Nuestra Señora del Pilar
- Lestonnac
- Nuestra Señora de la Inmaculada. Nueva del Carmen

■ **educational services**: Two kinds of centers: CFIE and EOEP. (Definitions: CFIE stands for Center for Educational Innovation and Teacher Training. These institutions depend on the Education Council of the Junta de Castilla y León (Governing Body of the Autonomy) and they are in charge of offering training courses for teachers at a non-graduate level. Among other tasks, these centers are responsible for supporting a wide range of training initiatives.

EOEP stands for Educational and Psychopedagogical Counseling Team. As part of the educational services offered by the Governing Body of the Autonomy, these teams are formed by social workers and professionals specialized in Psychology and Pedagogy that provide educational counseling to all the members of the education community: teachers, students and families. These teams work at infant and primary schools in specific geographical areas of our community.)

- Center for Educational Innovation and Teacher Training of Valladolid (CFIE)
- Educational and Psychopedagogical Counseling Team (EOEP #4)

■ **education administration**

The Education Administration manages and supervises the institutions through the Education Inspection, whose functions are, among others, to collaborate, energize and evaluate the improve-

ment plans for the schools. They preside the Commission on Student Registration, which is not only in charge of controlling registration in the schools, but also of distributing students with specific needs of support, as evenly as possible.

There is also a Commission on Absenteeism to supervise and follow-up cases of student absenteeism. This Commission is presided by a representative of the Administration and is composed of social workers from secondary schools, counseling teams, other social institutions, and representatives of the City Council.

- Pajarillos-Pilarica District Inspection Team (AIE)
- Commission on Absenteeism

3. Centers and services of the area; background and experiences

In the last few years, most of the educational centers and services located in the Pajarillos-Pilarica neighborhoods had been working according to the guidelines set up in individual Annual Improvement Plans (PAM) and putting into action measures associated to the quality of education, following the standards of the European Form of Quality Management (EFQM). Some of these centers had even been awarded the Extraordinary Prize for Quality.

What became very clear was the need to coordinate and join efforts both to improve the quality of education and achieve that the student population chose to stay in the primary and secondary schools of the area.

4. Ascertaining common objectives according to the needs detected in the context analysis and the experiments carried out in the area

At the beginning of the school year 01-02, the Educational Services of the District (CFIE, AIE and EOEP #4) encouraged all the schools located in the area to use their own individual Improvement Plans and participate in a wider District Plan. The objective was to join efforts and coordinate actions that, based upon the general principles of standardization, school integration, understanding and equal opportunities, might achieve actual integration of all social, economic and cultural diversities of the area with the purpose of guaranteeing democratic participation and sound living-together to all the future citizens.

Since then, the CFIE makes a proposal of Improvement Plan to all the schools and educational services of the area and each of them applies it to their own Plan, according to their own context and timing.

Sessions in practice

Making improvement plans

1. Making a plan to improve the quality of education

- Detection and analysis of educational needs
- Identification of fields to be improved
- General objectives of the improvement
- Specific objectives. Planning for several years and course distribution among the organisms involved

2. Setting up the organization and the way to carry out the work

- Appointing a general coordinator of the project
- Composition of the groups (seminars, departments, teams, etc.) and fields of work.
 - Assigning functions to each group and field of work
 - Determining the spaces, resources and timing to carry out the functions assigned to each group or field of work
 - Group and field work coordination. Determining communication methods, meetings, means, etc. to make coordination possible.
 - Diffusion of the organization among all the participants

3. Assessment design

- Working out the characteristics and type of assessment we want
- Fixing the points, processes and actions to evaluate
- Determining the criteria and indicators to be used
- Determining assessment techniques
- Setting up the instruments according to the techniques to be used

4. Results of the assessment

- Strong points
- Weak points

1. Making a plan to improve the quality of education

"From, to, with everybody for the improvement of the quality of education in our neighborhoods: pajarillos and pilarica"

The basic purpose of the Plan is to improve the quality of education in the 14 educational centers

mentioned above and, as far as the Educational Services are concerned, to collaborate with the project. In addition, to take the opportunity to undertake and work on the attention to diversity to enrich and enhance the educational offer.

■ ANALYSIS OF THE NEEDS

The management teams of the schools and educational services summon a first meeting, where they analyze the different improvement plans and draw the following conclusions regarding the needs and fields of improvement to focus on:

- To continue working in depth on how to respond to all the students, directing efforts to help them to succeed in their studies.
- To introduce strategies in the schooling process that allow a balanced distribution of all the students of the area, in such a way that all the schools take on all sorts of students, preventing the centers from becoming ghettos, as it had happened with some of them in recent years.
- To achieve a greater active participation from families and social and educational resources of the area, that is, to get them to know and get involved in the educational projects carried out in their district.

■ IDENTIFICATION OF THE FIELDS TO BE IMPROVED

- Field 1: To increase the information the students and their families have access to and promote their greater participation.
- Field 2: To develop a higher participation, coordination and organization among teachers, back-up professionals, and other institutions, associations, educational services and education inspection, in order to enhance the attention to diversity in Pajarillos-Pilarica.

- Field 3: To encourage analysis and debate as part of the teachers training in order to bring out positive attitudes that, on the one hand, help students to succeed in their studies and, on the other hand, result in a more satisfactory living-together of the whole educational community, as well as prevent or intervene in problems such as school absenteeism.
- Field 4: To achieve a greater balance among all the educational centers, regarding the type of students they take on.
- Field 5: To improve human and material resources and back-up from the educational services in order to respond to the socio-educational needs of the district to overcome existing inequalities and make all the resources as productive as possible.

GENERAL OBJECTIVES OF IMPROVEMENT

According to the fields identified above, a series of general, common and specific objectives are set forth as guidelines for the schools and educational services.

- To guarantee equal opportunities based upon the principles of standardization and

integration, organizational flexibility and curricular adaptation to promote the development of skills in students with special educational needs.

- To monitor the registration process in order to achieve an even distribution of the students in the educational centers throughout the school year, respecting the deadlines set up for registration and the freedom to choose school.
- To achieve the earliest schooling possible and minimize absenteeism.
- To pay special attention to the students' pass from the Primary Cycle to the Obligatory Secondary Cycle, so it is done successfully and in a coordinate way.
- To improve teachers' competence through reflection, debate and exchange of educational experiences.
- To improve the supply and use of material and human resources, attending to the students' cultural diversity.
- To plan and assess, in a coordinate fashion, the actions taken by all the educational centers and institutions involved in the project.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES AND COURSE DISTRIBUTION FOR EDUCATIONAL CENTERS AND SERVICES

COURSE	FIELD	SCHOOLS	CFIE TEACHER TRAINING	EOEP #4 EDUCATIONAL SERVICE	EDUCATION ADMINISTRATION
	<p>F1 – Increasing information for students and families in order to increase their participation.</p>	<p>To promote information and participation of students and families in school life. To include information on the characteristics of the different cultures that attend the schools in the Curricular Project (PEC) (document that explains the objectives, contents, methodology and evaluation of the subjects), in order to eliminate prejudice.</p>	<p>To provide counseling at the schools, concerning the application of the standardization and integration principles. To provide counseling to make and review the -School Educational Projects (PEC), in order to respond to diversity.</p>	<p>To collaborate in the efforts to increase information and participation in the schools. To provide counseling to set up the rules of participation in the schools.</p>	<p>To give information on the educational offers, resources and vacancies in the schools. To attach and register the students after the counseling process.</p>
<p>First course</p>	<p>F2 – Developing participation, coordination and organization among teachers and all back-up professional, as well as in other institutions, associations, educational services and education administration.</p>	<p>To have the teachers make teams in connection with a common project of reflection, debate, coordination and improvement. To participate in the coordination and debate meetings of the district.</p>		<p>To provide counseling regarding the coordination between institutions, acting as leaders of the process. To participate in the seminars for management teams.</p>	<p>To study and make proposals as to the organization and supply of educational back-up resources for the schools.</p>

COURSE	FIELD	SCHOOLS	CFIE TEACHER TRAINING	EOEP #4 EDUCATIONAL SERVICE	EDUCATION ADMINISTRATION
	F3 – Forceful promotion of training programs for teachers.	To organize task forces and participate in other kind of training possibilities that include the attention to diversity.	<p>To set up a Training Seminar for management teams, in order to facilitate the coordination of activities in the district.</p> <p>To offer and facilitate teachers training with courses or programs that allow learning in an environment of equality and discuss topics related to diversity.</p>	To maximize and energize training courses for teachers in the schools.	To participate in the Training Seminars for management teams, analyzing the results, in order for the Administration to take appropriate measures.
Second course	F3 – Forceful promotion of training programs for teachers.	To make programs that promote equal opportunities and help the students to succeed in their studies.	To design and carry out the Training Seminar on cultural minorities.	<p>To participate in the training seminar on cultural minorities.</p> <p>To participate in coordination with other institutions involved in the educational process of the district.</p>	To participate in the Training Seminars for management teams, analyzing the results, in order for the Administration to take appropriate measures.

COURSE	FIELD	SCHOOLS	CFIE TEACHER TRAINING	EOEP #4 EDUCATIONAL SERVICE	EDUCATION ADMINISTRATION
	<p>F4 – Attainment of a greater balance and integration among the students that attend the schools of the district.</p>	<p>To collaborate with the educational services, furnishing all the data concerning the schooling process of the students.</p> <p>To take measures that facilitate the students' access, that make them feel welcome and wanting to stay in the corresponding educational centers.</p> <p>To take "positive discrimination" measures, regarding gypsy families, in order to make them participate in the management boards of the schools.</p>			<p>To attach and re-register the students after the counseling process.</p>
<p>Third course</p>	<p>F5 – Making the best out of and improving material and human resources, as well as educational services back-up, in order to respond to the socio-educational needs of the district to overcome existing inequalities.</p>	<p>To increase didactic material resources, taking into account the students' cultural diversity.</p> <p>To organize educational back-up, taking into consideration the specific characteristics of the students.</p> <p>To assess the material resources, according to cultural diversity.</p>	<p>To make sure that the schools have information regarding the material available in CFIE associated to cultural diversity.</p> <p>To increase the supply of didactic material that improves the attention to diversity.</p>	<p>To provide CFIE and schools with counselling on the acquisition and use of specific resources to attend to diversity.</p> <p>To collaborate on the improvement of the schools' material and human resources.</p>	<p>To study and make proposals as to the organization and supply of educational back-up resources for the schools.</p>

2. Setting up the organization and the way to carry out the work

■ APPOINTING THE TEAM TO BE IN CHARGE OF THE GENERAL COORDINATION OF THE PROJECT

The CFIE, as an improvement team, is the institution in charge of coordinating the Improvement Plan.

The CFIE sets up an organizational structure based upon *training seminars*: A seminar is a kind of class or discussion panel whose training purpose is to delve deeply into the study of an educational topic. The participants contribute with their experiences and knowledge, as experts in pedagogical practice. It is a way of "learning in equality" and, sometimes, an expert is invited to moderate the discussions and help to go deeper into an educational topic, following the guidelines of a project and drawing conclusions from it.

■ COMPOSITION OF THE GROUPS (SEMINARS, DEPARTMENTS, TEAMS, ETC.) AND FIELDS OF WORK

One of the seminars assembles all the management teams from the schools and educational services. All the actions and the rest of the seminars are coordinated from this, so to speak, main seminar.

TEACHERS

Cycle teams
Classwork
Carrying out activities
Evaluation and proposals

SEMINAR

COORDINATORS
Proposals for activities
Design of activities
Evaluation and proposals

MANAGEMENT TEAMS

- Agreements regarding topics and activities
- Discussion and participants input on activities
- Coordination of material and human resources
- Evaluation and proposals

This cascade organization allows a dynamic feedback of information and a shared and balanced distribution of tasks and responsibilities in order to achieve greater effectiveness when carrying out the actions to fulfill the objectives proposed, as well as a better cohesion among such a numerous task force.

■ ASSIGNING FUNCTIONS TO EACH GROUP AND FIELD OF WORK

Management Team Seminar

The management team seminar has a monthly meeting and maintains the same structure as eight years ago, when this project was first set up.

Teachers' Seminar

- The teachers' seminars are summoned every two weeks, according to the activities to be carried out.
- Each seminar has a coordinator and the participants belong to the different schools of the area. The meetings take place simultaneously, the same day and time, in all the schools of the district. The teachers assemble according to the cycle they teach: infant, primary and secondary.
- The teachers seminars have varied in number and structure, depending on the program of activities to carry out throughout the school year (Peace Day, Assembly in the Courtyards, Intercultural Week, Film Festival Week, etc.).
- Both the seminars and task forces have always followed a cyclic process that consists in programming activities, resource hunting, diffusion, execution and evaluation of results with proposals for future actions, in order to program the following set of activities.
- The use of new technologies (computers, video, etc) has been an essential element to enhance communication among the participants, prepare material and diffuse the programs of activities.

The Counseling Team (EOEP) coordinates and organizes the training seminars for teachers in each school and offers training courses for parents through the Parents' School. The topics of reflection have been changing throughout the years: "Schooling and Absenteeism", "Conflict and Living-Together", etc.

3. Assessment design

Assessment has been carried out on a yearly basis. A global evaluation also takes place every three years, at the end of each plan. Both the plans and the projects have always followed a similar outline.

■ CHARACTERISTICS AND TYPE OF ASSESSMENT

The method of mixed evaluation is the one applied to do the assessments, and it was chosen as the most appropriate to fulfill the needs of the Improvement Plan. It contains two phases: self-evaluation and external evaluation.

Each seminar and school year undergo an evaluation based upon certain criteria and figures, at the beginning, during the process and at the end of the seminar/school year. The results are mainly of a quantitative nature.

The Provincial Commission for Improvement appoints an Assessment Team that carries out the external evaluation of schools and educational services involved in the Plan. The results are also of a quantitative nature.

ASPECTS, PROCESSES AND ACTIONS TO BE EVALUATED

The aspects assessed are the following:

- Objectives
- Activities
- Coordination
- Participants

- Resources
- Results obtained

■ CRITERIA AND INDICATORS USED

The criteria established to determine the degree of attainment of objectives for each field of work are:

- Degree of attainment of objectives
- Coherence of the actions taken to fulfill the general objectives
- Planning, development and timing of activities
- Degree of participation of students, families and teachers
- Degree of involvement of schools and educational services
- Degree of satisfaction of students, families, teachers and services
- Degree of internal coordination of management teams seminar
- Degree of internal coordination of seminars carried out
- Usefulness of resources
- Information fluency and feedback among schools and educational services
- Effect of the Plan on school life
- Effect of the Plan on absenteeism and schooling

■ TECHNIQUES

The techniques most commonly used are:

- Inquiry
- Observation
- Joint reflection

■ INSTRUMENTS

The instruments used are:

- General annual assessment of management teams seminar questionnaire
- Seminar assessment questionnaire
- Activity assessment questionnaire
- Reports on the quality of the training seminars
- Annual memorandum

4. Results of the assessments

The results obtained are presented globally summarized in the following:

■ STRONG POINTS:

- Improvement of coordination among schools and services to find solutions to common problems and carry out joint activities.
- Improvement in participation, involvement, living together and relationship between students and teachers.
- Improvement of the image of these neighborhoods, due to a better knowledge of their social reality and the educational intervention performed.
- Promotion of training for teachers through permanent seminars organized in the schools.
- Improvement of gypsy students schooling and decrease of absenteeism.

■ WEAK POINTS:

- Family involvement
- Functioning of the Schooling Commission
- Uneven involvement of the schools
- Poor diffusion in the city of the educational offers in the district

Continue making improvement plans

1. Analysis of the needs
2. Identification of fields to be improved
3. General objectives for improvement
4. Specific annual objectives: description by fields and organisms involved
5. Actions and activities to carry out by the different organisms involved

6. Organization and way of working (same as in previous plan)
7. Assessment (same as in previous plan)

"IN OUR SCHOOLS WE ARE MOVING FORWARD TO ACHIEVE A COMMON GOAL"

The previous Multi-Annual District Improvement Plan yielded excellent results, as can be seen in the memoranda furnished by all schools and educational services. In addition, at the end of the school year 2002/03, the Plan was awarded a prize for being one of the best quality initiatives carried out in Castilla-León. Therefore, all the participating schools and educational services want to continue working on these projects, taking advantage of the structures created to implement the Plan.

1. Analysis of the needs

At this point, besides reinforcing our previous work, we would like to highlight the importance of the **Letters of Services, Health Education and Education for Living-Together**.

- The Letters of Services facilitate the knowledge and diffusion of the educational offer of the area in the city.
- The promotion of good habits to lead a healthy life, such as, eating properly and maintaining standards of hygiene, has a beneficial influence on the betterment of the learning processes and on a wholesome development of the students.
- The practice of an inductive discipline model by teachers and parents helps the students to be more assertive and improves the atmosphere in the classroom, schools, family life and neighborhood, in general.

2. Identification of fields to be improved

The **common fields** to be improved are:

- Field 1: To put into action measures that energize the socio-educational practices in the educational community, in order to promote sound living-together and acceptance of all the cultural diversities that live in the district.
- Field 2: To program activities in the neighborhoods with ample diffusion in all the city in order to inform all citizens of the educational offer and services in the district. These activities should aim at making the schools open spaces for the neighbors to participate actively in all programs and activities and for the families and students to get to know the school and each other as well.
- Field 3: To develop participation, coordination and organization of teachers, back-up professionals, and other institutions, associations, educational services and education inspection, in order to improve the attention to the students of the district.
- Field 4: To promote skill training for teachers, exercising analysis and debate with the purpose of modifying attitudes to focus better on the students' success in their studies and a satisfactory living-together in the schools and to prevent and/or intervene in absenteeism situations and improve students' health education.
- Field 5: To attain a greater balance among the different schools of the district, regarding the type of students they register.

3. General objectives of improvement

- To guarantee the fulfillment of the principles of quality and equal opportunities.
- To include in the curricula the inductive discipline and assertive behavior models for students, parents and teachers, in order to achieve an atmosphere of harmony in the schools and neighborhoods.
- To increase the participation of students and their families by putting into action measures that energize the socio-educational practices in the schools, neighborhoods and the rest of the city.
- To diffuse information regarding the educational offer of the district throughout the city, highlighting the constant work carried out by all the people involved in the betterment of educational quality.
- To improve health education of students and their families, maximizing their participation in sports and healthy activities.
- To supervise the registration process, distributing the students evenly in all the schools and throughout the course, respecting registration periods and the freedom to choose a school.
- To achieve that the students start school at the earliest age possible, and minimize absenteeism.
- To pay special attention to the students that are moving up to the following cycle, from Primary School to Obligatory Secondary School and coordinate their pass.
- To improve teachers' competence, promoting reflection, analysis, debate and exchange of ideas and experiences.
- To plan and evaluate, in a coordinate fashion, the actions carried out by each school or institution involved in the District Plan.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES FOR SCHOOLS AND EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

FIELD	SCHOOLS	CFIE	EOEP #4	DISTRICT EDUCATION INSPECTION	COMMISSION ON ABSENTEEISM
F 1.- To put into action measures that energize the socio-educational practices in the educational community, in order to promote sound living-together and acceptance of all the cultural diversities that live in the district.	<p>*To participate in the design of annual programs to energize the socio-educational practices of the district.</p> <p>*To collaborate on the development, diffusion, organization and assessment of the different activities.</p> <p>*To contribute economically to the development of the proposed activities.</p>	<p>*To provide counseling on the design of the annual programs to energize socio-educational practices of the district.</p> <p>*To collaborate on the development, diffusion, organization and assessment of the different activities.</p> <p>*To contribute economically to the development of the proposed activities.</p>	<p>*To participate in the design of annual programs to energize the socio-educational practices of the district.</p> <p>*To collaborate on the development, diffusion, organization and assessment of the different activities.</p> <p>*To contribute economically to the development of the proposed activities.</p>	<p>*To provide counseling on the design of the annual programs to energize socio-educational practices of the district.</p> <p>*To participate in the evaluation of the different activities.</p>	<p>*To participate in the design of annual programs, in order to energize the socio-educational practices of the district.</p> <p>*To participate in the evaluation of the different activities.</p>
F 2.- To program activities in the neighborhoods with ample diffusion in all the city in order to inform all citizens of the educational offer and services in the district. These activities should aim at making the schools open spaces for the neighbors to participate actively in all programs and activities and for the families and students to get to know the school and, also, each other.	<p>*To collaborate gathering information to write out the Letter of Services of the district.</p> <p>*To participate in its design and subsequent diffusion.</p> <p>*To push forward the processes of information and participation of students and their families, concerning the general dynamics of the school.</p>	<p>*To collaborate gathering information to write out the Letter of Services of the district.</p> <p>*To participate in its design and subsequent diffusion.</p> <p>*To provide counseling to write out PECs to adapt them to the cultural and ethnic diversity of the schools.</p> <p>District services: *To participate in their design and subsequent diffusion.</p>	<p>*To collaborate gathering information to write out the Letter of Services of the district.</p> <p>*To participate in its design and subsequent diffusion.</p> <p>*To participate in coordination with other institutions involved in the students' education process.</p> <p>*To provide counseling and support when welcoming the students to their school.</p>	<p>*To participate in the coordination meetings with the schools' management teams, analyzing results and measures that the Education Administration might be taking.</p>	<p>*To participate in the coordination meetings with the schools' management teams, analyzing results and measures that the Education Administration might be taking.</p>

	<p>*To participate in the schools' management teams meetings.</p>
	<p>*To help the different groups and teams to find the appropriate moments to summon their meetings. *To participate in the schools' management teams meetings.</p>
	<p>*To participate in the coordination meetings and in the corresponding task forces.</p>
<p>*To provide counseling to write out and review the PECs to adapt them to the cultural and ethnic diversity of the schools.</p>	<p>*To coordinate the meetings of the schools' management teams participating in the District Plan, in order to help schools and services involved to develop their initiatives.</p>
<p>*To recognize and include in the PEC an explanation of the characteristics of the different cultures that attend the school.</p>	<p>*To organize the teachers in teams that work on a common project of reflection, debate, coordination and improvement. *To participate in the coordination and debate spaces that will be created to operate in the district.</p>
<p>F 3.- To develop participation and organization of teachers, back-up professionals, and other institutions, associational services and educational inspection, in order to improve the attention to the students of the district.</p>	<p>F 4.- To promote skill training for teachers, exercising analysis and debate with the purpose of modifying attitudes to focus better on the students success in their studies and a satisfactory living-together in the schools and to prevent and/or intervene in absenteeism situations and improve the students' health education.</p>
	<p>*To collaborate on the evaluation and follow-up of training strategies: School Plan, District Plan, PFC, etc., that require intervention, support and assessment from the District Education Inspection.</p>
<p>*To organize the task forces, seminars, teams, etc. to discuss topics, such as living-together, absenteeism, health education and attention to diversity.</p>	<p>*To encourage the organization of training courses for teachers in the schools involved in the District Plan.</p>
<p>*To organize the task forces, seminars, teams, etc. to discuss topics, such as living-together, absenteeism, health education and attention to diversity.</p>	<p>*To participate in the Coordination Seminar for schools' management teams and back-up services.</p>

FIELD	SCHOOLS	CFIE	EOEP #4	DISTRICT EDUCATION INSPECTION	COMMISSION ON ABSENTEEISM
F 5.- To attain a greater balance among the different schools of the district, regarding the type of students they register.	<p>*To collaborate with the schooling commissions throughout the students' registration and diagnosis processes.</p> <p>*To attain transparency and truthfulness, regarding all processes.</p> <p>*To collaborate with the other schools of the district to make the registration process easier.</p>	<p>*To provide support and counsel, regarding inter-institutional coordination.</p>	<p>*To collaborate with the schooling commissions throughout the students' registration and diagnosis processes.</p> <p>*To attain transparency and truthfulness, regarding all processes.</p>	<p>*To assign the places applied for, after counseling, registration and adjudication have taken place.</p> <p>*To attain transparency and truthfulness, regarding all processes.</p> <p>To support positive discrimination measures in the district.</p>	<p>*To support measures taken to prevent absenteeism in the district.</p> <p>*To carry out effective follow-up of the cases detected by the educational services of the district.</p>

4. Organization and way of working (the same as in the previous plan)

5. Assessment (the same as in the previous plan)

Evaluation results

The results obtained are presented in a global summary:

■ Strong points

A feeling of district has been accomplished, which means:

- Permanent coordination and joint reflection to find solutions and carry out common activities.
- Participation, involvement, living-together and relationship among teachers and students in the schools and among all the schools.
- An improvement of the image of these neighborhoods, due to a better knowledge of their social reality, which has created a "Pajarillos-Pilarica conscience or culture".
- A greater diffusion of the district's educational offer has been accomplished, making catalogues and posters with information about the different options and possibilities for the students to attend school.
 - The schools continue offering training for teachers through Permanent Seminars that are set up according to the needs that arise.
 - Registration of all 3-year-old gypsy students has been achieved and absenteeism has decreased.

■ Weak points

- Family involvement is still low, but has improved.
- Due to the way the schooling commission works and the regulations in force, sometimes the students cannot be distributed evenly in the different schools.
- Uneven application of the Plan in certain schools.

Proposal for the future

1. Detection and analysis of needs (weak points recorded in previous plans and continuity proposals from the schools concerning plans already carried out).
2. Identification of fields to be improved or general objectives.
3. Setting up specific annual objectives (according to general objectives) and their distribution among the participants.
4. Actions and activities that the different participating organisms are to carry out.
5. Organization and way of working (according to the participants).
6. Project evaluation design.
7. Practical description, illustration: work projects for Pajarillos-Pilarica until 2009.

Work projects for the Pajarillos-Pilarica district until 2009

After 6 years of joint work, the schools and educational services have managed to put in motion a collaboration network in the Pajarillos-Pilarica district. In the Evaluation Memorandum 06/07, nearly all the participants of the Improvement Plan expressed their wish to keep together as a DISTRICT to continue working to achieve the objectives they had set up from the beginning.

A series of new collaboration initiatives are being carried out to increase family participation in school life and put in motion appropriate elements to promote and support family involvement, especially, of those from immigrant origin or cultural minorities.

The general objectives of this new project are:

- To improve the quality of education in the area and increase the success rate of the students.
- To continue the analysis and study of the school population of the district in order to accomplish a balanced distribution of students in the different schools.
- To program common activities that promote living-together and coordination among schools and educational services.
- To encourage family participation in school life, especially among immigrant families or cultural minorities, making a specific plan of action.

As far as the organization and way of working, the EOEP is the main coordinator of the Plan. The Management Teams Seminar is maintained as the cohesion element for all the schools. Their task is to discuss the work proposals in their schools, with the teachers teams and bring back their ideas to the Seminar.

Therefore, the EOEP coordinates, the Management Teams make the planning, and the schools carry out the actions and activities agreed.

Afterwards, all of them participate in the evaluation of what was done.

Initiatives and practical activities to facilitate closeness between families and schools

Participation in schools for parents:

Schools for parents are a meeting point for the training and participation of families in school life. They are held in schools during the school year in evening sessions. They are coordinated by members of the Educational and psycho pedagogical Counseling Team. During their sessions, topics of interests for families are discussed. These topics are raised by parents or detected with the help of class tutors.

Frequently, the topics for discussion are:

- Prevention of school absenteeism, school rules.
- Prevention of conflicts in the classroom.
- Diversity in the classrooms.
- Health education.

These topics are presented and discussed by members of the Educational and psycho pedagogical Counselling Team or by external experts.

Establishing of a climate of confidence in the relationship with families

In order to achieve an appropriate climate of confidence in the relationship between schools and families, the following principles are followed:

- Make use of the times of entrance to and departure from school to favor closeness between school and families.

- Many schools have established their own "welcome plans" to ease the integration of new students and their families in the school and in the surrounding area. These plans are made up of different activities in which both teachers and students participate.
 - Distribution among families of printed versions of the "charts of services" of each school. These charts explain what families can expect from schools, their services and the quality compromises of the educational centre. These charts have versions in different languages to meet the needs of immigrant families.
 - Assistance in the procedures to apply for different subsidies, financial or socio-cultural: school grants, school enrolment paperwork both at Infant or Secondary stages, evening activities for students, school canteens, social subsidies. This assistance is coordinated between the schools, Social Services of the area and local NGO's.
- Promotion of the participation of gypsy families in school activities**
- School management teams and class tutors pay special attention to the participation of gypsy families in:
- Parents' meetings, at the beginning and along the academic year.
 - Parents' associations
 - Schools for parents and other training and cultural activities, like excursions or school festivals
 - Transition between Primary and Secondary Education. Special informative events are organised with the participation of people relevant in their culture.
 - Acceptance and fostering of the role of the mediator to ease access of gypsy families to schools.
 - Collaboration of mediators to solve conflicts or to avoid absenteeism
 - Specific training courses for mediators, with the participation of teachers, members of the educational and psycho pedagogical counselling team and members of the gypsy community. These courses have emphasised the role of students of gypsy background who act as mediators.