



Nieves Blanco Garcia

January 4, hrs 14.30 – Room 112

INNOVATION BEYOND REFORMS: RECOGNIZING THE WISDOM OF SCHOOLS

Innovation is linked to the search of adequate forms of teaching, so that they make possible a better and more rewarding life for each and every one of the boys and girls in our classrooms. However, to give shape to this purpose is a very complex matter, but at the same time there is the conviction that it was never so important to achieve it. Reforms may constitute an opportunity or an obstacle for innovation, creating contexts that induce change and favour educational practices, or that restrain them. In any case, what recent research tells us is that reforms will have limited success, or even become announced failures, if the changes to improve the pedagogical practices are not desired and supported by the teachers themselves. The possibility of innovation, therefore, is linked with the professional ideals and the participation of each teacher individually, for, as Barry McDonald wrote, "what determines the quality of teaching and the perfectment of school is the quality of the teachers themselves and their involvement with change." If we want to promote innovation and changes to improve schools, which are so needed at this moment, it is necessary to base such process in the knowledge that is already there, the one that the innovative teachers have; it is necessary, therefore, that the policies are based in the trust and ability of the teachers to begin and maintain changes; and that research practice should redefine its codes to be able to listen and translate them in adequate words, "interrupting the mechanisms of unlegitimization and subtraction that have dominated until now the economy of relations in the academy and schools." (Mecenero, 2003, 109)

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