

Wake Up call

Wednesday, February 9, twelve thousand angry teachers, school heads and governors met in Utrecht (Netherlands) to protest against budget cuts on education for children with special needs. The new Dutch government saves 300.000.000 euro's on special education. Together with an earlier budget cut of 100.000.000 euro's it's a significant downsize of investing in the future generation. And maybe this is not the end. I've received the same disturbing messages from other European countries. The problem is that most politicians will agree on the fact that investing in education is the best investment for the future and it saves a lot of money on the long term. Every early school leaver will cost the Dutch society the average sum of € 200.000 before adulthood; money spent on youth care, criminal affairs, social security etc. On life time it's more than a million!. So not investing in education is really penny wise and pound foolish. School leaders face not only lack of money; the problems in our schools increase in numbers but also in complexity. It's not an easy job to grow up in this complicated and often very unsafe society. A lot of children face serious problems; sometimes in complex learning disabilities, sometimes in behaviour problems. Furthermore, parents are more and more demanding to schools and don't we all aim for a perfect society?

Good education is a pre-condition to an almost perfect society. It's time for a political wakeup call!!