

Responsibility, autonomy and evaluations for the improvement of schools

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Basic ideas behind schooling

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One who knows
disseminates his/her
knowledge to those who
do not.

Students learn by
listening and
following directions.

Students learn by
doing and
reflecting.
Teachers support,
help and challenge.

Sweden in 2009

o Preschool	ages 1 to 5	40-90%
o Preschool class	age 6	100%
o <i>Grund</i> school	ages 7 to 16	100%
o <i>Gymnasie</i> school	ages 16 to 19	95%
o University	ages 19 & over	50%

In the Swedish school system

- o The parliament
 - o Determines the overall structure
 - o Sets the goals
- o The government
 - o Decides how funds are distributed amongst its schools
- o Each *kommun*
 - o Produces results and decides how to use the funds
- o Each school

To know how

- To think
- To feel
- To express
- To create
- To produce
- To decide
- To learn

To be

- Independent
- Co-operative
- Tolerant
- Honest
- Aware
- Responsible

To dare

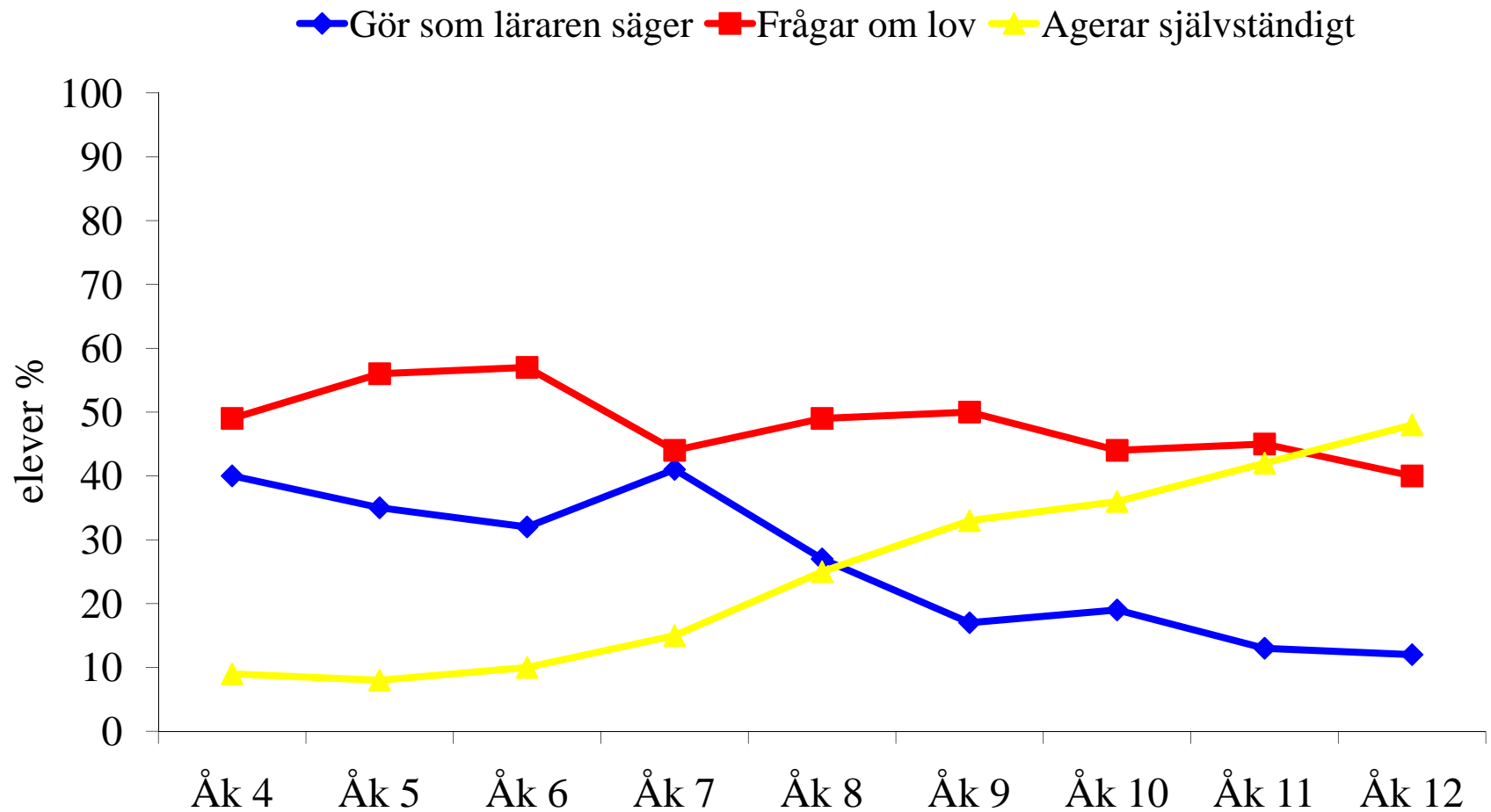
Evaluating independence

- Your teacher tells you to find out how a given product is made. You are asked to read about the production process in the library. On your way to the library you realise that one of your neighbours knows a lot about this process. It would be quicker and easier to phone him.
- What do you do?

Possible responses

1. Go to the library and do as the teacher told you.
2. Ask the teacher for permission to call your neighbour instead.
3. Call your neighbour without asking the teacher.

Independence during school years



Student observations regarding work over a 2-week period: % of 15-minute periods spent...

	11-13 y.o.	14-16 y.o.	17-19 y.o.
Listening to the teacher	22	13	25
Working alone	50	58	30
Working in groups	20	10	19
Having discussions	38	39	19
Researching	26	28	7
At the computer	10	9	16

Each year the school

- o Assesses its results and the quality of internal work
- o Submits a quality review to the *kommun*, which is usually posted online
- o The *kommun* submits a quality review to the National Agency for Education (*Skolverket*)

Evaluation rules

- o Marks are not given until grade 6
- o Teachers use their own methods to test students' knowledge throughout the school years and are trusted to mark the students
- o Each semester the teacher, student and parents meet for 'development talks', based on each student's development plan

Evaluation rules

- o National tests in Swedish and maths are compulsory in grades 3 and 5.
- o Compulsory tests in Swedish, maths and English are given in grade 9.
- o Compulsory national tests in several subjects are given in the *Gymnasie*.

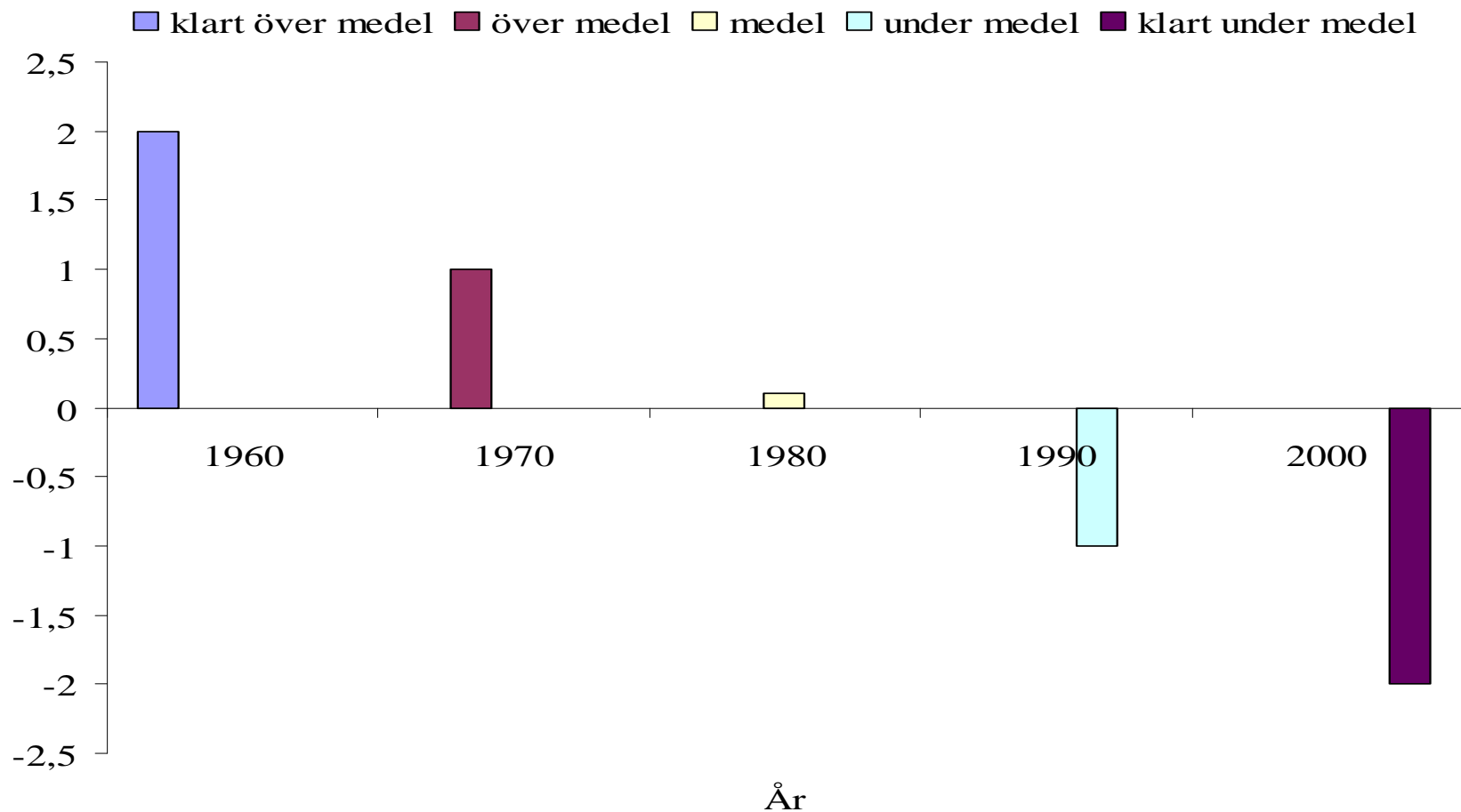
Evaluation rules

- o The results of the national tests are used as a 'calibration' tool to help teachers mark students.
- o The aggregate results of the national tests for grade-9 students are published online for each school.

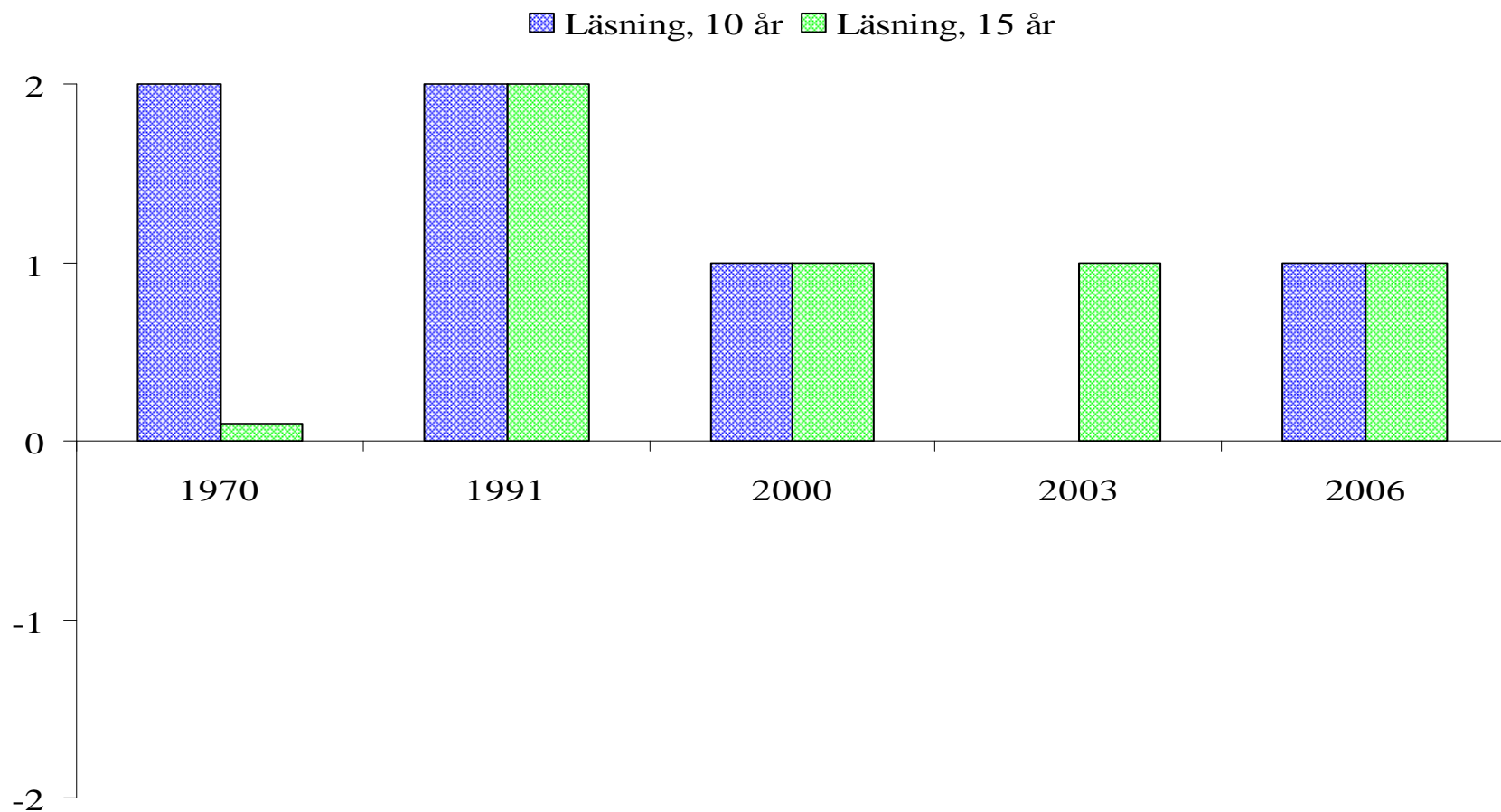
National evaluations

- o In 1989, 1992, 1995, 1998 and 2003, specific national evaluations were conducted, examining all subjects taught in *Grund* schools.
- o Sweden also uses data from different international evaluations of the school system as part of its regular national evaluations.

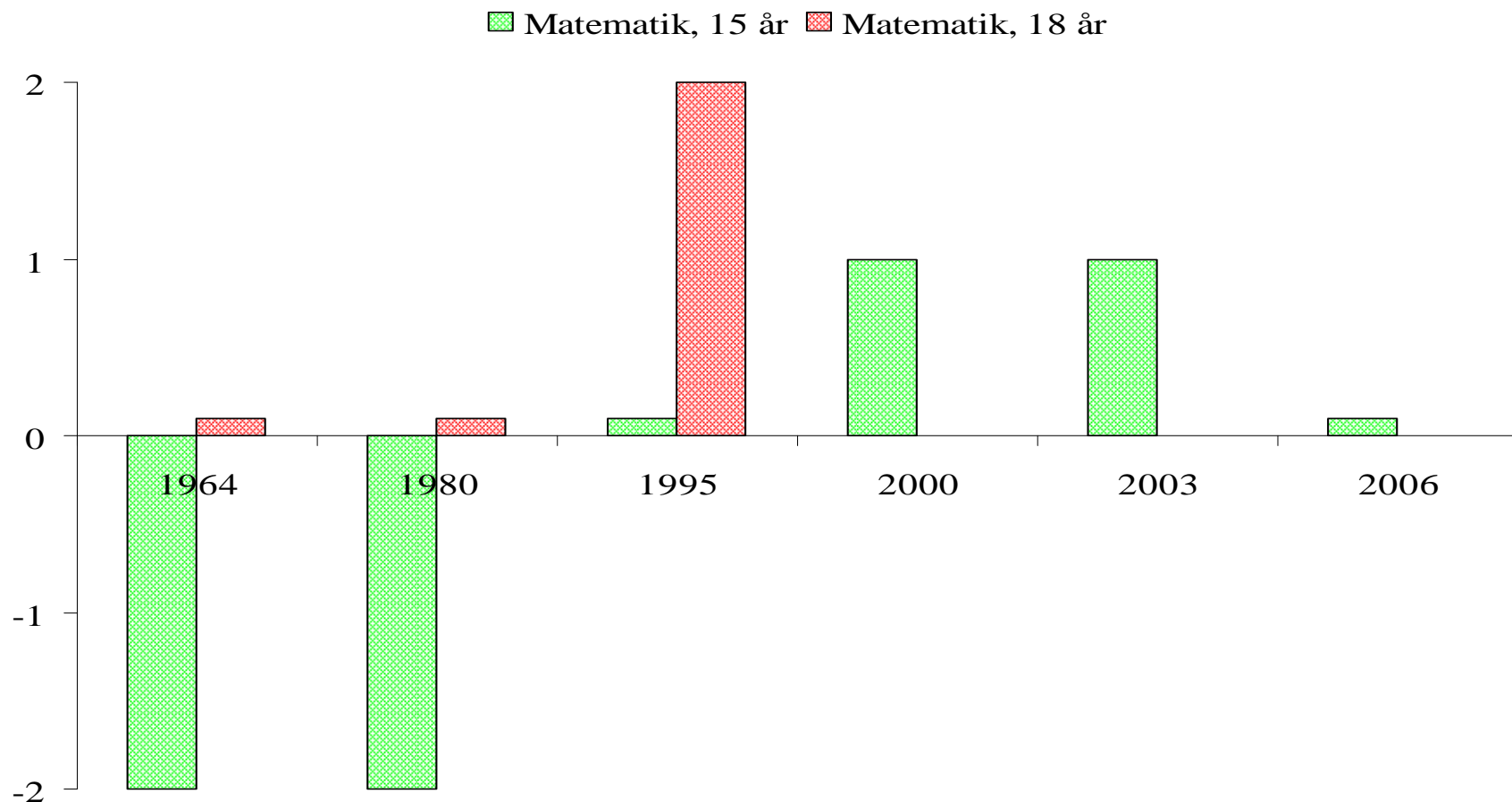
International comparisons



International literacy comparisons



International maths comparisons



Use of the evaluations

- o The evaluation results are used in the public debate about schools via the media, from Parliament to the local schools.
- o Politicians at all levels use them
- o Teachers' organisations and *kommuns* use them
- o School leaders and teachers use them to make local improvements

Use of the evaluations

- o Parents use them to a small extent when choosing schools for their children
- o The National School Inspection body uses them as a basis for its inspections, which it conducts every three years

Teachers lead in-school learning

- o Teachers follow the same students for many years (between three and six years)
- o Teachers base their leadership on learning diagnoses and individual development plans for each student
- o Teachers give feedback to students and parents

School leaders
manage autonomous and accountable
schools based on

- o Clear visions
- o Internal democracy
- o High degree of professionalism

School leader training

- o Role of school leader is tried out before the job starts
- o Introductory period in the early phase
- o In-depth training in the first years on the job
- o Continuous, on-the-job training, etc.

School leader tasks

- o To state the school's ideology
- o To manage time, tasks and people
- o To oversee evaluation activities
- o To react clearly
- o To find administrative and economic solutions
- o To identify relationship patterns
- o To help settle conflicts
- o To preserve as well as to develop

Swedish efforts to train all school leaders since 1975

- o Study circles examining school leaders' work.
 - o 10 meetings
- o Training on basic activities and regulations.
 - o The first year on the job
- o In-depth training on school development and school-based evaluations.
 - o 2–3 subsequent years, 6 weeks + homework and seminars
- o Continuous, on-the-job training
 - o About 5 days a year

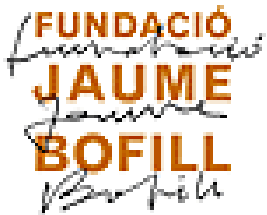
In future...

- o More teachers and school leaders need to become engaged in the production of new knowledge about learning
- o Teachers and school leaders need to use time more systematically within their professions to build knowledge at their schools regarding learning processes and results



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