**Meeting Tactile Reading and Braille professionals**

Date: 04.10.2024 (on Teams)

**Those who attended the meeting:**

Ásta Björnsdóttir – Iceland

Heiður Baldursdóttir - Iceland

Marie Sverdrup - Norway

Tine Hansen – Denmark

Niina Laitinen - Finland

Victoria Bergström - Sweden

Liselotte Kürstein Andersen - Denmark

**The subject of the meeting:**

Marie Sverdrup presented her thesis:

*Everything takes much longer*, experience of teachers in teaching Braille in mainstream schools, what challenges do teachers face? The purpose of the thesis was to gain insight into the experience contact teachers and special education teachers have with Braille in regular teaching at grades 1-4. She was working with 3 contact teachers and 3 special educational teachers and took interviews with them. Her research questions was: How do contact teachers and special education teacher in primary school describe their experience with braille in the mainstream school.

There were a few themes that came from the interviews that she told us about.

* Need for knowledge and support
* It is not always easy to include Braille in the classroom
* Different framework conditions for the same work

Often there is little knowledge in the schools when students start, overwhelming at times. Helps to know that you are not alone, more then one teacher that share the responsibility. Helps to take a course on Braille before in Stadped. Time in the essence to develop competence, and a continuous process of developing competence-new technology and equipment, „learning new things all the time “. All teachers talked about the need for expert support from Stadped. They do not look for PPT, rather Stadped. They think that Braille must be normalized in the classroom and they had positive experience with that. Use it in station teaching, labeling material on the wall and printing pupil’s text. Then contact teachers dont always have time, often the special education teacher and the contact teacher need more time to collaborate.

The teachers talked about how adapted material from Stadped was timesaving. Time consuming to adapt material in the school. They also talked about how digital teaching aids and resources are not universally designed. Many visual teaching tasks are very visual so it’s not giving the students a good enough learning outcome. Another theme was that everyone working with the pupil should increase their competence and knowledge. Often the assistance teacher and special education teacher have the most knowledge. They think that the management should send the teachers to take a course on Braille (15-hour course they have) before they start teaching (there is not enough time, they would have to do it in their free time). Some teachers said that in their school they were giving time, and they were happier. They all talk about lack of time to collaborate. With contact teachers, assistant teachers and subject teachers. It is an obstacle to plan the teaching that works for sighted and blind children. They said that it was positive to work in a two-teacher system. Even more time is needed for planning and preparation. They all share the experience about using their free time to prepare and plan, but they also say that it is worth it.

Her conclusion was

Conclusion is that various framework factors affect and impact the work

* Time and knowledge
* Organization of teacher resources
* Management
* Economy

Different latitues and different possibilities.

After the presentation we all had a discussion about it and we all share the same experience from our countries.

Tine and Liselotte told us about their computer camp, once a year, the students come with their teachers, and they are going to ask their co-worker to come and tell us about it on our next meeting.

Victoria told us about their digital workshops, and Carina works on that, and she will ask her to introduce it to us after Christmas.

Marie shared that the ICT. Novir has open meetings sometimes that

Marie told us that they are doing revision in the ABC braille books, she will tell us more about that next year. Also, about courses -digital on for ex food and health.

Ásta shared that we are starting with open ICT meetings collaboartion with us at the National institute and the Blind union, starting next week.

Discussion about webinars for teachers and PPT are invited.

Tine showed us their website about webinars, that has many free webinars, both at Ibos and refsnæs.

**The agenda for the next meeting:**

The next meeting is scheduled for Friday morning 29th of October at 8.30 Icelandic time

\* Liselotte will show us material that she has been working on in adapted books.

\*Presentation from Denmark about computer camp (hopefully)