



School-to-School Mentoring Report:

Our experience in MenSI

Mentor school: Weöres Sándor Primary School in Gyömrő

Pilot school year: 2021/22

Mentor school coordinator: Csilla Kertész Reichertné





1. Composition of the MenSI Pilot School cluster

School Name	Role	Location	Website	Nr students	Nr teachers
Gyömrői Weöres Sándor Általános Iskola és Alapfokú Művészeti Iskola	MENTOR SCHOOL	2230 Gyömrő, Fő tér 2/b	https://weoresiskola.hu	887	68
Algyői Fehér Ignác Általános Iskola	MENTEE SCHOOL	6750 Algyő, Sport u. 5.	https://algyoiskola.hu	423	39
Gyomaendrődi Kis Bálint Általános Iskola	MENTEE SCHOOL	5500 Gyomaendrőd, Fő út 181.	http://www.kisb-gyomae.edu.hu/	235	23
Üllés, Forráskút, Csólyospálos Községi Általános Iskola és Alapfokú Művészeti Iskola Csólyospálosi Tagintézménye	MENTEE SCHOOL	6135 Csólyospálos Kossuth L. u. 58.	http://cspiskola.hu	178	18
Szandaszőlősi Általános Iskola és Alapfokú Művészeti Iskola	MENTEE SCHOOL	5008 Szolnok (Szandaszőlő Simon Ferenc út 47	https://szandasuli.hu	756	73



2. Priorities and Goals

(Please describe the priority areas and goals of the mentoring activities that were implemented within your school cluster in terms of innovative pedagogical practices and use of digital technologies to improve teaching and learning)

Priorities

Our school cluster applied a bottom-up approach to school-to-school mentoring. We planned our work to mutually help and support each other.

Goals

Our goal was to identify our strengths and weaknesses based on the SELFIE report, and after that to create a network in the school cluster to help teachers improve their digital skills and teaching practices.



3. Mentoring activities

3.1 Preparation

What steps did you undertake in order to initiate dialogue within your cluster of Mentee schools and identify their specific needs (e.g. Describe approximately how many interviews, meetings, questionnaires and surveys, SELFIE tests, etc. did you implement?)

Please add/delete rows as appropriate.

ACTIVITIES	ACHIEVEMENTS	CHALLENGES
<i>What did you do to achieve your goals?</i>	<i>What positive results did you achieve?</i>	<i>What difficulties did you face?</i>
<i>Online meeting 1</i>	<i>Introduction of the members of the project and the schools, planning the first F2F meeting at the mentor school. Introduction of the MenSI project.</i>	<i>none</i>
<i>Conducting the SELFIE survey</i>	<i>Each school conducted the SELFIE survey. Based on the results of the survey we identified our strengths and weaknesses taking into account the feedback from school administration, teachers, and students.</i>	<i>Students needed some clarification to understand the questions.</i>
<i>Online meeting 2</i>	<i>We created a one-year work plan for the duration of the MenSI project, adapting the MenSI concept of the project to our bottom-to-up approach. We agreed on the deadlines, documents due, the platform to be used.</i>	<i>Because of the pandemic regulations, the meeting had to be held online instead of F2F.</i>



3.2 Creating a framework for school-to-school networking

What steps did you undertake in order to coordinate mentoring activities and facilitate collaboration within your school cluster? e.g.

- Spaces both physical and virtual (e.g., hubs, online forums, platforms, etc.)
- Human resources (e.g., teams of school leaders, coordinators, experts and teacher trainers, reviewers, students' representatives, etc.)
- Digital infrastructure and resources
- Incentive and reward schemes to offer a tangible return on the schools' additional workload.

ACTIVITIES	ACHIEVEMENTS	CHALLENGES
<i>What did you do to achieve your goals?</i>	<i>What positive results did you achieve?</i>	<i>What difficulties did you face?</i>
<i>Analysing the SELFIE report</i>	<i>Identifying the strengths and weaknesses in each field, adding this information into an Excel grid, and looking for methods to improve our partner schools.</i>	<i>We had to agree on what should be regarded as a good or a bad result. Some of the scores seemed poor compared to the best score, so we decided that if it was above 4, it was not to be counted as poor.</i>
<i>Online workshop 1</i>	<i>Each school introduced its good practices in short presentation in the format of a TeachMeet.</i>	<i>none</i>
<i>Online workshop 2</i>	<i>Based on the SELFIE report and the choice of good practices we built and continually promoted our cluster network of schools to help each other.</i>	<i>Each school could find at least one good practice to use. In some cases, there were some more popular good practices needed by more schools, while some other good practices were not used at all. The distribution of help was uneven.</i>



3.3 Building up a community of practice

What steps did you undertake in order to facilitate dialogue and exchange of best practices within your school cluster (e.g. online sharing / repository / community platforms, regional hubs meetings and forums, blogs, websites, newsletters, cluster diaries, etc.)

ACTIVITIES	ACHIEVEMENTS	CHALLENGES
<i>What did you do to achieve your goals?</i>	<i>What positive results did you achieve?</i>	<i>What difficulties did you face?</i>
<i>Online cluster meetings</i>	<i>We involved more colleagues by organising online meetings, thus saving time. We met online once a month as a hub, and individually whenever it was needed. We could manage the project this way and mentor each other online. For the online meeting, we used Google MEET . We also uploaded all the documents on this platform.</i>	<i>In order to involve more colleagues, we preferred online meetings. This way, although we never met in person, we could introduce good practices online, since they were all digital. It worked well for us.</i>
<i>Mini reports</i>	<i>Each month we wrote a report on our mentoring activities in Hungarian. This helped us also to document activities, results, products, and challenges.</i>	<i>As a bottom-to-up cluster, we agreed that each school should hand in a report by itself, since we used different practices and methods to mentor each other.</i>
<i>Cluster diaries</i>	<i>Documenting the actions taken, and their impact, steps ahead, reflecting on our work.</i>	<i>It was a little bit confusing how to complete the chart in the middle of the process, as we could not see the impact yet.</i>

3.4 Creating professional development opportunities for Mentee school teachers

How often did you provide any of the following forms of professional development and support to Mentee schools?



- Face-to-face workshops and courses
- Online courses
- Learning snacks (or Digital Pills / eTapas)
- Webinars and Expert talks
- Panel discussions
- Teachmeets
- School-based study groups along MOOCs
- Articles and guides on dedicated blogs and websites
- Online mentoring
- Video recordings of classroom practice
- Other

ACTIVITIES	ACHIEVEMENTS	CHALLENGES
<i>What did you do to achieve your goals?</i>	<i>What positive results did you achieve?</i>	<i>What difficulties did you face?</i>
<i>Online mentoring and workshops</i>	<i>Keeping in touch, discussing tasks or problems, helping each other.</i>	<i>Lack of personal contact</i>
<i>Teachmeets</i>	<i>Introducing good practices in our schools.</i>	<i>none</i>
<i>Learning snacks</i>	<i>Sharing materials (videos, documents).</i>	<i>none</i>

3.5 Monitoring the mentoring process and evaluating progress

How often did you provide any of the following peer reviewing activities in order to evaluate how Mentee schools were progressing?

- Semi-structured interviews
- Face-to-face or online meetings
- Surveys & questionnaires
- Ongoing SELFIE self-assessment
- School visits
- Instructional rounds
- Job-shadowing & learning walks
- Video-based observations
- Others



ACTIVITIES	ACHIEVEMENTS	CHALLENGES
<i>What did you do to achieve your goals?</i>	<i>What positive results did you achieve?</i>	<i>What difficulties did you face?</i>
<i>Online meetings – once a month, individual online meetings as needed.</i>	<i>More colleagues were involved, saved time, flexible timing. We could discuss the tasks to carry out and reflect on the ongoing monitoring in the cluster.</i>	<i>Lack of personal contact.</i>
<i>SELFIE report at the beginning and at the end of the project</i>	<i>A clear, easy-to-handle report of the survey.</i>	<i>After one year of the project, the report was too close, not showing relevant changes or results yet. We missed personal feedback for the participants who filled in the survey.</i>

3.6 Documenting outcomes

What initiatives did you undertake in order to document mentoring activities and to share progress, evidence and outcomes with the whole school community (e.g. video interviews, school observations reports, cluster diaries, articles on blogs and/or websites, etc.)

ACTIVITIES	ACHIEVEMENTS	CHALLENGES
<i>What did you do to achieve your goals?</i>	<i>What positive results did you achieve?</i>	<i>What difficulties did you face?</i>
<i>Introducing the MenSI project to the school staff</i>	<i>The school staff became aware of the project, and some of them joined our work.</i>	<i>Some colleagues were rather passive, not willing to join. Mainly those that came on board are open-minded, innovative teachers, who are confident in using digital methods anyway.</i>
<i>Sharing cluster diaries and mini reports with the school staff on the school's Google Drive.</i>	<i>The project files were accessible to all school staff.</i>	<i>Not many teachers saw these documents.</i>
<i>Presentation of the work carried out in the MenSI project at the end-of-the-year staff conference.</i>	<i>The work and results of the project were shared with the colleagues.</i>	<i>none</i>



4. Lessons learnt in MenSI

4.1 Looking back to one year in MenSI

If you could go back to the beginning of your whole-school mentoring experience in MenSI or if you are planning to continue collaboration in your network, what would you do in a different way?

We think the project was all in all successful. The online meetings worked well for us. On the other hand, listening to other school clusters' presentation about their work who had the opportunity to meet face to face, we feel the lack of it due to the pandemic. With face-to-face meeting we could have got to know each other better. Visiting other schools is always a fascinating experience.

4.2 Final considerations / recommendations

What are your lessons learnt through MenSI? What recommendations would you give to schools that are willing to undertake a journey in school-to-school mentoring?

Working together is very rewarding! By seeing how other schools work, meeting colleagues and seeing what kinds of wonderful work is going on in other schools can be very enriching experience for all of us. Our school cluster was very lucky to have outstanding schools to work with. Probably that is why we managed to develop our community of practice from bottom to top. All of our mentee schools were motivated and had excellent practices. We also could learn from them.

Creating a work plan at the beginning of the project was very helpful. It is important to set clear objectives, deadlines, a timeline of things to do. Although our National Office did not interfere with our work, it helped with clear things-to-do lists and deadlines to keep us on track.



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