

Interview transcript (1:11:05)
December 5, 2019

A: Interviewer CM

B: Headmaster, MrCV, Fribourg

C: Interviewer AB

B: I'm visual, so to explain things, I might make drawings - maybe, but maybe not.

A: But it would be very good for us. To begin with, why did you decide to become a school principal or were you a teacher before?

B: First of all, it's not me who decides, I wish. A director is appointed. I've been a director for 10 years. If I had had to answer this question 10 years ago, I would not have answered in the same way as today. I've done a lot of training since then and I've gotten to know one thing: in fact, I explain things that are huge. I did a training and they explained why people became teachers. I was shocked by what I learned, because most teachers become teachers because it's a reassuring job, where there's little movement. And then they're in something that flows. And I said, but not at all! I'm moving, I take classes, I take ideas, I change. Teachers are not like that. And then he said to me, yes, but teachers are like that, not you. Besides, you're not a teacher anymore - you're a principal. Then I thought, it's true, every time I had another idea, the response was "ah no, we mustn't, we don't want to change everything this year, we still want to wait."

We're a very participatory school, which means that the team spirit of the disciplines is very strong in our school. The disciplines work together a lot. It's a desire that comes from me. I want people to have the same book or the same script or the same database. So if you have 11 different classes in the first year of math, all 11 teachers do a little bit of the same thing. That's typical in elementary and middle school but not at all in secondary II where everybody does what they want. We are in secondary II. For teachers in gymnasium, they have a script, that's it. For me, we collaborate. And then we say, scripts, what an idea, because students change teachers from one year to the next. When I was in the gymnasium, I heard a lot of teachers describing students saying, "Oh, sir, I have math problems with math teachers" and they would say do you know why do you have problems? Last year you had him, and his script, but if you had me...." But what a shame to talk like that. Whereas when you have the same script that you've been working on yourself, you don't ask who a student got last year, you say, I know you did this last year, I know you saw this, I know you did this exercise. In the end, we are more supportive of the Fachschaft's approach, of the discipline.

When we want to change something, it takes time. I was a leader to make things change and I want to make things move, to make the school move, to move forward. I don't like it when it just rolls along. So for me, if I'm the director, it's because I was probably estimating in my work something that moves more and then it's the passion of the students, not only in math but generally speaking, their professional future for me is something that fascinates me and then I found that as a teacher I can make things happen. Now as a school principal, you can make things happen. You know, some principals don't make things happen. There are principals who roll. You know two styles of principals, those who want to run the school, the school is doing well, and those who want to move.

So you don't have to make a move to make a move. For example: I'm involved, I'm on the Swiss committee of directors of schools of general culture, I'm President of the French-speaking committee. So I see my colleagues from Thurgau, from Geneva, I see their problems which are perhaps not ours, which were ours or which will be ours, which allows me to anticipate, to react before rather than being there and then to wait until the problem arrives and then to wait until there are solutions in the service. We are given a lot of freedom. And the advantage we have in the canton of Fribourg is that schools like ours have two. There are five gymnasiums, so to get people moving is more difficult than when there are only two of us and we are the parent company, if I dare say it like that. X they are very small. They are integrated in the gym. The gymnasium, the school of general culture and the business school. We are alone and we have been in existence since 1972. At X, they have existed since 1992. It is always what Y, which is the school of importance, has done, X has copied. At X, they also have a lot to do with the gymnasium and the business school, so I am lucky to be a little bit the only mother school. What we do, the others will copy. And since we are in the center of Switzerland, on the linguistic border, we know the problems of the German-speaking Swiss, we know the problems of the French-speaking Swiss, so we can make a lot of progress. For example: we are a school that is highly regarded at the Swiss level, at the SEG [Swiss Education Group] level, we were the first school to have bilingual classes, so people come and ask us a lot of questions. And then, we know that Fribourg has good results in the PISA test, so we get a lot of attention. I thought to myself, I have this chance to arrive at this school and I felt that it was a school that was going to grow even more. Gymnasiums don't grow anymore. They've been around for 400 years. It's slow, at the Swiss level, it's slow. For us, it's super dynamic. We've been around for 35 years, we have to move. I think it's just great.

A: What is dynamic, for example? Curriculum? Students? Can you explain what is dynamic?

B: School in the last 50 years, it has already gone through four big changes. First it was a school that was only for Francophones, a two-year curriculum for the health field. That was for 17 or 18 years. After that, it opened up to German speakers and also to the social field, for a three-year study program. It lasted about 15 years. After that, it also opened to students of pedagogy. And then afterwards, since 2010, when I became principal, it opened up to the fourth year with specialized maturities. So every ten, fifteen years there are big changes. Big changes in the number of years of study, in the type of study, ... but the school moves.

For example, in Bern, we have now been asked to review the national curricula and frameworks. Some cantons have waited. We have made cantonal curricula move, we have worked for cantonal curricula. We did not get the result that we would have hoped for because it is a consensus of 26 cantons, but we know that we have our share of work to do in this area. So, Bern is asking us to change things and the school in 2020, it will change completely again with new timetables, with new study plans - wow, it's moving! When you look at the gymnasiums, I'm going to be critical, in a year and a half, at the school of general culture we changed the whole timetable with the participation of the teachers, validated by the canton, changed all the regulations, changed all the national study plans, all the Fribourg study plans, the teachers are preparing the start of the school year for 2020 with these new study plans - in a year and a half. In the gymnasiums, in a year and a half, they have been told that computer science will become a compulsory subject. There will be an extra hour. You have to make a new schedule. In a year and a half, they have just

adopted the new schedule for one more hour - computer science. You had to take an hour off. Over the four years for one more hour, one hour had to be removed. A year and a half of discussion. We changed the complete schedule for the four years of study at the school of general culture, completely! And almost everything is ready in a year and a half. It's dynamic, the teachers know it's moving. So I think that's what's great.

What's also great for me is that the gymnasiums are easy. You've got the best students, the best students. You're in university, so you've been to the gymnasium. I've been to the gymnasium. It's so easy, there are only good students. So in the good students there are bad ones. But we complain about students who are still the cream of the crop. Here we are much more representative of Swiss society. For example, in the gymnasium they have 10% foreign students. In Switzerland, we have 24% foreign students. We have 24% foreign students at our school. We are not a school where we are outside of Swiss society. I think we represent Swiss society. Gymnasiums represent a certain elite. But yes, it has always been like that. Yes, and that doesn't change. We have more students with difficulties than the gymnasiums, we have more migrant students, we have more students who need compensation for disadvantages, more Asperger students, more students with disability insurance, we have more of everything than the gymnasiums because we are truly representative. And then all those who have difficulty getting into an apprenticeship because they have a difficulty with school or movement and who can't make it into the gymnasium, they feel at home with us. We also have a lot of students with difficulties, so we have to have teachers who are more flexible. I think it's great. For me, running a school like that is an honor and a joy.

I've been picked up several times to teach in gymnasiums. I had a former director say, "you have to come and teach at X" because I was an alumnus at X. It's the culture, the alumni X come back to teach at X, the college of tradition. I wanted to, but no, it's not interesting. Whereas for many people, you could have gone to teach at X, it's an honor. Ah, you're the director of the school of general culture, ah no. I'm so proud to be the director of this school.

A: It's very, very interesting because you said the demographics are about the same as in Switzerland. How do teachers prepare for this diversity? How do you facilitate or help them prepare to teach this kind of diverse group?

B: The first thing to prepare them well is to choose the teachers well.

A: And you can do that? Do you hire them yourself or is it done by the canton?

B: No, it comes from my house. Afterwards it is validated by the canton but it is always validated. If the teacher doesn't have the right title, he doesn't have the right skills or qualifications, I can be told no. But if he has the right qualifications, I decide. I take an example. You can choose between a teacher called Nicolas Genoud, a real Fribourg native, who is Swiss, from Switzerland or a teacher called Deluxun..., who comes from Sri Lanka but who has always lived in Switzerland and still has many ties with Sri Lanka. Who do you take? I take Deluxon Nilofer. I take Portuguese people, not necessarily secondos. We have a lot of Portuguese in Switzerland. I know that I can't only have Portuguese teachers, but I know that the Portuguese teacher, she helps me with the difficulties of some Portuguese students. Either me to understand, or she will discuss with them. So the choice we make of teachers is important. And if I show you, I don't have

many. I have 100 teachers, and of the teachers I'm telling you, I don't have many. But if I can choose them, if in the panel I'm offered, all of a sudden there's someone from the East, someone from Italy, etc., I try to take them too. We also need to have a faculty that represents our society. That's important to me.

Here I am perhaps talking about people who support the integration of foreigners. Last year, I hired a teacher and when I saw the file arrive, I said, I wanted this teacher. And when I looked at her file, for me it's even better because she's a person who... I didn't choose her for that, careful. You have to be careful. She's a person I saw in the newspapers a few years ago. Her son was the 10,000th inhabitant of X. And necessarily the commune chose the... as the 10,000th you take whoever you want around 9900 to 10,100, you take one. He was a mentally handicapped child with Down's syndrome. And she is the mother of this trisomic child. Okay. There had been a report, a program that is very well known in French-speaking Switzerland called "Temps présent" on Thursday evening about her and her child, the integration of her child into a class in an elementary school. It was very touching. I had seen it a few years ago. Wow, great!

And we in our school are opening up to the professions of health, social work and pedagogy. We do days with mentally handicapped people. We do days with small children. We organize a lot of days in the professional future. If we have someone who is even more sensitive because he is touched, if we have someone who can bring us this experience, a person, we take it. I didn't choose her for that. I chose her because she was a good teacher and she had the right title in the right discipline, but on top of that, if she has that in equal quality, I take her. So for me, the criteria goes further than it's a good teacher who has the title. After that, if I can get things, I also look at the teacher's background, for example. Very often in gymnasiums we want an academic career. I like teachers who have a non-academic background. That means people who come from a professional background, who have done an apprenticeship, who have gone through a university of applied sciences. For example, I have a chemistry teacher who has done an apprenticeship and she has a different vision of life. In the gymnasiums here, if you haven't done the gymnasium yourself, you're nothing. It's all about the gymnasium. And I have to say to the students, the gymnasium is good, the school of general culture is good, learning is good, and if I only have teachers who come from the gymnasium, I don't want teachers in my school who will say you have to go to the gymnasium if they can't do it. You need people who are open to everything. I think we also need to choose a faculty that is ready and open. Most of the teachers I hire are also people who have often done internships or replacements with us. So they know the school and they have appreciated it.

In the gymnasiums you have again something that is very academic. We do days with people in wheelchairs. We take our students and tell them for a whole day you are in a wheelchair. Because they are going to go to work later with people in wheelchairs. That's the number one reason. But then it's also to make them understand what a person in a wheelchair is like even though they won't be working with a person in a wheelchair. It is to start the integration. And when you're in a wheelchair one day, here I come here and I want to take the book that's upstairs there, I can't. The guy in the wheelchair can do it like this, no. Actually, you can't. If I go to the cafeteria, and then I take my plate, oh, it mustn't fall off. You start to realize what it's like to have to use one hand. So we make them do exercises. They have to have hot tea. They have to go drink in smoking places. You have your hot tea and you have to go down a ramp. Do you tell an able-bodied person, can you carry it? But what does that mean? You start to understand that you have to put the tea

here and then you get burned or I can't go smoking. So for me, our students do it, I also try to integrate the teachers in days like that to realize how much the difference is welcomed by the other. But now I stay with a teaching staff where there are people who complain because it takes more time, because we have to prepare two different exams, because we have to redo an exam. Not everyone is always kind. Most teachers are. It's a school that's a little slower with a little bit slower students who roll along a little bit more from that point of view but who are welcoming people, I think.

A: You said something about the concept of integration. How do you understand this word? What does it mean ? Could you explain what is integration?

B: I'm looking for a word, wait. You're talking about integration. I don't agree with you. We do what I call inclusive education. School integration means I take someone who is different and I tell him, you are like the others and you have to do like everyone else. We are inclusive. We take it and you're in a class with 24 different students, each with their own strengths. You, how can I include you with your strengths and weaknesses? You have to adapt things. So, we do the adaptation. Careful, but without, that's our policy, without changing the level of what we want to achieve as a competency at the end. If, for example, we have to give a student more time to take an exam, for different reasons, we will give more time. But we're not going to tell him, you have the same time but we're taking away questions. So we have an equity policy on this, we really try to be inclusive.

Inclusion is at all levels. I'll take an example, an example that you may not have thought of right away. We have a ski camp and we have students who are gluten-free, yeah, because it's a school issue, we have students who are pork-free, we have students who are vegan. I think inclusion is different. Vegan is a choice. Gluten-free is not a choice. But now what do we do and how far do we go? Or the one who is meatless, that's it, we can offer him a plate and say, take the meat off. How far should we go? Then we accompany you up to a certain point but for example gluten free we tell him, we agree to welcome you but if it's possible you take your bread. He knows that he has to take his bread. But we must be aware that we have gluten free students. For me what counts is this welcome in all possible diversity. So it can be a diversity of languages. What happens with an allophone student who arrives in the school and has neither French nor German? One, can we welcome him/her? A student who has been living for 16 years in the canton of Fribourg, who arrives at our school, but who is weak in French or German, we tell him, you are too weak, we don't welcome you. You cannot come. A student who has been coming from Portugal for a year, who has not mastered either French or German. He is even weaker than the one we couldn't take, there were exams. Am I allowed to take it? Compared to the other one, do I have the right to take it? So you have to ask yourself some good questions. And then, for me afterwards, you have to create rules that are preliminary for all the students. Very often we work with the other school principals and then we try to make rules, precisely the reception of allophone students. For example, if a student has been here for a year, we don't make him take the exam in German, but we still want him to have certain abilities in French. Without French, history, geography, everything will be difficult. So, language one, yes, language two, we can leave it aside. For those who have been here for two years, we want higher standards. Then we use the same criteria for everyone. Everyone will arrive saying, but I am different, welcome me. Yes, but for languages, we will set criteria. And then we will put them all in these language criteria for those who arrive with language difficulties.

Then we have Asperger students, so each Asperger student is completely different. So we try to see what we need. But there are also decisions that are made by working groups that we have created, which are a little bit higher up. For example, for all the upper secondary schools, we tried to say, we want to do the same thing. I don't want a student who is accepted at X, I always take X, so it's clear, and we tell him you are Asperger's, we give you such and such and such compensation. For example, I don't know. Let's take a simpler case. I'm thinking of a student who is dyslexic. At X we say, we agree to do all the exams on blue sheets, if for example it is recognized that for him it is better to do it on blue sheets, what type of writing, in font 12, line spacing one and a half, and when he comes to me, we tell him that we do not agree. If they agreed there, I have to agree here or if they didn't agree there, I don't have to agree here. We have seen that our problems are common to certain schools, we also try to see things that are common. On the other hand, we have many more students like that. We currently have 5% of students who benefit from compensation measures. It will increase to 10%. We have between 1-2 per class. It's huge and it takes work. We try to integrate them as well as possible everywhere. So I took examples of the food, of disadvantages compensations. We could talk about students of elite sports, talented artists who play a lot of flute, dance. What do we do? How do we welcome them? We adapt the schedule. There are a lot of things that can be set up. Extending the time, support courses, the problem: all that has a cost. To what extent can we ask the teacher to do it for free as part of their work? That's complicated. I think we have teachers who are caring. And the fact that we have teachers who work as a team helps. When you have teachers who are individuals, who work individually, it's very complicated. I think for us, the idea of the school to have a real team working for me is important.

A: So you are quite open to diversity, clearly, and a bit proactive, in other words you seem to take measures before, or think about things before they are a problem. Why is that? Have you had any particular preparation or any particular kind of self-reflection that maybe other school directors may not have had? How have you come to this perspective?

B: It is by the type of school we are. Gymnasiums or vocational schools prepare something different. In gymnasiums, you're preparing people to study law, or to become an economist - to studies that are very academic. I'm going to be critical again; studies which are less human. Careful, when I say human. We cover health professions, social work and pedagogy. In health, we're going to work with people with physical or mental health problems. In social work, we work with people with social difficulties integrating into society, with alcoholism, with money problems, etc. And in pedagogy, with people who have learning difficulties, so we're dealing with something very human. I am not saying that lawyers are not human. For me, when I came to school, I absolutely wanted to develop this side of it. And if you look here (points to the office wall), it was a mentally handicapped person who painted this picture for me. It's your child, no, it's probably a person with an intellectual disability, an artist, one of the best known in the world. Because we bring these people to school.

The school culture that I wanted to establish, the health culture, social work, pedagogy, requires that we bring people in, as I said, in situations of mental disability, in situations of physical disability, and not only. Last year, some teachers decided to read a book. It's always in the books you read, you can read Rabelais, a great author of the 16th, 17th of French literature. You can read Molière, so you do, but you can also read books whose

theme is set in a hospital, whose theme is set in the street, that's it. So, last year, the teachers decided to read a book that was based on social workers, it was happening in the street with people who had lost their jobs. And in the classroom, the first year students said, "yeah, if they lost their jobs it's their fault, they should work." At home, these students see this? The teachers told me no. So can we go and visit X? X is an institution that welcomes people who don't know where to sleep at night. Can we organize it? Yes, I know the director, tak, tak. I made the links and they went to visit as part of the book, they suddenly had the idea to go and visit. They came and the students were delighted. They loved it. They started to understand what they had. On another note, the French teachers decided to read a book called "Et au center bat le cœur" (And in the middle beats the heart). That's a book you should read. It exists in French, in German, I don't know if it exists in English. It was written by a cardiac surgeon for very small children, newborns. His name is René Prêtre, he lives in Switzerland. He was named Swiss of the year in 2013. And there are teachers who say it might be cool to read a book that happens in a hospital with technical terms about the heart and everything. They decide to read the book and contact René Prêtre: do you want to come to the school to give a lecture? René Prêtre, at the school of general culture? It's not possible. He would never come. Then, yes, he is coming. The biology teachers say great, then we will do a dissection of the heart at the same time. The biology teachers are organizing a heart dissection, the visual arts teachers, great, we'll do some work, we'll make postcards. We're going to sell postcards. It's a kind of voluntary action led by ourselves but we're going to collect money and we're going to give it to René Prêtre. There, I have a photo over there with the heart, you see. The students were very heartfelt. It may not be the most beautiful picture but we took a lot of pictures. We sold a lot of photos. We brought back 9500 francs. We had René Prêtre come. There were 100 students in the auditorium, and parents, and we brought in people who are specialists in humanities. When you read a book like that, it opens another dimension of what you are going to do later on in health, in work, even. It's not someone who specializes in health. It's a specialist in human relationships. He explains to you the relationship he has with parents when he has to explain a surgical operation. He explains how he has to tell parents about a death. There are some very powerful moments in this book.

And our students are sponges. They are immersed in a human culture. And when you bathe them in human culture, you have a lot of students coming into first year here who don't really know why they are here. They're here because they couldn't go to college or they couldn't find a place to learn. And little by little, by being immersed in this culture, they are people who reveal themselves in this world. So I think that by being... I want to develop this culture, and for me, I have to be a model. So I'm in many social institutions, I'm a member of committees of associations with people with mental disabilities. We work with associations, particular institutions of the city of X. At the moment, there is a kiosk in the center square, it's the soup festival. So we are doing a soup festival with students. If you want to come tonight. What's that, sir? Come and see. We make soup and there are people who don't know what to eat in the evening, they come to eat the soup. We eat with them. And then at the end we put something on, that's it. Ah, that's it. That's it. People don't know about social institutions. So we have to get them here. For me, I have to be a role model.

A: Speaking of students who are foreigners, migrants, do you know how many students are immigrants, economic immigrants, Portuguese, others versus refugees, maybe Eritrean, Sudanese? Do you make a difference there?

B: I have the number of foreign students after I have the second generation students, who are now Swiss, naturalized but named Domingues, for example. I think that I have about 50% Swiss, 25% second generation, and 25% foreigner. Among the foreigners we imagine, from the name, that we have refugees. For example, I regularly have requests. The ORS, which is responsible for taking care of the refugees who are with us and who contact me. When the students come to school, they have to pay a tuition of about 370 francs per year. All the parents have to pay that. And since the refugees are at the ORS, it is the ORS that pays these 370 francs and they ask us not to pay the tuition. I have to inform them in advance, the decision will be made by higher-ups. I have to say whether or not. In the end it is the state that will pay in one way or another. If I say no, the ORS will pay these 370 francs. It might as well keep these 370 francs to do something else and then the state will say that they are not paying. So I see a lot of requests coming through. So, I have the names of the students who are refugees. So maybe there are refugee students who don't ask not to pay for schooling, but.... So I know I have requests.

I also know from the administrator all the problems we have with people not paying for school or asking for payment arrangements. In the gymnasiums, there are none. Or very few. We're in a society that is once again elitist. Where you can pay for education. People come to us, studies cost 1200 francs a year. Between schooling, books and other expenses. That means 3 francs and a half per day. That means 100 francs a month. For me we have to find that. But there are people who cannot. For me, it also puts me in a reality where I see pay slips coming in because they say, but look at what I earn, I can't pay. It's not for me to decide. I take note, it's not for me to decide. I can refer people to scholarships. I can't decide whether people pay bills or not. In Switzerland, we pay the bills. That's it.

We realize the difficulties of society. I see the number of migrant and refugee students we have. But I can't give you a clear proportion. On the other hand, I know that we have people who arrive, for example, from Portugal, maybe because they no longer have a job in Portugal. They came to work in Switzerland. Should we consider them differently from an Afghan person who arrives where there is war? Then, undoubtedly, yes. But I mean, we must first look at integration in the school in terms of languages. A person who doesn't speak French or German no matter what country he or she comes from. Afterwards, however, all of a sudden you notice, and I have visual arts teachers coming. They have a series of works done. I'll take an example. They have to make a book of 10 works. Once in pencil, once in charcoal, once in paint, once, there you go, and the theme is the tree. There are students who arrive who have lived through the war who draw things for you. If I ask you to draw a tree, you're going to draw a tree. If the theme is the tree. You can draw a leaf, there a branch, there a forest, the crown of a tree. There are tortured brains, the trees that come out of the brain, there is never any color, it's all black. The visual art teachers come to me and say, can you look at this, what do we do? How should I react? I feel like he's suicidal. This is just an example. People, they care. So we're going to talk to the class teacher, we're going to talk to the mediators. We have mediators. Can't you get into a discussion with this student? But afterwards, be careful. We are still a school. And then, for me, after a while, there's a limit with what happens outside. So we have to learn how to manage a lot of things at school. We're a bit out of the school context, but then, if the student doesn't know where to sleep at night, I have to do everything I can to help him find a place, but I don't have to take him home. But it's difficult. Sometimes I want to take him home. It's like the social worker. You have to put a line between your private life and their private life and school.

A: So you have then probably connections with other institutions, associations in Fribourg who can help. What about for foreigners who come, who have, are there any community associations, like ethnic associations that you communicate with? In other words, how do you also bring in more culture and language of the students to the school? Or do you?

B: Now I think we are reaching the limits of what we do. The student who arrives from abroad right away like that, we can't welcome them. If they don't master French or German, how are we going to evaluate if they can come to us? Most of these people, they are first welcomed in another school called X. At X, they have 15 classes of different levels with very few students, 5-6 students per class. They welcome people who come from abroad mainly for integration courses, language courses. They already select students who can come to us. So we talked with them. We made a working group. What are the selection criteria that you make? So they select those who come to take the exams with us. One of the first selection criteria, everyone agrees on that, it's not just us but obviously in the world, the level of mathematics of a young person gives a good vision of his level of knowledge or abilities. It's fairly validated. I didn't know that. I listened to them. So they can do math tests pretty quickly because math is pretty universal. So, but be careful, there is the way to write numbers or to write certain symbols, but mathematics is quite universal. Compared to a language. And then they manage to select them and continue to teach them. They select a part of the students one, by their professional orientation and two, by their abilities if they can take the exams with us.

We do have exams but I must say that we take a level that is quite low and we include them in the first year, which is a year in which grades don't count. It's a year of inclusion. Often they will repeat the year. It's to help them, we want to help them to integrate themselves, to include themselves, to integrate themselves. And during that year, the ORS or other institutions very often give them other language courses next door. So when they are with us, they learn a certain life in Swiss society. They learn a certain level, but they continue to have language courses. When they are definitely with us, the inclusion is over. After a while you also have to say, then you go, for example, you don't count German for six months. Or if German means that, then language two means that you are not promoted. I'm like Caesar, I don't have the right to do that [thumbs down], but I have the right to do that [thumbs up]. I cannot for one student say I have the right to do that and for another student I don't have the right to do that. We don't do that. But I have the right to take an unpromoted student and say, I think you are promoted. But these are very rare cases. Because again, for me, I have to be fair to everyone else. And I can't say to a student, yeah, that's good, I'm giving you the opportunity.

Sooner or later, I will have to give him a paper in relation to the compulsory schools in Canton X, the paper that is issued in the compulsory schools is a paper X. Me, I issue a paper that is Swiss and that is recognized in other countries. So I do not have the right to give a title at the discount. So at the end, the exams are the same for everyone. I have to avoid having someone who at the end won't have the abilities. So I have to be sure of what I am doing. So there is this accompaniment, this sensitivity to say, you can take a little more time, this sensitivity, this connection with other networks for language courses and everything. But for example regarding the integration of refugees, we took three two years ago. Of the three, one left very quickly. It was not going well at all. One had to do his full year to retake the first year and one went so well. We were able to say, let's count these

marks and we'll take him straight into second year. We are adapting. I can't tell you that we got three. All three took a different course.

I take another example. There is a student who comes from Afghanistan. She is now in the third year. So, it's complicated because she said that the students in the class were putting her aside and the students in the class said, they were trying but she was putting herself aside. After a while, what do I have to do? She is Chinese. I heard there are problems in the shower. People come in with a vision of the body, of the woman's body. I don't know, I haven't been in the shower with girls, it's not that. You have 12 girls who come to shower and she seemed to say that the girls dressed in a vulgar way. I can imagine that she saw underwear. Me, I didn't go to see. But I hear about these problems, and how much do I have to bear responsibility? It's interesting that it goes so far. After a while I have to say stop. I wish I could help with inclusion. On the other hand, I find that choosing books, going to institutions, that's our role, having debates, cultural conflicts, I find it interesting.

I know a lot of debates happen in school, in sociology classes, in history classes. I think it's great, but then we have to have teachers who are moderators. If the student has an opinion, we have to respect that opinion. But we have people who live in societies where, for example, because we are in the context of women here, where the image of women in relation to the image in 2019 in Europe and Switzerland that we have or would like to have, of a very emancipated woman, even if we still have to fight in Europe on this, you have veiled mothers at home. I say this because I have seen veiled mothers. We have students who are veiled. I'm not saying that we don't have the right but it's hard. I have teachers who say, we women in Switzerland had to fight for the right to vote. It's not that we are racist, it's not racism. And this tolerance that we have, it's complicated. We have a role there that we must welcome everyone. I have students who have come to ask me, this girl, sir, can't you tell her to take off her veil? I mean, she has a full veil, it's really a big veil. And always dressed in black. I have to tell them, yes, I have to welcome her. And I have to say that for me, in my culture, it depends on the image that is conveyed behind it. And I don't know, there's something that's disturbing for me but at the same time it's part of the welcome. It's complicated. Because sometimes I feel like I'm not being open. No. I don't know, it's complicated. That's it, it's not easy. You have boys who have discipline problems with teachers. But not with male teachers. Integration goes so far. And when you welcome the parents here and you meet the dad or the mom and you see what education people have, you say, me, it's not the education I received, of openness and tolerance. These are people who have lives ... I think I can say that I have 100 teachers, it's crazy this year, I have 50 women and 50 men. I can't do better. But I didn't want to. It's just the way it is. I favoured women a few years ago, I had maybe 40% women, 60% men with contracts. But now I'm not going to look, there's a woman leaving, so there has to be a woman. Maybe one day I will have 60% women or 60% men again. We try to have a good balance in the faculty as well. But after that there are problems.

A: Aussi avec les parents des élèves. How do the teachers interact with parents? Do they ever have a chance?

B: Very little. The structure of the school means that the only teacher who will have regular contact with parents is the so-called class teacher. The other teachers in the class report problems to the class teacher and it is he who keeps in touch. A teacher can always make contact. We have evening get-togethers where parents can come and see the biology or math teacher. There are meetings there. Maybe there are one or two phones. But the

most regular communication is with the class teacher. It's about academic difficulties, about behavioral difficulties, and then it's our dean, principal or me. But the rest of the teachers, I talk to them, do you have any contact with the parents? No, very little. We have young people between 16 and 20 years old. And from the age of 18, we are no longer allowed to have contact with parents. You have to ask the young person, do you agree that I have contact with parents? Or afterwards I can have contact with the parents, then that's to avoid the law, I don't have the right to call the parents. The student is not there, I call home and I get the parents. Hello, can I talk to your son? No, he is not here. Oh well, excuse me. What's the reason? But I can't tell.

We have very few young people who are 15 years old. If they are between 15 and a half and 16 years old in first year, from 16 years old you are not an adult, but you have the sexual majority, in relation to alcohol, in relation to a lot of things. Our teachers talk a lot with the students first and foremost. So for me we have a contact with the student first and foremost. When I have a problem with a student, even a 17-year-old student, I discuss it with the student first. Then we go to the parents. I think that between the ages of 16 and 20, these contacts diminish. They are still important but they are decreasing. And it is also due to the age in our school. For the 16 and 17 year olds, there is still some but then there is almost none. On the other hand, it is often the opposite - that parents call us. So we are happy there. We can see that there are parents who are still interested. The contacts are when we have sanctions in relation to the students and we have to copy the parents. The young man is 18 years old. I take him here, I didn't inform the parents, he receives a letter and we have to send a copy to the parents. At that moment the parents say, you should have informed us. I can't do that. It is the law. So you are talking about the parents, I am 18 years old, for me it is important. So that means out of 1100 students that I have, I have about a third who are under 18, yeah, 40% are under 18 and 60% are over 18. Legally I can contact 400 parents.

A: Have you ever thought about doing a school climate survey or have you ever asked students how they feel about the school culture and school climate? Is that something, I don't know if it's typical in Switzerland?

B: So, yes, we ask in two ways. The first way, it has a cost. We did it seven, eight years ago. We did a benchmarking exercise. We were looking for former students and they had to talk about the training at our school, what it brought them. And people are still very happy about a lot of things. Most of the remarks we had and I know why, it's because our school was too motherly. We are too nice, we take them by the hand too much. We listen to them too much. We should be more strict and then let them go on their own. That's the comment they make afterwards. And at the moment they find us too strict sometimes. I think that we give them a lot by the hand. But I think we have a category of the population that needs it because they are people who have difficulties at school. There are people who have been, I'm going to use the word broken, by their school experience. Those for whom school was a trauma at a certain point. People in relation to wars, in relation to a lot of things, their culture, their family, who arrive with difficult experiences. I believe that we are a school where we rebuild young people and help them to leave, that's it. So this very human side makes us very mothering. So it's probably the quality of the school, but it's probably also a flaw. This is one way of getting feedback.

Now we have another way of getting feedback, that is, in each class, we ask two students to be delegates. And these delegates meet three times a year with the class teacher, they

meet with the dean. And they can talk about anything. About the atmosphere, the climate, the teachers, the activities, the organization. And it comes back to me. Very often it's more about teaching, about the teacher. But we have comments about the cafeteria square, about the quality of the meals, about the fact that it's cold in class, about a lot of things. So we have a lot of things that come up like that. It's difficult for me to get each of the 1100 students to come, so it's very pyramidal, it goes up and down like that. But it allows everyone to be able to express themselves. It's a bit like a Swiss political model. Elected officials are appointed to represent us. So, we, there are 2 students, they don't have to come with their own opinion, they have the role of delegate.

A: How are those delegates selected?

B: It's in the classroom. They decide. It's students among themselves. We don't decide anything.

A: Do you think that these délégués are representative of the class? In terms of diversity? In other words, are there every any refugee delegates or migrant delegates?

B: Yes, but it can be two things. It can be students with a strong personality, so that's a problem because the delegate is imposing himself. We have heard that the delegate is the student causing problems in class. So he's not going to come and say there are problems in class because of him. He will avoid bringing them up. So for us, the fact that the class teacher is there and he knows his students but he also gives us some information about the delegates. We have delegates who are black, white, in chairs. We also had a student in a wheelchair who was a delegate. I don't expect only students named Franier and Schneuwly (typical Swiss) to be delegates. Not at all. In the first year, students come from all over and they don't know each other. So it is very difficult for them to elect a delegate at the beginning of the first year. It's more like he's the one who decides, who says, I'm interested. In the second year, the students are starting to recover. So it weighs something else. It's not the same information that comes up in first, second, third year. We also have students who know more about the school, which is interesting. So this system is interesting for me as well. It allows me to bring up the problems of the teachers. I don't have to take care of the teachers anymore. My deans mostly take care of the students. But we all talk to each other. When a problem that gets to my office, it's because it is a major student problem. But I know what's going on, I can give advice but I'm not the one who directly manages it. When arrives to my office, it's something else.

C: Perhaps just one last question in relation to student assets, given that we have quite a diversity, how can we include or integrate student assets into teaching?

B: So I think there are disciplines where you can more easily integrate these assets. In a math class, I was a mathematician, I think it's more difficult. We have sociology courses. Again, in terms of the type of school, we have ethics courses, we have philosophy courses, perhaps French, history courses where different cultures can express themselves. And I think we have to make room for these cultures to express themselves. When we have debates, that's where it's most interesting. Afterwards, I also speak perhaps in terms of language, depending on the language, depending on the strength of a student in a language, we should be able to take him as a second teacher. You have someone who comes from, I don't know, I'm not saying that in Sri Lanka we speak English extremely

well but maybe it's a second language that is much more used than in our country, we come with better knowledge, we should perhaps be able to... I know that there are German teachers who use students who are strong in German to be able to manage groups. When you do group work, you can put all the strong students together, you can, it can be an attitude and all the weak ones together for pedagogical reasons. But you can also divide them up. But with the risk that the good one does all the work for the weak ones, that's not it. We must also say that we train future primary teachers. So, giving responsibility to students to teach. I think it's also nice. So teaching is not just about teaching a language, it's also about culture. I know that we had classes or special days where the students had to cook food, but we eat very well at the school of general culture with our students. We have a variety of dishes that is just ... people are very proud of their culture. So we don't have to tell them to come to the school of general culture, we're going to make fondue. Also, but I find if we can eat specialties from all countries, that's better. It's a welcome that is on everything.

A: You mentioned that you are mostly concerned with teachers. Do you do the evaluation of teachers? Is there a part of the evaluation that would include cultural competence or would that be something to look at as a teacher? Maybe not only cultural but also diversity in general?

B: A teacher means his 80% of the teaching, the class. The 20% is ancillary activities. There are four types of side activities. This is called the follow-up of the students, giving a class next to it, the problems. It's not the class teacher, it's time given to the school, I need time to write the new study plans, that's it. There is continuing education and then there are extracurricular activities. When a teacher comes to my office, he thinks I'm evaluating him on that. That's what I'm interested in. Because that, you know, that I know if it's good or not before it even happens. That I know. Most of his work, you know. It's colleagues that I've known, that I know, that I've visited. That's what's important to me in evaluation. You're asking me if I evaluate these things, of course. For example, we have a ski camp, I try to get as many teachers as possible to come up. And at ski camp, you live with the students something different from what I live in math class. If I am his ski instructor, I will get to know the student differently. I find at the secondary II level, that's where it becomes interesting. It's when you have a student, where you enter a little bit into his sphere, into his culture, you enter into different cultures. We have theme weeks. And in the theme weeks we try very hard to use these different skills of the students. Do I evaluate that, yes. I'm going to have two teachers that I've seen teaching, on a one and a quarter hour discussion I take twenty minutes for what I've seen in class and I take about 55 minutes to an hour for the rest. I'm reversing the proportions.

A: It's very interesting and important. Thank you very much!